

## **A CHAPLAINS MANUAL**



**NEW YORK STATE  
ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHAPLAINS, INC.**

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## **Table of Contents**

### **Section I**

#### **General Information**

The Department Chaplain	4
Duties of a Department Chaplain	6
The Maltese Cross	10
Chaplain's Emergency Service Bag	11

### **Section II**

#### **Prayers**

Introduction to Prayers and Services	12
Prayers for Emergencies	13
For Various Occasions	17
Invocations, Benedictions, & Graces	21
Prayers for the Dead	27
Auxiliary Prayers	29
The Fire Chief's Prayer	31
The Firefighter's Prayer & Firefighter's Psalm	32
A Junior Firefighter's Prayer	33
EMS Prayer	34
A Memorial Poem-Gone But Not Forgotten	35
Meet Me In the Stairwell	36
I Wish You Knew . . .	37
The Dash	38
If Tomorrow Never Comes	39

### **Section III**

#### **Ceremonies & Services**

Introduction to Ceremonies & Services	40
Installation Ceremonies	41
Dedications	44
A Ceremony for Placing New Apparatus into Service	46
Memorial Services	47

#### ***Part 1: At a Funeral Home for a "wake" or "viewing"***

Suggested Ritual for Memorial Service for Deceased Brother/Sister	48
A Brief Memorial Service For A Deceased Brother/Sister	50
Ritual Outline For A Deceased Brother/Sister	50

<b><i>Part 2: At the Funeral or at the Graveside</i></b>	<b>54</b>
Placing of the Glove Service	55

#### ***Part 3: Annual Memorial Services***

Ritual Outline	56
A Suggested Memorial Service	57

<i>Part 4: Additional Material for Memorial Services</i>	60
Jewish Funeral Service Guidelines	62
A Jewish Memorial Prayer	63
A Jewish Memorial Service	64
A Jewish Graveside Service	65
A Tribute	66
Resolutions	67

#### **Section IV Scripture Readings**

Introduction to Scripture Readings	68
Old Testament Readings	69
Apocrypha Readings	70
Epistle Readings	72
Gospel Readings	74
Qur'ân Readings	76

#### **Section V Suggested Protocol for Fire Department Funerals**

Introduction to the Suggested Protocol for Fire Department Funerals	77
Walden Fire Department Protocols	78
Dix Hills Fire Department Protocols	164
Federation of Fire Chaplains Fire Department Funerals	200

## **Section 1 – General Information**

### **THE DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN**

The Fire Department and/or Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Chaplain functions in a similar way to the military chaplain in that the chaplain is responsible for the spiritual, moral and ethical life of all firefighters and EMS workers in the department to which s/he is appointed. Ordained chaplains carry out these functions within the scope of their ordination vows.

An ordained chaplain should have the educational requirements of their church (usually a minimum of four years of college and three years of seminary) and a minimum of five years of pastoral experience with adequate training in pastoral counseling. In the department that appoints a lay chaplain (non-ordained), the lay chaplain should have the endorsement of their pastor, church or synagogue.

The responsibilities of the chaplain:

*If the chaplain is also a firefighter or EMS trained, they should perform those duties unless otherwise directed by the Incident Commander.*

1. At the fire/EMS incident scene:

- A. The chaplain observes the activities of all personnel, watching specifically for approaching fatigue or undue stress.
- B. In case of injury to firefighter/EMS personnel, the chaplain is available to administer comfort, concern and prayer in accordance with the religious background of that person. If deemed appropriate, the following action would be taken:
  - a. Contact the injured's pastor, rabbi, or imam
  - b. Contact the injured's family
  - c. Accompany the injured to the hospital
- C. In the role of the chaplain, the chaplain never issues commands as far as the incident is concerned, but can recommend to the proper officer that, in good judgment, personnel should be removed because of fatigue, stress or hyperactivity.
- D. The chaplain becomes involved with the families affected by the incident:
  - a. Keeping the distraught from entering the scene
  - b. Offering spiritual comfort
  - c. Contacting the appropriate clergy or spiritual leaders
  - d. Putting the family in touch with the Salvation Army and/or Red Cross.

2. After the incident:

- A. In the event of a death of personnel or any person at the incident, the chaplain is available to assist in debriefing those firefighters who are having inward or external difficulty handling death or painful suffering.
- B. The chaplain may be invited by the officers involved to participate in a critique of the incident.
- C. Be available to personnel for debriefing after a severe trauma event.
- D. The chaplain is available for personal counseling, as requested.

3. At other times:

- A. The chaplain is available to all personnel for personal conversation or counseling, if requested by the person. All of this communication is strictly confidential.
- B. As a result of this counseling, the chaplain may refer the person to their own clergy or other professional personnel (doctor, psychologist, psychiatrist or other mental health worker). Obviously, this is not an independent action, but is handled through the chain of command.
- C. The chaplain counsels with the personnel's firefighters family, if requested.
- D. The chaplain plans for Memorial, Dedication or other religious services to which the personnel are invited.
- E. If no clergy is available or involved, the chaplain can officiate at weddings, baptisms or funerals involving personnel (as allowed by law).

The chaplain is available to all department personnel as a listener, confidant and friend. The chaplain takes no sides, but ministers to all.

The chaplain may be assigned additional duties at an incident according to ones experience and skills.

## **Duties of a Department Chaplain**

**General Information** The chaplain is the spiritual leader of the department. An active chaplain must be available. This includes:

- presence at all fire department activities: fire and emergency calls, drills, meetings, wakes and installation dinners.
- on public occasions.
- be available to counsel the chiefs and members in departmental and even domestic personal problems.
- at the call of the chief of the department for any assistance that might be suggested.
- responsible for the spiritual needs of the department members. This responsibility can be discharged in several ways: e.g. referral to the person's own clergyperson or to a proper agency (counseling service, psychologist, etc.); or direct counseling by the chaplain. Prudence is required so that the chaplain forces neither the need nor the call for counseling.
- to circulate freely among the department members, when possible, as a source of encouragement.
- be readily available to minister to their needs when required.

The following may be incorporated into a chaplaincy program. This list does not include all the responsibilities that a chaplain can undertake but these ideas can be taken into consideration as a vibrant chaplaincy program is developed.

**Spiritual Guidance** Two important functions of the chaplain are to help firefighters/EMS personnel and their families in times of crisis and to help them with their spiritual needs. Of the many responsibilities a chaplain may hold, these are the principle responsibilities. The chaplain may use a variety of techniques to bring about spiritual truths and give assistance to an individual or family, however, the most important ministry is to simply be available when called upon. Spiritual need is the greatest of all needs and the chaplain must be able to meet this need.

A chaplain should remember that this job is not meant to direct a member to the religious beliefs of the chaplain, but should help the person in his/her own religious belief. A chaplain should assist and direct a member to the religious leader of their own belief system. If they have no present affiliation, then a chaplain may guide them in the chaplains own belief system. Under no circumstances, should a chaplain compromise his/her own set of religious principles in the carrying out of the chaplain's duties.

**Emergency Situations** If the chaplain is a trained active firefighter and/or rescue person, they will respond to the call as do the other members of the department and be available for service as directed by the chief or incident commander. If the chaplain is not an active firefighter and/or rescue person, they will respond to the call in the capacity of chaplain. Call types may include, but not be limited to:

1. Confirmed working structural fires
2. Multiple alarm incidents

3. Incidents involving multiple displaced persons
4. Confirmed fatalities (civilian or fire/EMS personnel)
5. Motor vehicle accidents
6. Serious injury to fire/EMS personnel
7. Other emergencies as requested

At fire incidents, the chaplain should be alert to the needs of the personnel. The chaplains should be especially mindful that the type of people responding to emergencies is easily capable of overexerting themselves to the point of exhaustion. Knowing this, the chaplain can make incident command officers aware of potentially dangerous situations that need immediate and/or medical attention.

At major incidents, it is often the chaplain who is free to assist in handling unruly or hysterical people (these people often tend to be family members of ones involved in the incident). This becomes a needed function at fires, rescues, extrications, situations that draw a sizable crowd, or incidents that involve children. A chaplain who can remain calm and be able to explain what is happening to the public can be a helpful asset to the situation. *(Note that this is not a Public Relations Officer who talks to the media. This should be another person assigned by the Incident Commander to deal especially with the media.)* Comforting the bereaved and offering positive direction to the victim's family are also priorities at these incidents. The chaplain can help explain the types of assistance that is available to the victims such as the Red Cross, Salvation Army, etc. and direct individuals to these programs.

The chaplain will be available to the victims of disaster or loss, to comfort, to advise and to assist in any way possible. The chaplain will obtain clergy of the person's faith when needed. If one is not available, the chaplain will pray with or for the person(s), offering spiritual support.

#### Suggested procedure of the Chaplain at the Incident Scene

- A. Report to the chief in charge as soon as possible. In a mutual aid call, report to the chief in charge as a matter of courtesy.
- B. Inquire from the chief if there is any special need. Remember that life is the first concern.
- C. In keeping with the chaplains own fire fighting or rescue experience, you may survey the entire scene. If you have observed a condition that demands action, report this to the chief or incident commander. Never, never give an order at a incident scene. A recommendation is often a valued aid but commands are the responsibility of the chief or incident commander.
- D. Words of comfort and sympathy are of great help to those whose homes and possessions are destroyed or to the person who has just lost their place of business.
- E. The chaplain shall assist directly when possible or contact and cooperate with local relief agencies on behalf of victims of fire or disaster.

In the event an injury (major or minor) or death of rescue personnel should take place, the chaplain will be the primary contact with the victim's family. If an injury should occur, the chaplain should meet the injured at the hospital, quickly determine the extent of the injury from the hospital staff, and then notify the family in a manner that will not cause undue panic or grief. At the time of contact a decision should be made as to whether the family needs transportation to the hospital and then prepare to meet with the family when they arrive.

## **Non-Emergency Situations**

### **Liaison with Hospitals**

A chaplain should visit local hospitals to build a rapport with the medical personnel. These visits may help the chaplain receive accurate and helpful reports from the hospital professionals. However, be aware that with governmental and hospital regulations concerning privacy some information may be unavailable.

### **Conducting/Assisting at Funerals**

The chaplain can assist a family in the arrangements of a funeral for both active and inactive (retired) members. The chaplain may be called upon to officiate at the service or to assist the family's minister.

The department should have a written set of funeral protocols for all funerals. A suggested set of protocols can be found in Section V of this manual.

Counseling and consolation for the member's family and children are responsibilities of the chaplain. The chaplain should always send condolences at the time of death and represent the department by offering assistance according to the protocols.

The chaplain may represent their department at services for deceased members of near-by departments, and when possible, attend county, regional, or statewide memorial services.

### **Visitation**

A great deal of comfort, spiritual aid, and friendship can be given to the sick, distraught, and injured through personal contact. Visitation at the hospital or at home is an important function of the chaplain.

### **Weddings**

The chaplain may be called upon to perform weddings for department personnel. Lay chaplains are not able to perform these ceremonies while ordained chaplains may be able to perform these events within the guideline of their religious beliefs.



## Counseling

The daily pressures of the society in which we live and by the nature of rescue personnel can greatly contribute to the need of competent, caring counsel. A chaplain must take extreme care not to overstep the abilities that he/she has. The need for counseling in the areas of marriage, profession, family, substance abuse, children, finances, acute traumatic stress management, and a wide variety of other issues can quickly overwhelm a chaplain. A good chaplain should know when to refer a person to a trained professional. Care must also be given to confidentiality issues.

In case of death, sickness or injury to a department member, the chaplain will minister to all firefighters and to their families as requested. The chaplain should be notified immediately upon the death, sickness or injury of any department member.

## Department Functions

The chaplain, when requested, will offer prayer at meetings, banquets, dedications, graduations, memorials and funerals as well as at other appropriate times.

Periodically, the chaplain should conduct special training sessions for the department that include procedures to be used at places of worship with reference to religious items to be saved and/or protected in case of fire emergency. Local clergy should be invited by the chaplain to update information on their church/synagogue on a regular basis. The New York State Association of Fire Chaplains has a PowerPoint training program called "What to Save in a House of Worship Fire."

## The Lay Chaplain

The role and duties of a lay chaplain are identical to that of an ordained chaplain. Liturgical and ritual restrictions of a particular denomination are the only time it may require one who is ordained.

On all of the above occasions the chaplain should wear distinctive clothing and/or uniform with insignia so as to be readily identified. Chaplains should have gold insignia on dress uniforms (as their department allows) and their Personal Protective Equipment should also indicate the position of chaplain. The title and name of the chaplain (e.g. Chaplain James Brown) should appear in all places where the list of company and line officers appear.

All of the foregoing requires dedication from the chaplain, cooperation and permission from the chief, common sense and a love of God and the fire/EMS service.

## **THE MALTESE CROSS**

The badge of a firefighter is the Maltese Cross. The Maltese Cross is a symbol of protection; a badge of honor; and its story is hundreds of years old.

When a courageous band of Crusaders, known as the Knights of St. John, fought the Saracens for possession of the Holy Land, they encountered a new weapon unknown to European warriors. It was a simple but horrible device of war. It wrought excruciating pain and agonizing death upon the brave fighters for the Cross. The Saracen's weapon was fire.

As the Crusaders advanced on the walls of the city, they were struck by glass bombs containing naphtha. When they became saturated with the highly inflammable liquid, the Saracens hurled a flaming torch into their midst. Hundreds of the Knights were burned alive while others risked their lives to save their brothers in arms from dying painful, fiery deaths.

Thus these men became our first firefighters, and the first of a long list of courageous firefighters. Their heroic efforts were recognized by fellow Crusaders who awarded each hero a badge of honor – a cross similar to the one firefighters wear today. Since the Knights of St. John lived, for close to four centuries, on a little island in the Mediterranean Sea named Malta, the cross came to be known as the Maltese Cross.



The Maltese Cross is your symbol of protection. It means that the firefighter who wears this cross is willing to lay down their life for you, just as the Crusaders sacrificed their lives for their fellow man so many years ago. The Maltese Cross is a firefighter's badge of honor, signifying that they work with courage – a ladder rung away from death.

A floral tribute in the shape of a Maltese Cross should be used at a funeral or Memorial Service and has the official sanction of this Association. It is hoped that this floral tribute will be used throughout New York State.

### **Chaplain's Emergency Service Bag**

When an emergency occurs there is little time to “gather a few things together.” The following items have been recommended as components of an Emergency Service Bag that can be carried at all times in the chaplain's vehicle or be at the ready near the exit of your home.

- Heavy duty carry all bag
- Emergency service identification card
- Flashlight with four extra batteries
- Writing paper with two extra pens
- Warm cap with ear covering
- Cap with “Chaplain” on it
- Heavy warm gloves
- Light cotton/wool gloves (for dry warmth)
- Latex surgical type gloves (protection for blood borne pathogens)
- Over shoes
- Rubber boots
- Pair of socks
- Rain gear coat/jacket
- Bug spray or repellent
- Ministry book, small Bible
- Small personal religious or prayer book
- Small first aid emergency book
- Small first aid kit with band aids etc.
- A street map
- Resource booklet with phone numbers
- Snack bars, raisins and fluid replacements where appropriate
- Specialty items required by your climate or particular circumstances
- Personal soft body armor (you do not want to die)

Thanks to Chaplain Richard Holst  
Huntington Manor FD

## **Section II – Prayers**

### **INTRODUCTION TO THE PRAYERS**

The Board of Directors respectfully submits the following prayers which have been gathered from many areas throughout New York State. A broad representative selection of those prayers has been selected for inclusion in this manual. If any are used, it is suggested that words may be changed and sentences added or deleted according to the locality and circumstances, or as custom dictates.

Traditions and customs of our many churches and synagogues and other houses of worship must be respected. For example, those who do not teach or believe in the “Trinity” may wish to eliminate any reference to Jesus Christ. Prayer conclusions that are more generic in nature can be easily be substituted as needed, such as “We ask this in Your Eternal Name” or “We ask this in all faiths name.”

There is no set formula for prayer. It is necessary, therefore, for each chaplain to pick and choose what they wish, add/or delete words, and change or modify according to their beliefs. The pages that follow offer suggestions and models that can readily be adapted to your needs.

## **Prayers for Emergencies**

The Department Chaplain is often called upon to act in emergencies that involve life and death, or serious injury. This is especially true for chaplains serving departments that operate rescue vehicles.

It is clear, in this ecumenical age that chaplains can and should be of service to people of all religious faiths at the time of such an emergency. It is the chaplain's responsibility to be as familiar as possible with denominational traditions and expectations in emergency situations.

In all emergency situations, the wishes of the family involved should be respected. Also, the chaplain is often in a position to notify the appropriate pastor, rabbi, or other religious leader, and should do so as quickly as possible.

When immediate religious services are called for, the following prayers and suggestions may prove helpful.

### **Absolutions:**

1. The almighty and merciful Lord, grant you absolution and remission of all your sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of His Holy Spirit. Amen
2. Grant, we beseech You, merciful Lord, to Your faithful people pardon and peace, that they may be cleansed from all their sins, and serve You with a quiet mind; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen
3. Lord, for Your tender mercies' sake, lay not our sins to our charge, but forgive that which is past, and give us grace to amend our lives, to decline from sin and incline to virtue, that we may walk with a perfect heart before You, now and ever more. Amen
4. Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of His great mercy has promised forgiveness of sins to all those who turn to him with true repentance and sincere faith, have mercy on you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins. God confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

### **Blessing:**

1. The Lord bless and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace. Amen

2. May God the Father bless you.  
May God the Son comfort you.  
May God the Holy Spirit enlighten you.  
May Almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen
3. May the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, come upon you and remain with You for ever. Amen
4. May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen
5. May the almighty and merciful God bless and protect us, The Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen

### **In Time of Sickness, Pain or Death**

1. O Lord God, in whom we live and move and have our being, open our eyes that we may behold Your Fatherly presence ever before us. Teach us to be anxious for nothing, and when we have done what You have given us to do, help us, O God our Savior, to leave the issue to Your wisdom, knowing that all things are possible to us through Your Son our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen
2. Almighty God, we entrust all who are dear to us to Your never failing care and love, for this life and the life to come; knowing that You are doing for them better things than we can desire or pray for, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen
3. Breathe down, O Lord, upon all those who are bearing pain, your spirit of healing, the spirit of life, the spirit of peace and hope, of love and joy, the spirit of courage and endurance. Cast out from them the spirit of anxiety and fear; grant them perfect confidence and trust in You, that in Your light they may see light and experience your presence; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen
4. O God, the strength of those who walk with You, without whom nothing is safe, nothing is tranquil; confirm in us the knowledge of Your presence that, You being our companion, we may so deal with our anxieties that at length our hearts may find their rest in You; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen
5. O Lord, who does feel the pain of the world, and looks upon all sick and suffering persons, enfolding them in Your love, grant that in the midst of pain they may find Your presence; to doctors and nurses grant tender hearts and healing hands; and give health again in body and mind, for Your tender mercy's sake. Amen
6. Lord our God, the death of our *brother/sister*, name recalls our human condition and the brevity of our live on earth. But for those who believe in your love death is not the end, nor does it destroy the bonds that you forge in our lives. We share the faith of your Son's disciples and the hope of the children of God. Bring

the light of Christ's resurrection to this time of testing and pain as we pray for name and for those who love *him/her*, through Christ our Lord. Amen

7. Lord Jesus, our Redeemer, you willingly gave yourself up to death, so that all might be saved and pass from death to life. We humbly ask you to comfort your servants in their grief and to receive name into the arms of your mercy. You alone are the Holy One, you are mercy itself; by dying you unlocked the gates of life for those who believe in you. Pardon name *his/her* sins, and grant *him/her* a place of happiness, light, and peace in the kingdom of your glory for ever and ever. Amen

### **For Healing – Jewish**

1. May the one who blessed our ancestors Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah, Bless and heal the one who is ill: name son/daughter of parent's name. May the Holy One, fount of blessings, shower abundant mercies upon *him/her*, Fulfilling *his/her* dreams of healing, Strengthening *him/her* with the power of life.

Merciful One: Restore *him/her*, Heal *him/her*, Strengthen *him/her*, Enliven *him/her*.

Send *him/her* a complete healing from the Heavenly Realms. A healing of body and a healing of soul, together with all who are ill, soon, speedily, without delay: Amen

### **For Healing and Anointing**

1. O Almighty God, whose blessed Son laid His hands upon the sick and healed them; grant, we beseech You, to this person, on whom we now lay our hands in his Name, refreshment of spirit, and if it be Your holy will, perfect restoration to health; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
2. O Almighty God, the giver of every perfect gift; hear us on behalf of this Your servant, and mercifully grant that by this anointing with holy oil *s/he* may receive relief from their sickness, cleansing from sin, and healing both of body and soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
3. I lay my hands upon you in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, beseeching the mercies of our Lord Jesus Christ that He, by the power of His indwelling presence, may heal all infirmities of body or mind or spirit that you may praise Him and serve Him with a grateful heart and a quick mind; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## For Guidance

1. Lord, take me where you want me to go. Let me meet who you want me to meet.  
Tell me what you want me to say, and keep me out of your way

Father Mychal Judge, FDNY Chaplain

2. God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change;  
courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time;  
Enjoying one moment at a time;  
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;  
Taking, as He did, this sinful world  
as it is, not as I would have it;  
Trusting that He will make all things right  
if I surrender to His Will;  
That I may be reasonably happy in this life  
and supremely happy with Him  
Forever in the next. Amen

Reinhold Niebuhr



## **For Various Occasions**

### **Being a Member**

Almighty God, we offer our grateful thanks for the opportunity to serve in the name of the organization. We are grateful that in this way we are given the privilege of discharging our duty to our fellow human beings and to our community. May we have the courage and the insight to carry out our tasks cheerfully and responsibly so that we may be a true credit to our department and to our community. This we ask in Your Name. Amen.

### **Following an Emergency Call**

O God, we offer our grateful thanks that all our members have returned safely to quarters and to their families following the emergency. Our equipment is cleaned and ready for the next call. The station is quiet; our members are tired. May we now be granted that time of refreshing rest so that we may be prepared to return to the duties of the coming day, and so that we may be ready for the next alarm. This we pray in Your Name. Amen.

### **On the Death of a Member**

Almighty God, as we return to quarters, we do so in the knowledge that name is not with us. *S/He* is now returning to final quarters in your presence. That life was given that others might live. The way has been shown. Name died in service; may *s/he* now live in service and rest in the peace of your presence. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **For Courage**

Fortify us, O God, with the courage which comes only from You; that in the midst of all our perils and perplexities we may find that peace which only you can give; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **For the Members**

Eternal God, in whose hands lies the destinies of all persons, help us to feel our sacred unity as members of the human family and children of a common Father. Make us alert, vigilant, and in concord to our service to our community. May the spirit of love and good will possess and control our hearts as we bring blessedness to needy humanity and especially to those who look to us for protection. Bless our members and their service and hear our prayer, through the merits and mediation of the blessed Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

## **Memorial Prayer at a General or Public Meeting**

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we invoke Your blessing upon us as we enter into this very significant service in remembrance of those who have served in former years and who have entered into the life triumphant. We pray the cherished memories that well up in our hearts may now be a source of inspiration to us; that we may serve in our time as well as they served in their day. And as we go from this meeting and from this celebration back to our homes, we pray that we may give to our communities the same high devotion to duty, the same contribution of ourselves to the welfare of life that they gave in their day; that we may build in this time a heritage worthy to be handed to those generations yet to come. Our prayers are offered in the spirit of Jesus Christ. Amen

## **For the Fire/Rescue Service**

Almighty God, look with your favor upon all who serve in the *Fire/Rescue* Service. Give to chiefs and officers the wisdom and experience to lead and to direct; to our members the courage and determination to serve our communities; and to all of us the understanding and the realization of our role and responsibility in the protecting of our property, lives and natural resources. Amen

## **For Fire Service Families**

Our heavenly Father, we offer our grateful thanks this day for our families, our spouses, our children and our parents, without whose support we could not function very well as members of the *name of the organization*. We know that our work takes time away from our families. We ask your blessing upon them. When we are away from home for meetings, drills, and especially at the *fire/rescue* scene, we ask your protection for them. Finally, Oh God, when the time of danger passes, may we be united in safety with them. We pray through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

## **To Honor a Group of Firefighters**

Almighty God, our Father, how thankful we are for all You have given us. We ask Your blessing at this time upon the officers and members of this Department as we gather to honor (*our past presidents, retired members, deceased members, etc.*). May all the endeavors of this Department, these dedicated members who give so graciously of their time and efforts, constantly preserving life, limb and property, from the hazards of fire and other emergencies, without thought of rich or poor, race, color or creed, have Your guidance and blessing. We ask Your blessing upon our (*retired, ill, distressed, departed, etc.*) members and their families who cannot be with us at this time. We ask this in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

## **Opening of a Meeting**

1. Dear Lord and Father of all people, accept our thanks for all Your mercies of the past. We now call upon You for strength and guidance in this meeting. Teach us to look always to You for assistance, even as our fellow citizens look to us in their hour of need. Give us Your direction so we may plan that our service will be increasingly effective and efficient through the days ahead. We ask this in the name of the Servant of all. Amen
2. Almighty God, direct our thoughts and decisions at this meeting that we may always serve the best interests of our department, and also that as individuals and as an organization we may more faithfully, responsibly, and effectively serve the community and people committed to our care. This we ask in Your Name. Amen
3. O Lord and Father of all, allow everyone here to have the awareness that You are the giver of every good and worthwhile gift; that our lives are in Your keeping; that our endeavors are directed by Your leadership; that our successes and failures are known to You; and that Your love and concern are limitless. Favor us with Your blessing as we attempt to fulfill the assignments of our department in Your Name. Amen

## **Closing of a Meeting**

1. Loving Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your guidance through this meeting. May Your loving spirit guide and keep us in all our ways, and so direct our paths that, like the Master, we may serve all creation with all our talents and abilities. Bless and keep all our dear ones in Your loving arms. Amen
2. O God, send us forth with a renewed commitment to serve. Renew us with your strength to do our job; with your wisdom to make the right decisions in time of emergency; and with your courage that we may be freed from fear. Keep us in your safety until we are together once again. Amen

## **For a Banquet - Opening Prayer and Grace**

Almighty God, who alone spreads out the universe and kindles the fires in countless stars, confer Your favor and encouragement upon the frail efforts of all to curb the devastation that attends Your people daily throughout the world. To You we commend our security, and in particular the safety of all public guardians, especially these *firefighters/Emergency Medical Technicians* and their families. Support them, O Lord, at their tasks, and keep them alert and skillful in every emergency. Endue them with courage, loyalty and confidence; shield them from the hazards that attend their duties; and grant that they may serve as an honorable safeguard to our communities and as a guarantee of good order to

each of us at all times. And now we ask You to bless for our use these Your good gifts of which we are about to partake, making us truly thankful, and keeping us ever mindful of the needs of others. Amen

### **For a Banquet - Closing Prayer**

Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings by Your most gracious favor, and further us with Your continual help that in all our work begun, continued, and ended in Your Name, we may glorify You; and in particular, we beseech You to continue Your fatherly protection to us this night, now, and on the highways, and when we have returned to our homes. Defend us from all dangers and from the fear of them; that we may enjoy such refreshing rest as may fit us for the duties of the coming day. And grant us the grace always to live in such a state that we may never be afraid to die; so that living and dying, we may serve only You; through the merits of Your Son, in whose Name we offer up these imperfect prayers. Amen

### **A Meal Blessing**

You do not walk a lonely road,  
For God is always near---  
He shares your heartbreak and your pain  
And knows the things you fear.

His hand will guide you safely,  
For His love is always there  
To give you strength and courage  
If you ask for it in prayer.

Let us give thanks for the food we are about to receive.  
Bless it to the nourishment of our bodies,  
And us to Your service. Amen

### **A Benediction**

God keep you in the busy day,  
And in night's lonely hour;  
Though storms may gather 'round thy way,  
Trust His protecting power.

God guide you!  
May his wisdom shine unclouded o'er your soul,  
And lead you by its light divine to the eternal goal.  
Grant us each a safe journey home. Amen

## **Invocations, Benedictions, & Graces**

Oh God, we gather this evening with thankful hearts, mindful of all your gifts to us of a physical and spiritual nature. Help us in the *fire/rescue* service to best use those gifts to meet the needs we encounter within our service, and particularly those needs of the public we serve.

As we dismiss Oh Lord, go with us always, guide our pathway, help us smooth the bumps in the road and always help us present ourselves so those we come in contact with will know we are yours.

Gracious heavenly Father, we thank you for this special occasion when we can share about these tables in fellowship and food.

unsigned

Father, we ask for your presence to be with us tonight. Open our eyes and our hearts that we may see you at work in our world and in our lives. Fill us with your wisdom and keep us safe. Amen

Dear Lord, we pray for your blessings to be upon the lives of the men and women here tonight. Watch over them and keep them safe as they risk their lives to help others. Give them the strength they need for all they will face and fill their hearts with your peace. In the name of your son, Jesus Christ. Amen

Lord we give you thanks for the meal we are about to share. Bless our fellowship around these tables, bless our lives as we serve you by serving others. In Jesus' name. Amen

Chaplain Barrie Lyn Foster

Our heavenly Father we thank you for allowing us to come together here in your name. We pray that all we do is in your name and for all the good of all here.

Our heavenly Father we thank you for allowing us to be here tonight. We pray that the decisions we made will help not only us but those we serve.

Our heavenly Father we thank you for allowing us to come together here in your name. We pray that you will bless this food we are about to receive. We pray that it will nourish our bodies so that we will be able to do your will. Amen

Unsigned

Loving God, we are gathered here this evening. We thank you for the opportunity to be together in fellowship. We remember those who cannot be with us because of illness or distance please bless our time together and help us to focus on the task at hand. Thank you Lord for our name of the organization and our work. Be with us this day and everyday. In Jesus name. Amen

Fellow *firefighters/Emergency Medical Technicians*, go in peace to love and serve the Lord and may the grace of our savior, Jesus the Christ and the presence and power of God's Holy Spirit be with you this day and every day. In Jesus' name. Amen

Almighty God, We thank you for each and every *firefighter/Emergency Medical Technician* and for the work that you called them to do. We thank you Lord for each one who works in Emergency Services, for all who serve our community, for their caring and sharing.

Lord, the work of a *firefighters/Emergency Medical Technicians* is both dangerous hard and so we ask that you continue to keep our *firefighters/Emergency Medical Technicians* safe. Guard them from all harm. We thank you for the sacrifices they make for our community, for the hours of training for the missed meals and family event, for sleepless nights. We know that their work takes them away from their families and so we ask Lord that you bless their families as they wait for their loved one's safe return. Lord we thank you tonight for those who have served name of the organization and the community. We pray your blessings upon those who are retired and those who are ill. We also remember those who are no longer with us. Almighty God we ask that you bless all who serve with courage, perseverance and determination, and we pray these things in Jesus' name.

Gracious God, How thankful we are for all you have given us. We ask you special blessings at this time upon all who are gathered here this evening. We ask that you bless our food and bless us to your service.

Rev. Cynthia Huling Hummel

Let us pray; Our dear Lord we ask that you would bless this organization. We would ask that you would honor this time we have together for this special time. Be with us now in Jesus' name we pray. Amen

Let us pray; Lord we pray that you would bless our time we have had together. Now we ask that you would be with us as we end this time and travel to our homes of abode. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen

Father, we would ask that you would bless this food we are about to receive. Bless the hands that prepared it and bless it to our use. In Jesus' name. Amen

Chaplain Don Elthorp

Let us pray; Dear Lord, thank you for bringing us together, guide us in this meeting to be mindful of our members and our community, help us to make good decisions remember those families who have lost a loved one, be with them at this time. All this we ask in your name. Amen

Lord thank you for all that you have done. Bless us now as we go forth to do your work, bless our families and friends as we continue to do your work. Amen

Dear Lord, thank you for the food we are about to receive. Guide us and protect us as we go to our respective homes, protect us as we continue to do your work. Amen

Unsigned

Dear Lord, we thank you for attending this meeting of the name of the organization. We ask that you be with all the officers and members as they make decisions that will affect us all now and in the future. We also ask that we all return from all our calls to our families. We ask this prayer in all faith for the families and all firefighters.

Thank you dear Lord for being with us this day. We thank you for your aid and guidance this evening. Please be with those who could not be here with us this evening. Allow us safe passage to our homes. Till we meet again, we ask this prayer in faith for the families and all firefighters.

Thank you dear Lord for this bounty of food given by your hand. Bless those that have cooked and those the serve. We ask this prayer in faith for the families and all firefighters.

Unsigned

Gracious God, we thank you for this day and for this opportunity to gather to celebrate your love as it has been shown to us through your servants. We thank you for all members of name of the organization, for their dedication to the organization and to our community. Bless them and their families. Be with us in our fellowship around the table. Bless the food we will receive and the hands that have prepared it, and keep us always in your love and care. Amen

God of love go with us as we leave this place. May we go filled with your grace, your strength and your love to be servants of justice, safety, and peace in your world. Amen

God, we thank you for this time to gather at table. Bless our time, our laughter and tears. Bless the food we have before us, bless the hands that have prepared it. May it nourish our bodies as your spirit nourishes our souls. Amen

Rev. Michaela St. Marie

O Lord, as we come before you this *day/night* we ask that you bestow upon us your wisdom and guidance. We ask that you lead us and direct us that we may do your will. Bless all those who are not with us. May your light continue to shine upon their lives wherever they may be. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen

Now may the Grace of God our Father, and his Son our Lord Jesus be with us all as we depart. Keep us safe and in your care until we are together again. Amen

Lord we ask that you bless this food for our bodies that we may continue in your service. Bless the hands of those who have prepared this meal and those who serve us our food. We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen

Rev. Mark Perkins

We approach this occasion, O Lord, with an awareness that your Spirit flows through all things. This awareness leads us to humility, and humbly leads us to pray for your help and blessing. Grant to us your peace as we commence these festivities. With thanksgiving for all who serve so that others will have a higher quality of life. Amen

As God led the people of Israel with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, so lead us, Lord, along the pathways of goodness and community. Empower us to do your will at all times, in the name of all that is good, and noble, honest and true. Amen

The provision of food and drink comes to us from your hand, O God. Not only do you provide nourishment, but you also provide enjoyment. With a spirit of gratitude we honor your gifts. We pray that our enjoyment will lead us beyond gratitude to service to those for whom such food is not easily acquired. In the name of He who blesses. Amen

Rev. Dr. W. Kenneth Williams

Heavenly Father, we thank you for seeing us safely to this meeting. We ask you to help guide our officers in the decision making for the good and welfare of our organization.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for a successful meeting. Before we leave we ask for your protection for our men and women in uniform no matter where they are stationed and when we are called to service we pray for your protecting hand. Amen

Heavenly Father, as we prepare to partake of the fruits of Your bounty we have in our thoughts our brothers and sisters who have answered their final alarm. Amen

Chaplain Mike Brown



Gracious and loving God, we have come together to (*state function; i.e. installing officers, honor our departed members, etc.*). We thank you for the opportunity to serve you and our community as members of the *fire/rescue* service. We ask your blessing on this gathering and your continued blessings on our efforts to protect life and property. All this we ask in your name.

This has been an excellent occasion. We thank you, O God, for the time we have spent together. As we go forth to serve as members of the *fire/rescue* service and those who support us, may we go in safety. Bless our families and this community this day and always. Amen

Gracious God, we ask your blessing on this gathering and the food set before us from your bountiful creation. Bless those who grew it, those who have prepared it and those who are serving it. May it nourish our bodies as our time together nourishes our hearts and minds. We ask your blessing on our brothers and sisters *firefighters/Emergency Medical Technicians* who will be responding to the needs of the community as we dine here. May they be safe. Amen

Rev. Thomas E.C. Margrave

Gracious Lord, be with us as we gather to plan for our future. Help us to see the safety issues before we encounter them. Keep us in tune with our community so they feel confident in our abilities to serve. Be with our families as we rush out the door so that they know that you are with us and will see to our safe return home. Amen

Almighty Father of all, quell our souls in this time of loss so that we who leave here this day feel your comforting love with all of us left behind. Amen

Lord of all, we ask your blessing on this food and those who have prepared it. Allow this food to nourish our bodies as your word nourishes our spirit, let this gathering in fellowship continue to gather in your name. Amen

Rev. Joe Auslander

Our Father, who art in Heaven, we ask You to bless this meeting. Endow us with Your Spirit. May all our actions be guided by Your hand that we may be fair and just to all. Bless our *name of the organization* and all our members everywhere. We ask this in your most Holy name.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the privilege of meeting together. We ask Your blessing, care, and protection for all our comrades, now and forever. Amen

Chaplain Israel "Sonny" Cohen

Lord, as we gather here on this night of installation, we turn our thoughts to you. We ask your blessing on all those gathered here and for those who were unable to attend but are here in spirit. As we prepare to install new officers today, we are thankful to those who served faithfully over the past year and we ask your blessing upon those for their sacrificial services to their community.

Lord, as we prepare to close this evening of installation, we ask your blessing on those who have come forward to serve as leaders of our department over the next year. We thank you for their commitment to their department and community. Help us all Lord to support these new officers on the execution of duty. As we depart for this place Lord, grant us all safe travel home until we meet to answer the next alarm. Amen

Lord, we ask your blessing on the food and fellowship we are about to partake in. May it nourish our bodies and our spirit to execute our duties as firefighters. We ask your blessing upon those who have prepared the meal and those who have come to serve us. Amen

Chaplain Eric Bennett

Our heavenly Father, we offer our grateful thanks this day for our families, our wives, our children, our parents, without whose support, we could not function very well as firefighters. We know that our work takes time away from our families. We ask your blessings upon them. When we are away from home we ask your protection for them. May we find strength in your strength being ever mindful of our need for you and each other. Unite our hands in a bond of brotherhood because of our affection and sympathy, for our brothers who are with you now. May we be sensitive to your ever present Spirit as we offer our prayer in your name.

Chaplain Richard Holst

## **Prayers for the Dead**

1. Lord our God, the death of our *brother/sister*, name recalls our human condition and the brevity of our life on earth. But for those who believe in your love death is not the end, nor does it destroy the bonds that you forge in our lives. We share the faith of your Son's disciples and the hope of the children of God. Bring the light of Christ's resurrection to this time of testing and pain as we pray for *name* and for those who love *him/her*, through Christ our Lord. Amen
2. Lord Jesus, our Redeemer, you willingly gave yourself up to death, so that all might be saved and pass from death to life. We humbly ask you to comfort your servants in their grief and to receive name into the arms of your mercy. You alone are the Holy One, you are mercy itself; by dying you unlocked the gates of life for those who believe in you. Pardon *name* *his/her* sins, and grant *him/her* a place of happiness, light, and peace in the kingdom of your glory for ever and ever. Amen
3. Lord God, in whom all find refuge, we appeal to your boundless mercy; grant to the soul of your servant name a kindly welcome, cleansing of sin, release from the chains of death, and entry into everlasting life. Amen
4. God of faithfulness, in your wisdom you have called your servant name out of this world; Release *him/her* from the bonds of sin, and welcome *him/her* into your presence, so that *s/he* may enjoy eternal light and peace and be raised up in glory with all your saints. Amen
5. Lord, in our grief we turn to you. Are you not the God of love who opens your ears to all? Listen to our prayers for your servant name whom you have called out of this world: lead *him/her* to your kingdom of light and peace and count *him/her* among the saints in glory. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen
6. Lord, almighty and eternal God, hear our prayers for your servant name whom you have summoned out of this world. Forgive *his/her* sins and failings and grant *him/her* a place of refreshment, light, and peace. Let *him/her* pass unharmed through the gates of death to dwell with the blessed in light, as you promised to Abraham and his children for ever. Accept name into your safekeeping and on the great Day of Judgment raise *him/her* up with all your saints to inherit your eternal kingdom. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen
7. God of loving kindness, listen favorably to our prayers, strengthen our belief that your Son has risen from the dead and our hope that your servant name, will also rise again. Amen

8. Almighty God and Father, by the mystery of the cross, you have made us strong; by the sacrament of the resurrection you have sealed us as your own. Look kindly upon your servant name now freed from the bonds of mortality, and count *him/her* among your saints in heaven. Amen
9. Into your hand, O Lord, we humbly entrust our *brother/sister* name. In this life you embraced *him/her* with your tender love; deliver *him/her* then into paradise, where there will be no sorrow, no weeping nor pain, but the fullness of peace and joy with your Son and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen
10. Almighty God and Father, it is our certain faith that your Son, who died on the cross, was raised from the dead, the first fruits of all who have fallen asleep. Grant that through this mystery your servant name, who has gone to *his/her* rest in Christ, may share in the joy of his resurrection. Amen
11. God, glory of believers and life of the just, by the death and resurrection of your Son, we are redeemed: have mercy on your servant name, and make *him/her* worthy to share the joys of paradise, for *he/she* believed in the resurrection of the dead. Amen
12. To you, O God, the dead do not die, and in death our life is changed, not ended. Hear our prayers and command the soul of your servant name, to dwell with Abraham, your friend, and be raised at last on the great Day of Judgment. In your mercy cleanse *him/her* of any sin which *s/he* may have committed through human frailty. Amen
13. Lord God, in whom all find refuge, we appeal to your boundless mercy: grant to the soul of your servant name a kindly welcome, cleansing of sin, release from the chains of death, and entry into everlasting life. Amen
14. God of all consolation, open our hearts to your word, so that, listening to it, we may comfort one another, finding light in time of darkness and faith in time of doubt. Amen
15. God, to whom mercy and forgiveness belong, hear our prayers on behalf of your servant name whom you have called out of this world; and because *s/he* put *his/her* hope and trust in you, command that *s/he* be carried safely home to heaven and come to enjoy your eternal reward. Amen
16. God, in whom sinners find mercy and the saints find joy, we pray to you for our *brother/sister* name whose body we honor with Christian burial, that *s/he* may be delivered from the bonds of death. Admit *him/her* to the joyful company of your saints and raise *him/her* on the last day to rejoice in your presence for ever. Amen

## **Auxiliary Prayers**

### **Opening Prayer - Meeting**

1. Almighty God, we beseech You to bless us and all members of the Auxiliary, and to its officers vouchsafe the help and guidance of Your Holy will. Let each and every one of us pray that You are present watching over us, and that all our undertakings are in accordance with Your Holy will. Amen
2. O Lord, we are assembled in Your presence. Help us we beseech You, in the performance of our duty. Be with our absent *sisters/brothers* in their hour of need. Help our *firefighters/Emergency Medical Technicians* and send comfort into the homes of our sick. Help us to do our duty to this Auxiliary and its members. In Your Name we pray. Amen

### **Closing Prayer – Meeting**

1. Almighty God, we have met together in the spirit of friendship and goodwill. As we bring this meeting to a close, may we ask Your Blessing for an even greater future. Bless our homes. May our homes be places where peace and happiness is found and God is recognized. We pray that this meeting has been one of inspiration and uplift, and as we turn our steps homeward, may we feel that it was good to have been here. In Your Name we pray. Amen.
2. With our work done, we again must part. Go your way and may God rest and abide with you all, now and forever more. Amen

### **A Thanksgiving Prayer**

For this new morning with its light, we thank You. For rest and shelter of the night, we thank You. For health and food, for love and friends, for everything Your goodness sends we thank You. Amen

### **A Memorial Prayer**

Almighty God, we thank You for the memory of our friends, for the joys and contributions they made to those who knew them, for the friendship and the useful work their life brought to those for whom they labored. Help us, dear Lord, to do our best all the days of our lives, and to show by what we say and do, that service to others and to You is truly the goal of our lives. Amen

## **For a Funeral**

Our association with name is no more, *her/his* days with us have ended. Let us remember name as one who was a friend. Let our mourning be made lighter by the thought of the happy hours spent with name. Though now gone, *s/he* is not forgotten, nor will it ever be so, while we who were friends yet live.

O God, look upon us who are gathered together because our member has gone from us. Take our fear and our sorrow into Your peace. Teach us to consider that we too must die and until that time let us remain thoughtful in that hope. Amen

## **The Fire Chief's Prayer**

I am called to many duties, Lord, and now I've been called home.

I've had to leave the ones I love to stand before your throne.

I'll not complain, it's not my way, but there are some things I'll ask,

And please, Lord, grant them to me for the loved ones I hold fast.

I dare to ask because I know how you've blessed in the past.

I've learned to trust in your grace, O Lord, that's how I've come this far.

So now, O God, I humbly pray this Fire Chief's prayer.

Bless my spouse and family – so often left alone.

They knew where I was going and trusted you to bring me home.

Well, now I'm home and wait for them – keep them within the faith  
that one day, someday, we'll be together in this place.

And, O dear God, bless the members of my department.

I trained them the best I could.

I tried to do your will with them, and lead them as you would.

I need to know you're with them, Lord, or else how can I stay,

And peacefully enjoy this place of endless day.

This haven, where there is no night, no fire to kill or burn.

I guess that's why it's now my rest, my place, my turn.

And, Lord, be with my community and keep it safe as it can be.

For all its folks are special and very dear to me.

They are all my friends and, by your grace, I served them as best I could.

So hear this Fire Chief's prayer, O Lord, and grant it please. I already knew you would.

Amen

Author unknown.

In memory of all the deceased members of

The Walden Fire Department and Auxiliary

## **The Firefighter's Prayer**

When I am called to duty, God  
Wherever flames may rage,  
Give me strength to save a life  
Whatever be its age.

Help me embrace a little child  
Before it is too late,  
Or save an older person from  
The horror of that fate.

Enable me to be alert,  
To hear the weakest shout,  
And quickly and efficiently  
To put the fire out.

And if, according to my fate,  
I am called to Thee,  
Please bless with your protecting hand  
My friends and family.

## **The Firefighter's 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm**

The Lord is my Chief, he has chosen me to serve  
He leads me to still the fires raging around me.  
He restores my soul to fight even when all seems lost.  
He has prepared for me a place in life,  
Devoted to service, honor, joy, and fellowship.  
He anoints my soul with courage in the presence of my enemy fire.  
Yes, even though I have chosen to walk through life  
In the shadow of death,  
I will fear no fire, for He is with me.  
His strength will comfort me.  
And when life's final alarm for me has sounded  
I will dwell in the station house of the Lord forever. Amen.

This Psalm was originally written by a firefighter from North Tonawanda, NY.  
It was re-written for FASNY and dedicated to its departed firefighters by  
The Rev. Wayne F. Jagow, a member of FASNY's Chaplain's Committee.



## **A Junior Firefighter's Prayer**

My God and Supreme Chief,  
You know I am training as a Junior Firefighter  
So that when I come of age  
I will know how to save someone's life  
Wherever flames may rage.

Help me to embrace a little child  
Before it is too late  
Or save an older person from  
The horror of that fate.

Enable me to be alert to the weakest shout  
And quickly and efficiently  
To put the fire out.

I want to fill my calling and  
To give the best in me,  
To help my every neighbor and  
Protect their property.

And if I am to lose my life  
I know that you are in control,  
And to those who I leave behind,  
Remember me  
When that fire alarm doth toll.

Dedicated to Jake M. Hoeffner  
Captain, Junior Firefighters  
Yaphank Fire Department  
Firematic Services held June 3, 1998

## **EMS Prayer**

As I perform my duty Lord  
Whatever be the call,  
Help to guide and keep me safe  
From dangers big and small.

I want to serve and do my best  
No matter what the scene'  
I pledge to keep my skills refined,  
My judgment quick and keen.

This calling to give of myself  
Most do not understand,  
But I stand ready all the time  
To help my fellow man.

To have the chance to help a child  
Restore his laugh and glee,  
A word of thanks I might not hear,  
But knowing is enough for me.

The praise of men is fine for some,  
But I feel truly blessed,  
That you oh Lord have chosen me  
To serve in EMS

Written by Chaplain Frank Knowler

## **A Memorial Poem**

### **Gone But Not Forgotten**

Friend, when you weep for me  
Remember that it was meant to be  
Lay me down and when you leave  
Remember I'll be at your sleeve  
In every dark and choking hall  
I'll be there as you slowly crawl  
On every roof in driving snow  
I'll hold your coat and you will know  
In cellars hot with searing heat  
At windows where a gate you meet  
In closets where young children hide  
You know I'll be there at your side  
The house from which I now respond  
Is overstaffed with heroes gone  
Those who answered one last bell  
Did the job and did it well  
As firefighters we understand  
That death's a card dealt in our hand  
A card we hope we never play  
But one we hold there anyway  
That card is something we ignore  
As we crawl across a weakened floor  
For we know that we're the only prayer  
For anyone that might be there  
So remember as you wipe your tears  
The joy I knew throughout the years  
As I did the job I loved to do  
I pray that thought will see you through

Author unknown

Read by Sen. Edward Kennedy at the Memorial service  
following the Worcester (MA) tragedy of Dec. 3, 1999

## **Meet Me In The Stairwell**

You say that you will never forget where you were when you heard the news on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, neither will I.

I was on the 100<sup>th</sup> floor in a smoke filled room with a man who called his wife to say "good bye" I held his fingers steady as he dialed the phone. I gave him the peace to say, "Honey, I'm not going to make it, but it's OK... I'm ready to go!"

I was with his wife when he called as she fed breakfast to their children. I held her up as she tried to understand his words and realized that he was not coming home that night.

I was in the stairwell of the 23<sup>rd</sup> floor when a women cried out to me for help. "I have been knocking on your hearts door for 50 years!", I Said, "Of course I will show you the way home... Only believe in me now."

I was at the base of the building with a Priest named Father Mike, ministering to the injured and devastated souls. I took him home to tend my flock and his flock in Heaven. He heard my voice and answered!

I was on all four of those planes, in every seat, and with every prayer. I was with the crew as they were overtaken. I was in the hearts of believers there, comforting and assuring them that their faith saved them.

I was in Texas, Kansas, London. I was standing next to you when you heard the terrible news. Did you sense me there?

I want you to know that I saw every face. I knew every name---- though not all knew me. Some met me for the first time on the 86<sup>th</sup> floor.

Some sought me with their last breath. Some couldn't hear me calling to them through the smoke and the flames; "Come to Me... This Way... Take My hand." Some chose, for the final time to ignore Me. BUT I WAS THERE!

I did not place you in the tower that day, you may not know why, but I do. However, if you were there in that explosive moment of time, would you have reached for me?

September 11<sup>th</sup> was not the end of the journey for you. But someday your journey will end. And I will be there for you as well. "SEEK ME NOW WHY I CAN BE FOUND." Than, at any moment, you know that you are ready to go."

I will be in the stairwell of your final moments.

Signed: GOD

## **I Wish You Knew.....**

I wish you could know what it is like to search a burning bedroom for trapped children at 3 AM, flames rolling above your head, your palms and knees burning as you crawl, the floor sagging under your weight as the kitchen below you burns.

I wish you could comprehend a wife's horror at 6 in the morning as I check her husband of 40 years for a pulse and find none. I start CPR anyway, hoping to bring him back, knowing intuitively it is too late. But wanting his wife and family to know everything possible was done to try to save his life.

I wish you knew the unique smell of burning insulation, the taste of soot-filled mucus, the feeling of intense heat through your turnout gear, the sound of flames crackling, the eeriness of being able to see absolutely nothing in dense smoke-sensations that I've become too familiar with.

I wish you could read my mind as I respond to a building fire "Is this a false alarm or a working fire? How is the building constructed? What hazards await me this time? Is anyone trapped?"

Or to call, "What is wrong with the patient? Is it minor or life-threatening? Is the caller really in distress or is he waiting for us with a 2x4 or a gun?"

I wish you could be in the emergency room as a doctor pronounces dead the beautiful five-year old girl that I have been trying to save during the past 25 minutes, who will never go on her first date or say the words, "I Love you mommy" again.

I wish you could know the frustration I feel in the cab of the engine, squad or my personal vehicle, the driver with his foot pressing down hard on the pedal, my arm tugging again and again at the air horn chain, as you fail to yield the right-of-way at an intersection or in traffic. When you need us however, your first comment upon our arrival will be, "It took you forever to get here!"

I wish you could know my thoughts as I help extricate a girl of teenage years from the remains of her automobile. "What if this was my daughter, sister, my girlfriend or a friend? What were her parent's reaction going to be when they opened the door to find a police officer with hat in hand?"

I wish you could know how it feels to walk in the back door and greet my parents and family, not having the heart to tell them that I nearly did NOT come back from the last call.

I wish you could know how it feels dispatching officers, firefighters and EMTs out, and our heart drops because no one answers back or to here a bone chilling 911 call of a child or wife needing assistance.

I wish you could feel the hurt as people verbally, and sometimes physically, abuse us or belittle what I do, or as they express their attitudes of "It will never happen to me."

I wish you could realize the physical, emotional and mental drain or missed meals, lost sleep and forgone social activities, in addition to all the tragedy my eyes have seen.

I wish you could know the joy of working with other fire and EMS personnel, and the self-satisfaction of helping save a life or preserving someone's property, or being able to be there in time of crisis, or creating order from total chaos.

I wish you could understand what it feels like to have a little boy tugging at your arm and asking, "Is Mommy okay?" Not even being able to look in his eyes without tears from your own and not knowing what to say. Or to have to hold back a long time friend who watches his buddy having CPR done on him as they take him away in the Medic Unit. You know all along he did not have his seat belt on. A sensation that I have become too familiar with.

Unless you have lived with this kind of life, you will never truly understand or appreciate who I am, we are, or what our job really means to us...I wish you could though.

### **The Dash**

I read of a man who stood to speak at the funeral of his friend.

He referred to the dates on her tombstone from the beginning . . . to the end.

He noted that first came the date of Her birth and spoke of the second with tears, but he said that what mattered most of all was the dash between - those years.

For that dash represents all the time the she had spent alive on earth, and now only those who loved her, know what that little line is worth.

For it matters not, how much we own; the cars, the house, the cash. What matters is how we live and love and how we spend our dash.

So think about this long and hard, are there things you'd like to change?

For you never know how much time is left. (You could be at "dash mid-range.")

If we could just slow down enough to consider what's true and what's real, and always try to understand the way other people feel.

And . . . be less quick to anger, and show appreciation more and love the people in our lives like we've never loved before.

If we treat each other with respect, and more often wear a smile, remembering that this special dash might only last a little while.

So, when your eulogy is being read with your life's actions to rehash . . .

Would you be pleased with the things they have to say about how you spent your dash?

## If Tomorrow Never Comes

*In memory of all those who perished; the passengers and the pilots on the United and AA flights and the passengers and crew of flight 93 that crashed in PA. To the workers in the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and all the innocent bystanders and to Port Authority and the Fire and Police Departments of New York City.*

If I knew  
If I knew it would be the last time  
That I'd see you fall asleep,  
I would tuck you in more tightly  
and pray the Lord, your soul to keep.

If I knew it would be the last time  
that I see you walk out the door,  
I would give you a hug and kiss  
and call you back for one more.

If I knew it would be the last time  
I'd hear your voice lifted up in praise,  
I would video tape each action and  
word,  
so I could play them back in later days.

If I knew it would be the last time,  
I could spare an extra minute,  
to stop and say "I love you,"  
instead of assuming you would KNOW I  
do.

If I knew it would be the last time  
I would be there to share your day,  
Well I'm sure you'll have so many more,  
so I can let just this one slip away.

For surely there's always tomorrow  
to make up for an oversight,  
and we'll always get a second chance  
to make everything just right.

There will always be another day to say  
"I love you so,"  
But just in case I might be wrong, and  
today is all I get,  
I'd like to say how much I love you  
and trust you'll never forget.

Tomorrow is not promised to anyone,  
young or old alike,  
Today may be the last chance  
you get to hold your loved one tight.  
So stop waiting for tomorrow,  
And reach out for them today?

For if tomorrow never comes,  
you'll surely regret the day,  
That you didn't take that extra time  
for a smile, a hug, or a kiss  
because you were too busy to grant  
someone,  
their one last wish.

So hold your loved ones close today,  
and whisper in their ear,  
Tell them how much you love them  
and that you'll always hold them dear.

Take time to say "I'm sorry,"  
"Please forgive me," "Thank you," or "It's  
okay."  
And if tomorrow never comes,  
you'll have no regrets about today.

Written by Rev. Jim Van Houten

### **Section III - Ceremonies & Services**

Of the many tasks that chaplains are called on to perform, the most visible activity a chaplain may have is the performing of ceremonies and services. These may range from being called upon to serve as the Installing Officer or as a participant in an Installation Ceremony to blessing of equipment to the most solemn activity the participation in a memorial service.

The information included in this section is meant to be guides and suggestions to assist a chaplain in planning the ceremonies and services. Like much that is in the Chaplain's Manual, they may need to be adapted to the local situation.

In the planning stages for these events, it is also a good idea to practice these ceremonies and services before the actual event. A chaplain will want to be well versed in what s/he will say and do in each of the public rituals. Other members of the department may also wish to review what they are to be doing to enhance the experience of both the participants and the viewing community.

In the services for a deceased member, care must be taken to include and respect the family's wishes. It is also possible that some items may not be able to be done because of personal or religious preferences. Whenever a service is to be held at a house of worship, the religious leader must be included in the planning of the service so that religious traditions are respected.

We pray that these ceremonies and services will be helpful and beneficial to all who participate in them.



## **Installation Ceremonies**

### **1. Long Form**

Installing Officer: Do you accept the office to which you have been elected?  
(Answer: "I Do")

Are you ready to assume the obligation and perform all the duties of your office without reservation?  
(Answer: "I Am")

The Charge: (Optional) That you know the duties of your office is manifested by your election. Devote yourself to these duties, and conduct yourself as an Officer and person of integrity at all times.

Work honestly and faithfully with your fellow Officers. This organization can only function with smoothness and perfection when all is in harmony.

The name of the organization has placed in your custody the welfare of your organization. This was not done on their judgment of your popularity but solely on the basis of your ability to conduct the affairs of your Company, your devotion to duty and your ability to serve in a leadership capacity.

It is universally understood that the purpose of this organization is to protect the people and the real property of this district from the dangers of fire. Further, we are pledged to the protection and preservation of life through efforts in first aid and rescue.

Finally, it is your obligation and responsibility to serve wisely, so that the organization may be strengthened, preserved and continued.

The Pledge: I (state your name) hereby promise that I will perform the duties of the office to which I have been elected, to the best of my ability and for the best interests of name of the organization.

Or

I (name), pledge upon my honor that I will faithfully and to the best of my ability perform the duties of the office to which I have been elected. And I further promise that I will conduct myself as a true and loyal *Firefighter/Emergency Medical Technician* in every way.

Installing Officer: By the authority invested in me as the Installing Officer, I do declare that the officers of the name of the organization have been duly and regularly installed.

Chaplain (name), will you invoke the blessing of Almighty God?

(All stand)

Blessing: (Clergy or Company Chaplain)

God of mercy and compassion, make us understand that everyone whom misfortune has touched, is our neighbor. Help us by Your grace to see that by ministering to them we are really serving You. As they courageously serve You, may we honor and assist them, all of us working together in redemptive charity towards the glorious advent of Your eternal Kingdom, wherein the Prophet has said "Whatsoever you shall do to the least of these my brethren, you will have done to Me". Implant in their hearts the spirit of service and direct them to the cause of their neighbors in their hour of need.

And we especially ask that peace and harmony may prevail in the name of the organization and that prosperity may attend it and every individual member, and finally, O Father, we pray, permit us to assemble around Your throne at the great day, to remain near You forever and ever. Amen.

## 2. Short Form

And now, (name of Installing Officer) will give you the oath of office, (and present you with your badge).

Installing Officer: Please repeat after me: I (give your name) hereby promise that I will perform the duties of the office to which I have been elected to the best of my ability and for the best interests of the name of the organization.

This concludes the installation ceremonies and at this time I congratulate you and wish all of you success during your term of office.

Will you please turn around and face the audience.

(Ladies and Gentlemen), These are the officers of the name of the organization for the year \_\_\_\_.

Prayer (optional): Heavenly Father, we ask Your blessing on the officers of the name of the organization during their term of office, and when decisions are to be made, guide them well. Pour forth Your blessings also on all of us assembled here tonight.

Bring us safely home from this gathering. Amen

## At the Installation of a Chief

Chief (name), I charge you with the honor and responsibility of the name of the organization. You must plan well and wisely, being ever watchful of the lives and safety of your *firefighters/Emergency Medical Technicians* and your townspeople, safeguard their property and render aid when called upon.

Be ever mindful that the science of *fire fighting/healthcare* is always advancing; prepare yourself and your fellow members with that knowledge when made available.

Always conduct yourself as an Officer and a person of integrity. Take no reward or acclaim for a job well done without sharing such with your officers and members. That you have been chosen to be Chief of your company is a singular honor, for many are called but few are chosen.  
May God grant you the wisdom to carry on.

I name, pledge upon my honor that I will faithfully and to the best of my ability perform the duties of the office to which I have been elected. And I further promise that I will conduct myself as a true and loyal *Firefighter/Emergency Medical Technician* in every way.

### **Installation Banquet Invocation**

Lord, we seek Your blessing upon us on this night of installation. The men and women who have gathered here are a testimony to the importance of the occasion. We ask that You will meet with us; inspire us with Your presence and cause the name of the organization to be filled with your Spirit as we eat and fellowship and celebrate together. Amen

### **Auxiliary Installation – Opening Prayer**

Let us pray and look to God for His blessings.  
Almighty God our Heavenly Father, we ask You to grant us Your blessings as we gather here for this evening's installation service. We rejoice that we may always count upon Your favor and upon Your blessed presence. May each officer installed do *his/her* duty to God and to the office they are about to accept. Bless all here present tonight and those that through sickness and sorrow have been kept away. We again ask for Your blessing in Your name. Amen

### **Auxiliary Installation – Closing Prayer**

Dear Heavenly Father, bless our officers installed here tonight. Give them the courage to carry on and make our organization one we can be proud of, Bless our *firefighters/Emergency Medical Technicians* as they do their duty protecting life and property. We ask it all in Your name. Amen

## **Dedications**

### **At a Groundbreaking**

Almighty God, we set apart this land today for a very special purpose. May the building that will rest upon this soil adequately serve the *firefighters/Emergency Medical Technicians* of name of the organization. We ask your continual blessing on the persons who serve here. May they be given wisdom, courage and strength to do their work well and may they be given a sense of responsibility for the people and the property of our community.

Lord we would pray that a light might always shine from this place as a sign of service to those in need. May we always be ready to serve. Finally we dedicate this land to the *firefighters/Emergency Medical Technicians* of the past, present, and future of name of the organization and to the people who live here. In the name of Him who serves us all. Amen.

### **Of a New Station House**

Almighty God, we set apart this building today for a very special purpose. We name this building as a place of service. May it adequately serve the *firefighters/Emergency Medical Technicians* who will work here. May it safely house the equipment of the name of the organization.

We ask your continual blessings on the persons who serve here. May they be given wisdom to do their work well, and may they be given a sense of responsibility for the people and the property of our community.

Lord, we would pray that a light may always shine from this place, indicating our readiness to serve in time of need. We offer, if need be, the light of our lives to those who call upon us. May we always be ready to serve.

Finally, we dedicate this building to the *firefighters/Emergency Medical Technicians* who serve here; to the people who live here; and in the Name of Him who serves all. Amen

### **Opening a Building**

We are here today on this very special occasion, and in Your sight dear Lord, to help celebrate the opening of this new facility. We will always be in debt to those who gave so much time and effort to make this a possibility and reality. This building will be a living testimony to those who have served this organization in the past and to those who will serve it in the future, and in the name of him who serves us all. We ask this in all Your name. Amen

### **Of a New Apparatus**

1. Our Father, we dedicate this *engine, ladder, truck, pumper, ambulance etc.* to the people of our community, We offer our grateful thanks to all those who have made its purchase possible. May their support and encouragement be given recognition by our wise and responsible use of this equipment. May it always be kept in readiness. May it always be in good repair, and always be ready to serve our community. In His Name we pray. Amen
2. Almighty God, we offer our grateful thanks that we have an opportunity to serve our community by serving in the name of the organization. We are especially thankful this day for the opportunity of dedicating a new (apparatus name). We would ask your blessing upon it, and upon the persons who use it. May they be kept in safety, especially in times of danger. May they always have the support of their families. Finally Lord, we dedicate this (apparatus name) to service in our community, and in Your Name. Amen

### **Of a New Ambulance**

Heavenly Father, we thank You for the opportunity to serve You as members of these volunteer ambulances. We pray the You will bless this new ambulance, and that You will watch over the skills of the technicians, drivers, and dispatchers, and that You will show Your great mercy to the patients we carry. We hereby dedicate this ambulance to serve the people of Community in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen

Chaplain John Bennett

## **A Ceremony of Placing New Apparatus into Service**

Chaplain says to the Chief:

“Have these pieces of apparatus been named and christened yet?”

The Chief responds “No.”

The clergy and the Chief proceed to each piece of apparatus and the Department Chaplain says to the Chief: “Name this apparatus”.

After all pieces of apparatus have been named, then the Department Chaplain shall say: “Let God who has begun this good work in you, bring it to fulfillment.”

The Department Chaplain says: “Let us Pray....Blessed art You Lord God of our fathers, King of the Universe, you have called us into service to our community and the people committed to your care. Bless and Consecrate this (apparatus name) to Your honor and glory, and to the service of the name of the organization, and the people and community they serve. Amen.”

Dedicatory Address (designated speaker)

The reading of the 51<sup>st</sup> Psalm:

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge. Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place. Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

During the reading, the apparatus will be christened.

(Optional) *The Chief shall have pre-appointed representative firefighters (2 young people, 2 officers and a veteran firefighter whom the Department wishes to honor) who shall “HOUSE” the apparatus.*

*As the apparatus is “HOUSED”, the lights shall flash, the bells ring, and the sirens blow, and the tones be sounded (about 30 seconds or longer).*

After the sounding, the Department Chaplain will give the Aaronic Prayer:

May the Lord bless and keep you.

May the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you.

May the Lord lift his countenance upon you and grant you peace.

Dismissal: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord and the community committed to our care. Amen

## **Memorial Services**

These services honoring the deceased Firefighter or emergency personnel fall into three categories.

1. At the funeral home for a “wake” or “viewing”.
2. At the funeral or at the graveside.
3. Annual Memorial Services.

These services vary from a short and simple service to a very elaborate service. It is impossible to include all those available.

The official “Suggested Ritual for Memorial Service for Deceased Brother/Sister” seems to be used widely throughout the State, mainly at the wake in the funeral home. Many departments appear in full uniform and following the short service file by the casket and individually salute the departed fellow firefighter, and/or express their respect to the family.

## **Firefighter’s Memorial Hymn**

(Tune: Abide With Me)

In fond remembrance, gathered here today,  
Tribute to pay to comrades passed away:  
Garlands of flowers placed about our dead  
Spring’s brightest blossoms deck their quiet bed.

When duty called, our comrades they would go,  
Never daunted, met the fiery foe,  
May guardian angels o’er them vigil keep  
While they lie resting in eternal sleep

Father, in mercy, guide us on our way,  
Through storm and sunshine to eternal day,  
And when our duty here on earth shall cease,  
May we with them abide in joy and peace.

**Part I: At the Funeral Home for a “Wake” or “Viewing”**

**Suggested Ritual for Memorial Service for Deceased Brother/Sister**

**Presiding Officer:** Brother/Sister Secretary, has the roll of the name of the organization been called?

**Secretary:** The roll has been called and all have answered except *Brother/Sister* name.

**Presiding Officer:** *S/He* has answered the summons of the Creator, and it is with solemn thoughts that we assemble here to pay our tribute and affection to *his/her* memory. *S/He* was a loyal and faithful member of name of the organization, dedicated to the protection and service of our community in any time of need. We rejoice in *his/her* unselfish spirit and devotion to the welfare of all people. *S/He* stood forth a person of character, a beloved *firefighter/Emergency Medical Technician*, and has the high regard of all. No expression of ours can fill this vacant place held in the home and community. We do, however, commend *his/her* friends and loved ones to the loving care of the Creator who “Does All Things Well”. We can no longer be of service to name who served others so well, but in living memory let us here resolve to render a better service in *his/her* name.

**Secretary:** *The secretary shall read a brief history of the deceased’s service record indicating when s/he joined the organization, a listing of any offices held and award received and any other items of note should be stated here.*

**Chaplain:** Let us pray. Almighty God, Father of all, whose love and mercy is limitless; we commend unto You the soul of our *brother/sister* name. We thank You for the example given of the true spirit of greatness which realizes that it is nobler to serve than to be served. We pray that the cause *s/he* served so well may ever inspire us; and when our turn comes to answer Your summons, may we hear from You, as we hope and pray our *brother/sister* has heard, the gracious words “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord. To Your loving care, and gracious provision, we commend all *his/her* loved ones.

O Lord, support each one of us until the shadows of life lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and our work is done. Then in Your Infinite Goodness, Grant us a safe lodging, a holy rest, and peace at last. Amen.

**Presiding Officer:                      The Firefighter’s 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm**

The Lord is my Chief, he has chosen me to serve  
He leads me to still the fires raging around me.  
He restores my soul to fight even when all seems lost.  
He has prepared for me a place in life,  
Devoted to service, honor, joy, and fellowship.



He anoints my soul with courage in the presence of my enemy fire.  
Yes, even though I have chosen to walk through life  
In the shadow of death,  
I will fear no fire, for He is with me.  
His strength will comfort me.  
And when life's final alarm for me has sounded  
I will dwell in the station house of the Lord forever. Amen

**Chaplain: The Firefighter's Prayer or EMS Prayer**

When I am called to duty, God  
Wherever flames may rage,  
Give me strength to save a life  
Whatever be its age.

Help me embrace a little child  
Before it is too late,  
Or save an older person from  
The horror of that fate.

Enable me to be alert,  
To hear the weakest shout,  
And quickly and efficiently  
To put the fire out.

And if, according to my fate,  
I am called to Thee,  
Please bless with your protecting  
hand  
My friends and family.

As I perform my duty Lord  
Whatever be the call,  
Help to guide and keep me safe  
From dangers big and small.

I want to serve and do my best  
No matter what the scene'  
I pledge to keep my skills refined,  
My judgment quick and keen.

This calling to give of myself  
Most do not understand,  
But I stand ready all the time  
To help my fellow man.

To have the chance to help a child  
Restore his laugh and glee,  
A word of thanks I might not hear,  
But knowing is enough for me.

The praise of men is fine for some,  
But I feel truly blessed,  
That you oh Lord have chosen me  
To serve in EMS

**Chaplain:** Join me in reciting the Lord's Prayer.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen

## **A Brief Memorial Service For A Deceased Brother/Sister**

**Presiding Officer:** Brother/Sister Secretary, has the roll been called?

**Secretary:** It has, and all have responded except Brother/Sister name.

**Presiding Officer:** To the family of our *brother/sister* name and members of the name of the organization once again death has taken its toll from our ranks. To our *Brother/Sister* who has answered the last roll call, we are assembled here to pay tribute to *his/her* memory which has been so well earned.

During *his/her* lifetime here, every best effort was given in serving this community in which *s/he* lived, without hope of reward, but rather to make real that which has been written: "To love your neighbor as yourself". We that are left, bow our heads for a moment in tribute to name who has gone before us. The good that has been done will live after *him/her*. The privilege now is ours to labor where *s/he* died, that these efforts may not go for naught, and on this day resolve to carry on with greater effort, the examples of serving that have been set for us. To live and labor so that when the final roll comes it may be said of us: "Well done, Good and Faithful Servant".

**Chaplain:** Closing Prayer and Benediction

## **Ritual Outline For A Deceased Brother/Sister**

Firefighters march in two by two

Presiding Officer calls the assemblage to attention

General Statement by the Presiding Officer

Introductory Prayer or Scripture by the Chaplain

The reading of Scripture:

Words of the Chaplain

General Prayer and Benediction

Firefighters pay respects two by two and file out.

### **General Statement – Firefighter 1**

Recognizing the (number) years of service name has rendered to the name Fire Department and the friendships that have been made over those years, we meet to pay tribute to our departed *brother/sister*. *His/Her* memory will remain with us and *his/her* dedication to the department will serve as an incentive to all of us. We salute name with respect and gratitude.

**Prayer:** Lord, grant name eternal rest and peace in your kingdom. May we who mourn name find comfort for our grief. Allow your blessing of strength to be visited upon each of us and send us forth to do your will as we serve this community as firefighters. Amen

### **General Statement – Firefighter II**

We gather here to present our farewell salute to our friend name, who has served the name Fire Department faithfully for (number) years. Our name Company is lessened by *his/her* death, but we will always be mindful of *his/her* spirit of good will and camaraderie. Let us unite in a prayer of remembrance and appreciation.

**Prayer:** Lord, name had a great capacity for life. *S/He* loved it. *His/Her* hopes and dreams were contagious; all of us have been strengthened by *his/her* own special brand of good humor and fair play. Name gave us a sense of pride in our endeavors and made us aware that being a firefighter was important. May *s/he* find welcome rest in Your presence. Amen

### **General Statement – Firefighter III**

Our gathering is a solemn one. We do not want to say farewell, but we must. Death has claimed one of our finest and we are saddened by the loss of our *brother/sister* name. *His/her* sense of duty and service has meant much to all of us. May *s/he* find rest and peace in God's house.

**Prayer:** Our Father, we look to you for comfort in our sorrow. We are not always as certain as we might be and we would seek Your courage on our journey. May we find strength in Your strength for the days ahead by being ever mindful of our need for You and each other. Unite our hearts in a bond of brotherhood because of our affection and sympathy for name. May we be sensitive to Your ever present Spirit as we go from this place and be aware of Your concern in all circumstances of life. Amen

### **General Statement – Firefighter IV**

Our ranks have been diminished by the death of our friend name. *S/He* has been a part of our lives for so long we cannot imagine *his/her* cheerful personality will no longer be with us. *S/He* was honest and decent and gave so much to the name Fire Department. We salute *his/her* generous, outgoing spirit.

**Prayer:** Our Father, death is a profound mystery to us. The silence of it causes so much pain. But, we pray for Your healing to be at work among us. Renew our trust. Grant us inner fortitude and outward endurance. May we go from weakness to strength in Your word. May the eternal aspects of life take on new meaning for us as we offer our prayer for name in Your name. Amen

### **General Statement – Chief**

When a Chief dies a little of each of us dies with *him/her*. The leadership and example, the outstanding dedication to duty, the performance in crisis situations, the generous acts of bravery and the talent to encourage others will long be in our hearts. Chief name was never too busy to stop and help. Happy to lend a hand, whether it was setting up for a banquet, or putting out a fire. And *s/he* was always supportive of the firefighters who served under *him/her*.

**Prayer:** Lord, renew within each of us a keener sense of commitment for the sake of those who are no longer with us. Chief name has shared our sorrows, our joys, our troubles, our happiness. *S/He* has helped us by words of cheer and understanding, by deeds of kindness and good will. May the unity that comes through the common ties of our fellowship bind us even closer to You and each other as we say farewell to our Chief. Amen

### **General Statement – In the Line of Duty**

The work of the name of the organization was all important to name. It was no ordinary job, it was a way of life. *S/He* saw what had to be done and did it, even though it meant risking *his/her* own life. We meet here with great sorrow and with great pride. People like name remind us all of the dangers and joys that are ours as firefighters. We will think of name and *his/her* courage with gratitude and praise.

**Prayer:** The gift of the life of name humbles us by its greatness. We are touched by the tragedy of its loss. Help us through this experience and restore our faith, so that we may be made stronger by the memory of one who at enormous personal jeopardy thought only of others. May we be worthy of *his/her* sacrifice and return to our tasks with new hope and confidence. For this we pray in Your name. Amen

### **General Statement – Commissioner**

Our hearts are heavy tonight as we pay our final respects to name. *S/He* has lightened our burdens. *S/He* has shown us more creative ways to do our jobs on many occasions. We will miss *him/her*. Skill and integrity were *his/her* outstanding attributes, and *his/her* death affects us deeply. Our department mourns a faithful Commissioner.

**Prayer:** Eternal God, name has been one of us for so many years and we are finding it difficult to say goodbye. Encourage each of us with the words of Christ, “Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world”, until our minds absorb the depth of their meaning and we are enabled to find Your peace which surpasses understanding. May we endeavor to live more faithfully and bravely for Your sake and for the sake of those who are no longer with us. Amen

### **General Statement – Ambulance Driver**

The Ambulance Corps has lost a conscientious member. The name community may not really be aware of name's commitment, but there are many families who can testify to his/her prompt response to their need. Name was more than just an ambulance driver, s/he was concerned about people. Name took all assignments seriously and was good at the work.

**Prayer:** Infinite and Eternal Spirit, we join in a prayer of gratitude and recognition for the life and service of name. We are obligated to name for *his/her* excellence in the performance of *his/her* task. We will cherish *his/her* memory and ask that You fill us with Your benediction as we carry on our work with the name of the organization. Amen

### **General Statement – EMT/Paramedic**

Name took the time to learn about life saving techniques because s/he felt it was vital to know what to do in an emergency. The name of the organization has lost a most valuable member and we have lost a most valuable friend. Name also felt that being a *EMT/Paramedic* was close to being a doctor. S/He had the physician's touch and a quickness of administering first aid that was exciting to watch, for name knew what s/he was doing. S/He was sensitive to the needs of all patients and was compassionate.

**Prayer:** O Great Physician, we come to You with our need for healing. Our spirits are sorrow filled and we seek after your tender remedy for our grief. Perfect in us a steadfast trust in your divine authority and grant us Your calm as we leave name in Your safekeeping. Amen

**Part 2: At the Funeral or at the Graveside**

**Presiding Officer:** *Brother/Sister* Secretary, whose grave is this we are gathered around?

**Secretary:** This is the final resting place of the earthly remains of name of the name of the organization.

**Presiding Officer:** Brothers and Sisters, uncover and give your attention to our Chaplain.

**Chaplain:** Brother and Sister Firefighters, we are gathered together to pay our final respects to name. As we gather by this graveside, we are reminded that the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, in rising from the dead, teaches us that the grave is a symbol of hope for those who believe in Him, remembering always that life is eternal, love is immortal, and death is nothing which limits our earthly sight.

**Presiding Officer:** Sergeant-at-Arms, place the memorial wreath upon this grave.

**Sergeant-at-Arms:** This wreath of remembrance signifies our sorrow at the loss of our *brother/sister*, and is symbolic of the sure and certain hope that we shall meet once again in the eternal land of blessedness to which *s/he* has gone.

**Presiding Officer:** *Brother/Sister* name will never again respond to our roll call. *S/He* has answered the final summons and it is with solemn thoughts that we are assembled here to pay *his/her* memory a public tribute of honor and affection. *S/He* was a loyal member of the name of the organization, whose outstanding and vital purpose is to protect this community in time of need. *S/He* stood forth a beloved *firefighter/Emergency Medical Technician*, who held our regard and friendship. We can be of no further service to *him/her*, except to remember *him/her* in our prayers, that in God's mercy *s/he* may have peace and everlasting joy, and that *s/he* may go from strength to strength in God's Holy Kingdom.

**Chaplain:** Let us join together in reciting the Lord's Prayer.

(All recite the Lord's Prayer)

Almighty God, we remember this day before You Your faithful servant name, and we pray that, having opened to *him/her* the gates of larger life, You will receive *him/her* more and more into Your joyful service: that *s/he* may win, with You and Your servants everywhere, the eternal victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen

(Other prayers may be added as desired.)

**Bugler:** (Plays Taps)

**Presiding Officer:** This concludes the Graveside Service.

## Placing of the Glove Service

*In World War I, a tradition began among the sailors of the United States Navy. When a ship was involved in an engagement and a fire broke out on board the ship, certain sailors were also trained as firefighters. Their job was to protect the ship and contain the fire while the rest of the crew was fighting the enemy. This tradition began as one of these sailor/firefighters lost their lives battling the fire. At the sailor's burial (most often at sea), fellow firefighters on board would come forward, salute and then remove their right glove, place it on the casket, and silently leave.*

*Some fire departments have revived this tradition at funerals for their fellow firefighter. It may be used for a Line of Duty Death or for the death of an active firefighter. The following introduction may be used just before the final salute to introduce this tradition to the family and community.*

**Chaplain:** In honoring our friend name, the members of the name of the organization will remove their glove from their right hand following their final salute. It is first of all the symbol of our HAND of STRENGTH. It stands as a reminder of the years of service working together as firefighters as we have aided those in need.

Secondly, it represents our HAND of FRIENDSHIP. We in the fire service have a special brotherhood, a bond that ties us together. Even if we have seen this friend the day before, you will see us shaking hands in friendship.

And thirdly, it is the HAND of HONOR. That final salute does not end at the graveside. By placing the glove on the casket that salute remains with our friend until we meet again in the courts of Heaven as our Supreme Chief greets us with the words "Well done my good and faithful servant, enter into my rest."

Name is honored for a life well lived,  
Honored for a Race well run,  
Honored with a crown well deserved.

*The graveside service concludes as members of the Fire Department silently come forward, salute the casket, remove their right glove, place it on the casket and leave.*

### **Part 3: Annual Memorial Services**

#### **A Brief Outline**

The following outline is suggested a guide to use for Memorial Services. You may add or subtract items as needed for the local customs.

1. Organ Prelude
2. Processional Hymn
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. National Anthem or "America the Beautiful"
5. A reading (or readings) from the Scriptures
6. Reading of the Necrology (placing of flowers on a Maltese Cross, lightening a candle, and/or tolling of the bell for each name)
7. Memorial Prayer
8. Lord's Prayer
9. Hymn or Musical Selection
10. Memorial Message
11. Benediction
12. Recessional Hymn



## **A Suggested Memorial Service**

**Clergy:** In the spirit of peace and rest for all the dead called to God from the *firefighting/medical* service, we offer this memorial liturgy to give praise and glory to God through our fallen comrades. Before any gift or service is worthy of the Lord, let we ourselves, in the spirit of humility and love, and confident of God's mercy, renew the innocence of our souls and rededicate the purity of our service to God. If we die with Jesus, we shall rise with Him. Let us strive to die to sin and rise to lasting peace of conscience. You call us who are weary and overburdened, through You we find peace and rest; Lord, have mercy.

**All:** Lord, have mercy.

**Clergy:** You are the Savior of all; through You we come to the Father. Christ, have mercy.

**All:** Christ, have mercy.

**Clergy:** You prepare a place of happiness for us; through You we come to our true home in heaven; Lord, have mercy.

**All:** Lord, have mercy.

**Clergy:** Sharing the hope of eternal life through Jesus, we pray for peace for the living and the dead, for all those in the family of the *fire service/medical community*, and we ask our heavenly Father to accept our offering of life and prayer until we are one with our brothers and sisters in the fraternity of the Saints in heaven. Let us pray: Lord Jesus, our Redeemer, you willingly gave yourself up to death so that all people might be saved and pass from death into a new life. Listen to our prayers, look with love on us, your servants, who mourn and pray for their dead brothers and sisters of our community. Lord Jesus, you alone are holy and compassionate; forgive them their sins. By dying you opened the gates of life for those who believe in you; do not let our fellow *firefighters/Emergency Medical Technicians* be parted from you, but by your glorious power give them light, joy and peace in your presence where you live forever and ever.

**All:** Amen

**Chaplain:** A reading from the Prophet Ezekiel (37:12-14)

Therefore, prophecy and say to them: Thus says the Lord God: O my people, I will open your graves and have you rise from them and bring you back to the Lord of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and have you rise from them. O my people: I will put my spirit in you that you may live, and I will settle you upon your land; thus shall you know that I am the Lord. I have promised, and I will do it, says the Lord.

**All:** Thanks be to God.

**Clergy:** Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord; Lord hear my voice in supplication.

**All:** My soul hopes in the Lord.

**Clergy:** If you, O Lord, mark iniquities, Lord, who can stand? But with you is forgiveness, that you may be revered.

**All:** My soul hopes in the Lord.

**Clergy:** I trust in the Lord, my soul trusts in His Word. My soul waits for the Lord more than sentinels wait for the dawn.

**All:** My soul hopes in the Lord.

**Clergy:** More than sentinels wait for the dawn, let Israel wait for the Lord. For with the Lord is kindness and with Him is plenteous redemption, and He will redeem Israel from all their iniquities.

**All:** My soul hopes in the Lord.

**Chaplain:** A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans:

My brothers and sisters, none of us lives as his own master and none of us dies as his own master. While we live we are responsible to the Lord, and when we die, we die as His servants. Both in life and death we are the Lord's. That is why Christ died and came to life again, that He might be the Lord of both the dead and the living. We shall have to appear before the judgment seat of God. It is written, "As surely as I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bend before me and every tongue shall give praise to God". Every one of us will have to give an account of himself to God.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Clergy:** A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John:

Jesus said to his disciples: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Have faith in God and faith in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places; otherwise, how could I have told you that I was going to prepare a place for you? I am indeed going to prepare a place for you, and then I shall come back to take you with me, that where I am you also may be. You know the way that leads where I go." "Lord," said Thomas, "we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus told him: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me."

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**All:** Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Short Talk – Silent Meditation and Reflection

**Clergy:** Now that we have been comforted by God's Holy Word, let us all pray together for our departed comrades in the *fire/medical* service that they be found worthy of the promise of Christ. Let us pray also for ourselves and all Christians who are living witnesses of the Risen Christ and of our victory over sin and death. That God, our Almighty Father, may continue His blessing and protection upon all those in the fire service, that no physical harm may befall them, we pray to the Lord.

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Clergy:** That all those who have died in the *fire/medical* service be not forgotten by the Creator but receive a merciful judgment and rejoice in the company of the Saints where they may find peace in God's kingdom forever, we pray to the Lord.

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Clergy:** For all bereaved relatives and friends, that the families of our firefighters find comfort in the hope of resurrection, we pray to the Lord.

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Clergy:** That the providence of God care for all the dependents of our firefighters who served God and community in the line of duty, we pray to the Lord.

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Clergy:** That the bond of faith and unity that has joined all members together in the *name of the organization* grow and be blessed, we pray to the Lord.

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Clergy:** Father, we entrust our fellow *firefighters/Emergency Medical Technicians*, to whom we have dedicated this service, to your mercy. You loved them greatly in this life and now that they are freed from all its cares, give them happiness and peace forever. You have made us one, O Lord, in prayer and worship. Let the bond of your blessing follow us as we return, each our own way, to serve our communities in the fire service and the souls entrusted to us. Bless the work of all chaplains and may they find satisfaction in their pastoral cares. Welcome into paradise all the souls who have passed away from this vale of tears where there will be no more sorrow, no more weeping or pain, but only peace and joy with Jesus, Your Son, and the Holy Spirit forever and ever. May the souls of all our faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

**Clergy:** As we are all joined by the bond of faith and our dedication to the fire service, let us all join together in the words Jesus taught us to say     **All:** Our Father...

**Blessing:** (Blessing of Aaron-see Prayers for Various Occasions)

**All:** Amen

## **Part 4: Additional Material for Memorial Services**

### **Scripture Readings**

Psalms: 23, 24, 27, 39, 46, 65, 90, 121, 130, 148  
Job 19:23-29  
John 14: 1ff.  
Romans 6:14ff.  
1 Corinthians 13

See Section IV for additional readings

### **Opening Prayers**

1. Into Your hands, Almighty God, we commend our loved ones departed this life. We ask You, Almighty God, Chief of Your earthly fold, to take into Your loving hands the souls of Your servant(s) name[s]. Acknowledge that they are sinners of Your own redemption and children of Your own creation; that having served You in this life, they fail not to serve You in the life to come. And grant that we, following their good examples, may, together with them, obtain that crown which fades not away. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen
2. Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we pause now and put aside our consideration of the business and activities of this world. We turn our attention upon the eternal home where You live. We remember with sadness, but also with pride, the souls of our relatives, friends, and fellow firefighters now with you. They have answered their last alarm, they have caught the last hydrant, laid their last line and climbed their last ladder; all of which they did in their service of You, in helping and loving their neighbor. This faithful performance of their duty has brought credit to the fire service. Comfort their families and friends. Remind us constantly of their honor. Give us grace to follow them safely home to You. Amen
3. Almighty God, we remember before You this day those members of the name of the organization who have passed away while members of this organization, especially name[s]. We are grateful for their leadership, their dedication, and for the sense of individuality that each one of them has given. May the spirit of service which was theirs be ours also as we begin this new year. May we, like them, be satisfied not with mediocrity, but strive for excellence. And finally, Lord, we ask for them the refreshing spirit and strength of your presence; that they may know the joy of being full members in Your kingdom. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen
4. Grant, O Lord, to all who are bereaved, the spirit of faith and courage, that they may have strength to meet the days to come with steadfastness and patience; not sorrowing as those without hope, but in thankful remembrance of Your

goodness in past years, and in the sure expectation of a joyful reunion with those they love; and this we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen

5. Almighty God, our heavenly Father, in whose hands are all Your children; we give You thanks for all our departed members who have served with us and are now at rest. Grant to them Your mercy and the light of Your presence, that the good work which You have begun in them may be perfected; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen
6. Remember Your servant, name, O Lord, according to the favor which You bear unto Your people, and grant that, increasing in knowledge and love of You, *he/she* may go from strength to strength, in the life of perfect service, in Your heavenly kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen
7. O God, our Father, Supreme Chief of all firefighters, have mercy on the soul of name who has answered *his/her* last alarm. May the joys of heaven be *his/hers* forever. Remember *his/her* charitable spirit and service in protecting the lives and property of others. May we be united under Your supreme command in heaven for all eternity. Amen

### Closing Prayers

1. Support each one of us, O Lord, until the shadows of life lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed. Then, in Your Infinite Goodness, grant us a safe lodging, a Holy Rest and Peace at last. Amen
2. Almighty God, source of forgiveness, hope and salvation for all people, hear our prayer. May all our deceased comrades of the *fire/medical* service; indeed all our friends, relatives, and benefactors who have gone from this world come to share Your eternal happiness with all Your saints. In your Holy Name we make this prayer. Amen
3. Lord God, the days allotted to each of us are in Your Fatherly care. Though we are saddened that our brothers and sisters are no longer with us in the *fire/medical* service, we entrust them to You with confidence. May they live on in our memory and in Your presence in the happiness of Your kingdom where You live and reign forever and ever. Amen
4. Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord. And let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen
5. May their souls, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

**Funeral Service Guidelines for**  
**A Jewish Firefighter/Emergency Medical Technician**

1. Normally, a Jewish family buries the deceased the day after death.
2. Find out where the funeral is to take place.
3. If possible, visit the family before the service.
4. Make as many calls to fellow firefighters as possible, giving them the information, or use the county radio communication system (if available).
5. The deceased's family usually holds services in the evening, noted by the Rabbi or the people designate for the family.
6. Members should visit the family of the deceased during the period of mourning, called (Shiva). The period of mourning usually lasts approximately 4 to 7 days after the burial.
7. NO FLOWERS should be sent to the house or the funeral parlor.
8. Usually the organization should send a basket of fruit, or a platter of meats, or something for a meal.
9. When a fellow firefighter visits the family, it is customary to bring with you something sweet: cookies, box of candy, etc. (This is not always necessary.)
10. The organization usually makes a donation to a charity in memory of the fallen personnel.

## **A Jewish Memorial Prayer**

Eternal Father, Creator of the Universe and of All, it is with a feeling of deep sadness and loneliness that we meet today to offer our final respect and tribute to the dearly beloved soul of name who is no longer with us. *His/Her* friendship and radiance warmed many a life and now that we are bereft of *his/her* companionship we feel the void that *his/her* loss has caused us. With resignation, O Lord, we accept Your inscrutable decree. We cannot understand why such sorrow and pain are visited upon those we love nor can we fathom Your infinite purposes. Though we cannot see the eternal effect of Your actions in this world, our faith in You affords us the strength to bear this blow.

As we reflect upon the life of name we discover that in the midst of our grief we have much for which to be thankful. *S/He* lived a full and meaningful life that was dedicated to serving all others. *His/Her* time and labor on behalf of the name of the organization was typical of *his/her* characteristic of unselfishness and love for others. Personal sacrifice was a hallmark of *his/her* being and *s/he* exemplified this trait to the very end. Truly *s/he* was inspired by love of You and love of mankind. *His/Her* life contributed greatly to the safety and security of all and now that *s/he* has been taken from us, we offer to You, O God, our gratitude for giving us a one of *his/her* breadth and action who taught us how we can be better and more useful people in our communities. We valued *his/her* person in life and we shall cherish *his/her* memory in death.

Be with the members of *his/her* family, O Lord, who are bowed with intense grief in this moment. Teach them to emulate the good and noble in the life of their dear departed so that through their deeds and conduct they will reflect glory upon *his/her* name. Strengthen *his/her* (*mate, children, grandchildren, brothers, sisters, parents*), relatives and friends as well as all those who mourn, and send unto them Your sweet consolation. Enable them to lift themselves from the gloom of this dark moment and receive Your comforting presence. May the soul of name be bound up in the bond of the living and may *his/her* memory remain for a blessing. Amen

## **A Jewish Memorial Service**

**Chaplain:** There is a time for everything, all things under the sun. A time to be born and a time to die, A time to laugh and a time to cry, a time to dance and a time to mourn, a time to seek and a time to lose, a time to forget and a time to remember.

This day in sacred convocation, we remember those who gave us life. We remember those who enriched our lives, love beauty, kindness and compassion, thoughtfulness and understanding. We renew our bonds to those who have gone the way of all the earth.

As we reflect upon those whose memory moves us this day, we seek consolation, the strength and insight born of faith.

Reading of Psalm 90: 1-17  
(The Prayer of Moses)

After the reading, people may be invited to share any thoughts.

After all have had the opportunity to speak, ask everyone to say their own silent prayer.  
After a few moments, say:

**Chaplain:** May God forever remember our dear name, who is at *his/her* eternal rest. May *s/he* be at one with the one who is life eternal. May the beauty of *his/her* life shine forevermore and may our lives bring honor to *his/her* memory.

May the source of peace send peace to all who mourn and comfort to all who are bereaved. Amen



## **A Jewish Graveside Service**

**Chaplain:** Let all who are gathered here repeat these words after me, speaking them to the mourners:

May God console you.	<i>May God console you.</i>
May all who mourn	<i>May all who mourn</i>
In Zion and Jerusalem	<i>In Zion and Jerusalem.</i>

**Chaplain:** Early or late, all must answer the summons to return to the source of being, for we lose our hold on life when our time has come as the leaf falls from the bough when its day is done. The deeds of the righteous enrich us all, as the fallen leaf enriches the soil beneath. The dust returns to the earth, the spirit lives on with God.

Like the stars by day, our beloved dead are not seen by mortal eyes. They shine on forever, theirs is eternal peace. Let us be thankful for the companionship that continues in a love stronger than death. Sanctifying the name of God, we honor the memory of name.

The family first and then friends can (if they desire) take a shovel and shovel some dirt onto the grave. This is a sign of respect. When this is complete, the KADDISH is said ending the service.

**Chaplain:** Now to end this service, I shall recite the Kaddish (in English) for all who are here and who are mourning.

Extolled and hallowed is the name of God through the world which he has created and which he governs according to his righteous will. Just as he in all ways and wise are all his decrees. May his kingdom come and his will be done in all the earth. Praised be the Lord of life, the righteous Judge for evermore.

To the departed who we now remember, may peace and bliss be granted in life eternal. May they find grace and mercy before the Lord of heaven and earth. May their souls rejoice in that ineffable good which God has laid up for those who fear him, and may their memory be a blessing unto those who reassure it.

May the Father of peace send peace to all who mourn, and comfort all the bereaved among us. Amen

### **Tribute To A Deceased Firefighter**

We gather this *day/evening* to pay tribute to our deceased comrade name, a faithful servant of the name of the organization who has responded to the last call given by our heavenly commander. *His/Her* company and the entire *fire/medical* service are lessened by *his/her* death, but we will always be mindful of *his/her* spirit of brotherhood and good will.

Let us all remember, "That life is short and time is fleeting: also that it is appointed unto us once to die". And as our comrade served *his/her* tour of duty, and is now called to *his/her* reward, so we too shall someday respond to this same call. Therefore, let us be prepared so that when our call comes, we may be ready.

As Americans true to the faith of our fathers, we turn to God's holy word for help in times such as these, and as its truths are read, may we all, family, firefighters and friends, find comfort and submission to God's will knowing that He does all things best.

"The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. Though I walk through the valley of the shadows of death, I will fear no evil for You are with me. Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

With sorrowing hearts we call to mind, at this solemn time, our beloved one name whom death has removed from our midst. We thank You, O God, for the years which You did grant unto *him/her*, years in which *s/he* brought help, joy and comfort to many a heart. You in Your love gave *him/her* unto us, and You in Your wisdom, has taken *him/her* from us. We think of the time *s/he* moved among us, and shared in our labors, and bestowed *his/her* love and friendship upon us.

Our heavenly Father, commander of our lives, we bow today in submission to Your holy will, and pray that You will give to all of us the sustaining power to say, Your will be done. You have called our comrade of service away from the world's duties to the reward of *his/her* labors; we commit *his/her* soul to You even as we commit *his/her* body to the earth. We pray You to cover *his/her* sins and ours and extend Your loving compassion to all *his/her* family. May Your grace, freely given, be sufficient for all our needs. May we know that sorrow endures for a night, but joy comes in the morning, and may our sorrow be turned into joy through you, O God.

Though slumbering, *s/he* lives in our hearts as a lasting source of inspiration, leading us to good deeds and noble thoughts. In gratitude for all the blessings *s/he* brought to us and to humanity, we dedicate ourselves anew to the sacred tasks that *s/he* bequeathed unto us.

Lord of mercy, bring name under the cover of your wings and let *his/her* soul be bound up in the bond of eternal life. Be You *his/her* possession, and may *his/her* repose be peace.

## **Resolutions for a Deceased Firefighter/Emergency Medical Technician**

### **A Resolution for a Firefighter/Emergency Medical Technician Line of Duty Death**

WHEREAS:

*Firefighter/Emergency Medical Technician name has made the supreme sacrifice, and given *his/her* life in the service of name of the organization, and in the service of this community;*

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED:

That *his/her* loss to our work and fellowship be fully recognized.

That our members offer not only our sympathy but also our support to *his/her* family.

That record of *his/her* service and achievements be made public.

And finally that a copy of this resolution be placed in the minutes of our Association and forwarded to *his/her* family.

### **A Resolution for a Deceased Firefighter/Emergency Medical Technician**

WHEREAS:

*Firefighter/Emergency Medical Technician name has been taken from us. And whereas *s/he* has faithfully served the name of the organization;*

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED:

That the removal of *his/her* life from our fellowship and work will be fully recognized by our members.

That our members express our deep and sincere sympathy to *his/her* family and friends, and that our trust in God give us and them a certainty of hope for life, and for the future.

That a record of *his/her* service and achievements be made public. And finally, that this resolution be placed in the minutes of this department, and that a copy be forwarded to *his/her* family.

## **Section IV – Scripture Readings**

The following scriptures readings are intended to be used as suggested readings during any of the ceremonies that have been presented in this manual. A chaplain is not limited to just these readings, but they are presented as a sample of possibilities.

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The readings from the Apocrypha are from the **New American Bible** Copyright © 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Inc., Washington, DC.

The readings from the Qur'ân (Koran) are translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, 2003 reprint edition published by Islamic Book Service.

We thank these publishers for the ability to reprint the passages.

## **OLD TESTAMENT READINGS**

### **Job 19:23-26**

"Oh, that my words were recorded, that they were written on a scroll, that they were inscribed with an iron tool on lead, or engraved in rock forever! I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God.

### **Ecclesiastes 3:1-8**

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain, a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.

### **Isaiah 25:6-9**

On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine - the best of meats and the finest of wines. On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove his people's disgrace from all the earth. The LORD has spoken. In that day they will say, "Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation."

### **Lamentations 3:22-26**

Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, "The LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait for him." The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD.

### **Habakkuk 3:17-19**

Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior. The Sovereign LORD is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to go on the heights.

## **APOCRYPHA READINGS**

### **2 Maccabees 12:43-46**

Judas, the ruler of Israel, took up a collection among all his soldiers, amounting to two thousand silver drachmas, which he sent to Jerusalem to provide for an expiatory sacrifice. In doing this he acted in a very excellent and noble way, inasmuch as he had the resurrection of the dead in view; or if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again, it would have been useless and foolish to pray for them in death. But if he did this with a view to godliness, it was a holy and pious thought. Thus he made atonement for the dead that they might be freed from this sin.

### **Book of Wisdom 3:1-9**

The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead; and their passing away was thought an affliction and their going forth from us, utter destruction. But they are in peace. For if before men, indeed, they be punished, yet is their hope full of immortality; chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace, he proved them, and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself. In the time of their visitation they shall shine, and shall dart about as sparks through stubble; they shall judge nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord shall be their King forever. Those who trust in him shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love; because grace and mercy are with his holy ones, and his care is with his elect.

### **Book of Wisdom 4:7-15**

The just man, though he dies early, shall be at rest. For the age that is honorable comes not with the passing of time, nor can it be measured in terms of years. Rather, understanding is the hoary crown for men, and an unsullied life, the attainment of old age. He who pleased God was loved; he who lived among sinners was transported – Snatched away, lest wickedness pervert his mind or deceit beguile his soul; For the witchery of paltry things obscures what is right and the whirl of desire transforms the innocent mind. Having become perfect in a short while, he reached the fullness of a long career; for his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he sped him out of the midst of wickedness. But the people saw and did not understand, nor did they take this into account.

## **Sirach 51:1-12**

I give you thanks, O God of my father; I praise you, O God my savior! I will make known your name, refuge of my life; you have been my helper against my adversaries. You have saved me from death, and kept back my body from the pit, From the clutches of the nether world you have snatched my feet; you have delivered me, in your great mercy From the scourge of a slanderous tongue, and from lips that went over to falsehood; From the snare of those who watched for my downfall, and from the power of those who sought my life; From many a danger you have saved me, from flames that hemmed me in on every side; From the midst of unremitting fire, From the deep belly of the nether world; From deceiving lips and painters of lies, from the arrows of dishonest tongues. I was at the point of death, my soul was nearing the depths of the nether world; I turned every way, but there was no one to help me, I looked for one to sustain me, but could find no one. But then I remembered the mercies of the LORD, his kindness through ages past; For he saves those who take refuge in him, and rescues them from every evil. So I raised my voice from the very earth, from the gates of the nether world, my cry. I called out: O Lord, you are my father, you are my champion and my savior; Do not abandon me in time of trouble, in the midst of storms and dangers. I will ever praise your name and be constant in my prayers to you. Thereupon the LORD heard my voice, he listened to my appeal; He saved me from evil of every kind and preserved me in time of trouble. For this reason I thank him and I praise him; I bless the name of the LORD.

## **EPISTLE READINGS**

### **Romans 6:3-9**

Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him.

### **Romans 14:7-9, 10-12**

For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living. You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. It is written: "'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God.'" So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.

### **1 Corinthians 15:51-57**

Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.



## **2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-10**

Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. We live by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

## **Philippians 3:20-21**

But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

## **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.

## **1 John 3:14-16**

We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him. This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

## **Revelation 14:13**

Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them."

## **GOSPEL READINGS**

### **Matthew 5:1-12a**

Now when he saw the crowds, Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven.

### **Matthew 11:25-30**

At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. "All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

### **Mark 16:1-6**

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?" But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him."

### **John 3:16**

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

**Luke 23:33-34a, 39-43**

When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!" But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."

**John 11:17-27**

On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home. "Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" "Yes, Lord," she told him, "I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world."

**John 14:1-6**

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. <sup>4</sup>You know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

**John 16:20-22**

I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.

## **QUR'ÂN READINGS**

### **Surah 1**

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds; Most Gracious, Most Merciful; Master of the Day of Judgement. You do we worship, and Your aid do we seek. Show us the straight way. The way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, those whose portion is not wrath, and who do not go astray.

## **Section V – Suggested Protocol for Fire Department Funerals**

The following materials are three protocol suggestions for Fire Department funerals. The first is written for the Walden Fire Department by Chaplain Jim Van Houten and the second is from the Dix Hills Fire Department written by Chaplain Jim Hanly. We thank both departments for use of their protocols.

The final protocol is a generic version from which both of the previous protocols were based upon which the Federation of Fire Chaplains in conjunction with the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation produced. This material was reprinted with their permission and for which we are extremely grateful.

Although this material is written specifically for firefighters, it can be easily adapted for other organizations.

**We encourage all Fire Departments and EMS Agencies to have a written set of protocols for funerals.** Please feel free use these guidelines in helping to prepare your own set of protocols, appropriate for your department's needs.

# Protocol to be followed in the event of a Line of Duty Death

Rev. Jim Van Houten  
Chaplain  
Walden Fire Department

This protocol will help us in our response to the two following situations:

- A.) In the event of a Serious Injury sustained in the Line of Duty that is or may become, life threatening or cause permanent disability.
- B.) In the event of the Death of any Emergency Service Personal (Firefighter, Fire Police, or EMS) while on duty, performing in their job or other related activities.

This protocol is based on Three Guiding Principles of the Fire Service:

**TRADITION**

**HONOR**

**RESPECT**

A Line Of Duty Death effects everyone in the Surviving Family, all the On-Scene Responders and the Spouses & Families of these On-Scene Responders, all members of your Department including Junior Firefighters and Retired Members, and all the members of Neighboring EMS, Fire Police and Fire Departments; many of which may have been called to the scene because of a Mutual Aid request.

An essential part of this pre-plan is the use of the  
**EMERGENCY CONTACT FORMS**

If these forms are completed by all of our members, than in the case of such an emergency, we will know their exact wishes. We will know who we are to contact as well as all the basic arrangements, which this member desires.

It has been recommended that every Department place in their budget the amount of Five Thousand Dollars; which can be used in the case of a Line of Duty Death. These costs can be covered by an insurance policy, which of course must be purchased in advance. This Internal Resource can be used to cover the costs of food, lodging and transportation for both the surviving family as well as the visiting agencies.





## **ESSENTIAL INFORMATION**

It is essential that all Departments be aware of an additional source of funding called the

### **PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS BENEFITS PROGRAM**

This program was established in 1976, and it provides at present up to \$275,800.00 to the surviving family. Included in this program are educational grants for spouses and their children.

**HOWEVER, an Autopsy must be preformed and the results must be submitted to the PSOB Program.**

The PSOB Program must be contacted at area code 888-744-6513

On Line at [www.usfa.fema.gov/pdf/usfapubs/fa-156.pdf](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/pdf/usfapubs/fa-156.pdf)

Give them a contact persons name and contact information.

List the time, place and date of Line of Duty Death

List Departments name, phone number and address

Give them the deceased's full name

Give them a brief description of the incident.

Request copy of PSOB Fact Sheet.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THE  
DEPARTMENT CHIEF TO HAVE IN HIS OR HER FILE  
IN THE CASE OF A LODD**

**(STRONGLY RECOMMENDED)**

- 1. Statement by the Fire Chief clearly but concisely stating what happened, including events leading up to, or following, the injury to the deceased, signed and notarized.**
- 2. A copy of the Fire Report (“Run Report”) or other document, which clearly shows the activity in which the deceased was injured was an official activity; signed by the Fire Chief and notarized.**
- 3. Copy of the toxicology report (which will include blood and urine analysis), signed by the toxicologist or by the medical examiner’s custodian of records with the medical examiner’s raised seal or notarized to include notary’s raised seal. If such a report was not made, submit a statement to that effect signed by the medical examiner or by the Fire Chief; statement must be notarized.**
- 4. Copy of death certificate with raised seal of the Health Department or the medical examiner.**

**5. If deceased received more than first aid medical treatment, than a statement by the medical personnel/ambulance attendants must be submitted, to include anything administered (e.g., oxygen) and the amount(s); statement must be notarized.**

**6. A copy of hospital records or the physician's report must be submitted also, signed by the custodian of hospital records or by the physician, as applicable; statements must be notarized.**

**7. Certified copy of department's non-profit corporation charter or a copy of the minutes of a local government meeting which show that the local government established the department or encouraged citizens to establish it and function as that area's fire department.**

**The Hometown Heroes Survivors Benefit Act  
Introduced to Congress in 2/26/03 provides for extended  
benefits to any public safety officer who dies as a result of a  
heart attack or stroke, directly linked with the rigors of  
emergency services.**

**HEART ATTACKS & STROKES WILL BE  
QUESTIONED AND MANY WILL BE DENIED!**

**Many Claims have been denied because a direct link could not be made to prove that the call or emergency caused that Public Safety Officer to suffer the attack.**

**Your report must show that in responding to this call that the responder was subjected to physical exertion or stress or strain which went beyond his or her normal Duties. The Key Word is Traumatic Injury!**

**Examples:**

**Traumatic injury” means a wound or condition of the body caused by external force, including injuries inflicted by bullets, explosives, sharp instruments, blunt objects, or other physical blows, chemicals, electricity, climatic conditions, infectious diseases, radiation, and bacteria. Smoke inhalation is considered a traumatic injury and is a substantial factor in a heart related death, if the firefighter’s blood carbon monoxide level is 10% or greater at the onset of his attack; 15% or greater if the individual was a smoker. Other causes include physically aiding in a rescue, lifting heavy weight at the scene, dragging hose lines, lifting ladders, walking or running a distance to reach the scene of the emergency, these are factors which need to be considered.**

**Was your member placed under great emotional stress because they believed they were responding to an urgent call for help?**

**A radio transmission informing the member that there were children trapped, or a victim pinned in a MVA or that a fellow fire fighter might be down.**

**Information such as this will push all of us beyond our limits.**

**An Autopsy must be preformed and it is essential that these Toxicological examinations be completed:**

**The report must clearly state the levels of carbon monoxide and of alcohol, as well as any other finding of substance(s) in our member's blood stream. These levels must show a precise percentage.**

**For example, Blood alcohol level of .089%; or Carbon Monoxide level of .10%.**

**Toxicology reports which state vague or generalized levels, such as "positive for alcohol", "Carbon Monoxide normal", or "Carbon Monoxide less than 10%" could result in claim denial. A precise carbon monoxide level is particularly important to claim eligibility in a heart or stroke related death. It is recommended in such deaths that the medical examiner/coroner be reminded that a precise percentage of carbon monoxide is needed for benefits purposes even though that percentage may fall below "non-injury level". If the medical examiner/coroner is confused by this request, suggest he or she call the PSOB Office to receive further advice.**

**Clearly identify any opinion stated as an opinion. If certain facts are not known, say so. If it is necessary to include circumstantial evidence, do not attempt to draw any conclusions from it in your statement.**

## **PSOB Program Voids:**

**Void in the case of Suicide of the Responder**

**Void if Gross Negligence is determined**

**Void if there was Intentional Misconduct**

**Void if there is evidence of Voluntary substance abuse or intoxication.**

**There are Nine Essential Teams or Personal which Need To Be In Place.**

**I.) YOU MUST ASSEMBLE THE GO TEAM  
AHEAD OF TIME THERE WILL NOT BE TIME  
TO DO THIS AT THE  
ZERO HOUR**

**This will be the team sent by the Department to notify the family of the news of the serious injury or death of a Responder.**

**Time is an important factor, if you delay someone else will contact the family, everyone seems to have a cell phone and the results from this notification can be devastating if not delivered properly.**

**Please Remember this:**

**The delivery of this news will be the Only Time the survivors will hear this. How well the notification is done (with great amounts of dignity, empathy, and honor) will directly impact the survivors' grieving, surviving the event and their eventual recovery and ability to move forward.**

**The Go Team notification will be the beginning of the Grieving Process.**

**There Are Five Classic Steps in This Process**

Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression and Acceptance.

A.) The Go Team must be in place before the Line of Duty Injury or Death occurs, there will not be time to put a team together and train them, at a moments notice.

**THE GO TEAM CAN BE LEAD BY THE CHAPLAIN OR THE CHIEF BUT SHOULD ALSO INCLUDE:**



B.) At least Two other Department Members. If the Chief of the Department, and the Chaplain are Leading the Team than a Member who knows the family, should also be included if at all possible. It can be very helpful to have a female fire fighter on this team as well. All members should be in uniform or wearing Department jackets. The Chaplain should carry their Bible, it gives people a deep sense of comfort when the scriptures are read, and just the sight of a Bible gives them a sense of peace.

### **EMERGENCY CONTACT FORM**

At this time a copy of the Emergency Contact Forms for the deceased Responder should be opened, and this information shared with the Go Team. This information will help to guide the team as to who to contact. It will also inform them of the wishes of this Responder.

### **SUGGESTION**

C.) THE RESPONDERS CLERGY CAN BE INVITED TO GO WITH THE TEAM.

( Their name will be listed on Emergency Contact form)

However, there will not be time to wait for anyone, the Go Team must move quickly and that clergy can join the family at the hospital.

## THE FAMILY LIAISON

II.) One of the Go Team members will assume the duties as the Family Liaison. Their responsibility will be the care of that Responders Family, and they will be the contact for all arrangements.

The Department Member who knows the family can assume this position, aided by the Chaplain. This person must be available 24/7 if the family needs them.

CHIEF, this team member must be switched every two days! The stress and strain of this position can cause both emotional and physical problems. Marriages have been destroyed because of emotional and physical bonds that have been formed in such circumstances!

## LOGISTICS POINT PERSON

III.) The Logistics Point Person takes on the duties of all extended operations on-scene. They are to see to the needs of all personal at the scene, food water etc. This member makes the calls to engage a **CISM TEAM** to handle the immediate emotional needs of our members. A Debriefing should be arranged for all Department Members.

Important: S.O.P. that every Department Member at the Scene MUST ATTEND.

## **HOSPITAL LIAISON**

**IV.)** This member of the team goes to the hospital where Responder has been taken; they should be in uniform there duty is to prepare a Private waiting area for the family.

There should also a private area for members of the Department to meet and support one another. ALL OUR AREA HOSPITALS NOW HAVE A CHAPLAIN; THEY CAN HELP WITH THESE ARRANGEMENTS. The Department Chaplain will accompany the family to the Hospital, once there he will be ministering to the needs of both the **family** as well as the department members.

It might be helpful if the Responders Clergy could be at the Hospital at this time. If this is not possible have Mutual Aid requests a Chaplain from a neighboring Department to join you at the Hospital.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS LIAISON**

**V.)** This person will Immediately call the offices of the PSOB at 1-888-744-6513 and notify them of the death. They must be able to provide up to date information including: The Fire Department name and address. Their name as liaison, they will be the link for the department and deceased family from this time on.

They must provide the phone numbers of the Department as well as for themselves. A fax number is important of PSOB can send the death benefits questionnaire. They must be able to provide the deceased firefighters name, the date of the incident and a brief description of the incident.

This information is vital, please provide as much detail as possible, but do not speculate if the cause of death is not known.

A claim package will be sent to the department, it will include a guidance letter explaining the requirements, a form which the department must complete and submit reporting this Public Safety Officers death, and a form “claim for death benefit” which the surviving spouse must complete and sign. The PSOB liaison will make sure both forms are submitted! The family will need to submit a birth certificate, a marriage license or divorce decree.

A PSOB specialist will receive the package and review its contents; the department liaison will be contacted if more information is needed.

Their findings will be forwarded to the General Counsel who will contact the family directly to either approve or deny the claim.

The Public Safety Officers Liaison can also notify the New York State Compensation Board to file the claim for the firefighter’s family. They have 90 days to file this claim.

In the case of a Line of Duty Death the NYS Workers Compensation Board will pay a one time benefit of \$50,000 dollars, provide \$8,000 dollars towards funeral expenses and provide weekly cash benefit of \$800.00 dollars. College tuition will be paid for at any SUNY college.

## **PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER**

- VI.)** This team member will handle all media contacts and press releases for the Department. They may be asked by the family to be their Spokesperson. They will keep all members of the Department, as well as visiting agencies informed about arrangements.

People want to know details, especially the members of your Department; a Department Web Sight can be used to communicate important information.

**This Officer should be in a Department Uniform during any interviews with the Media Press or Television Reporters, and ALL OF HIS INFORMATION**

## **CISM LIAISON**

- VII.)** This Team member will call in a Local Team and help to set up the first of several counseling sessions. They will provide the CISM Team with a list of all personal who were present at the scene.

**THIS LIST SHOULD BE CORRECT!**

This Team member will help to determine what the Defusing and Debriefing Needs might be in your department.

They will also serve as the inside contact for the CISM Team Leader, aiding them in assessing the long-term mental health of the Department Members.

### **FUNERAL COORDINATOR**

- VIII.)** If you have a Department Member who is a Funeral Director they can serve in this position. If this is not possible choose a member who will work closely with an area Funeral Director helping the family with these final arrangements. Once again, the information which each responder provides on his Emergency Contact Form will serve as a guide in finalizing these arrangements. The Funeral coordinator will be the liaison between the family, the Funeral Home, the Church and the cemetery. He will see that there is an Honor Guard at the Funeral Home, and a Color Guard, Bagpipes or Bugler at the cemetery. He will also see to it that a 5' by 9 ½ 'flag is provided for the casket. They will see to it that the fallen Fighter's gear is displayed at the Station House and that the Honor Guard has Gloves to place on the casket at the internment Services.

In cases of line of duty deaths the Lighthouse Uniform Company will provide any firefighter with a class A uniform at no charge. They can be contacted on line at

[www.lighthouse-uniformco.com](http://www.lighthouse-uniformco.com)

## **VISITING AGENCY CONTACT**

**IX.)** This member will assist in providing for the needs of all the visiting Agencies and Departments who will be

Attending the funeral services. He will arrange for food and lodging for those who require them. It may be necessary to provide a staging area for the visiting companies to gather at, and then bus transportation from there to the funeral home or church.

He will coordinate all traffic preparations with the local police, as well as the staging of all Funeral Procession Vehicles. He will also arrange for Mutual Aid Coverage during the Funeral Services with neighboring departments

## **FOR THE CHIEF OF THE DEPARTMENT:**

SINCE STATEMENTS WILL NEED TO BE FILED THE FOLLOWING ARE  
SAMPLES WHICH YOU MAY WISH TO FOLLOW

I believe that sample A must be written and signed and a copy posted as well as given to every department member to cover the department, this should be done right away.

THIS STATEMENT MUST BECOME A PART OF YOUR  
PERMANENT RECORDS OF YOUR DEPARTMENT. IT  
SHOULD BE WRITTEN ON DEPARTMENT STATIONARY  
ANS SIGNED BY THE CHIEF OFFICER.

STANDING ORDER

DEPARTMENT LETTERHEAD

(Date)

I, Chief \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer Fire Department; do order ALL members of this  
department to take appropriate action at ANY time you may be  
involved with any fire or other emergency to which you would  
normally be alerted. I furthermore order all members of this  
department to take appropriate action when and where they see  
need for action within the realm of their training and experience,  
wherever such action may be required. All members of this  
department are directed to attend any and all firematic meetings,  
local, county, or state, and other activities that they are delegated  
to attend as a delegate or member. Travel to and from such  
firematic meetings shall begin and end at the fire station.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Typed: (Name and Title)



**THIS WILL HELP ESPECIALLY IN CASES OF HEART  
ATTACK AND STROKES.**

In cases of a Line of Duty Death the Chief will need to certify a Department run report, the following is a sample of such a statement to forward with the claim.

**RUN REPORT**

**DEPARTMENT LETTERHEAD**

**(Date)**

**I certify that the attached Fire Department (Report) (Run Report) (Fire Report) (or other Title of Document) is an exact and true copy of the original document, which is on file in this department.**

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Typed: (Name and Title)**

**NOTE: This statement must be notarized and include the raised seal of the notary.**

As Chief you will be required to submit clearly and concisely the facts concerning an individual whose injury resulted in death in line of duty. The following is a sample statement which might be helpful to you. The information needs to be concise, sometimes the less written the better.

# **Fire Chief's Statement**

## **DEPARTMENT LETTERHEAD**

**(Date)**

**This is to certify that \_\_\_\_\_ (Name) \_\_\_\_\_, a firefighter of this fire department, died (at) (about) \_\_\_\_\_ (time) \_\_\_\_\_ (am)(pm), on \_\_\_\_\_ (Date) \_\_\_\_\_**

**as the result of injuries received in the line of duty at \_\_\_\_\_ (Time) (am)(pm), \_\_\_\_\_ (Date) \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ (Give the location, town and state) \_\_\_\_\_.**

**Firefighter \_\_\_\_\_ (Name) \_\_\_\_\_ was engaged in (going to) (participating in) (returning from) \_\_\_\_\_ (State what activity & again include location) (use whatever space is required) as required by standing orders of this department.**

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Typed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Name & Title)**

**NOTE: This statement must be notarized and include the raised seal of the notary.**

# HELPFUL INFORMATION

National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

[www.firehero.org](http://www.firehero.org)

Firefighter Autopsy Protocol

[www.usfa.fema.gov/pdf/usfapubs/fa-156.pdf](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/pdf/usfapubs/fa-156.pdf)

International Assn. of Fire Chiefs

[www.ichiefs.org](http://www.ichiefs.org)

**THE FOLLOWING ARE SUGGESTED  
GUIDELINES WHICH CAN BE FOLLOWED  
WHILE CONDUCTING FIRE DEPARTMENT  
FUNERALS.**

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF NOTIFICATION  
FOLLOWING A LINE OF DUTY DEATH**

- 1.) The Go Team will be dispatched to notify the family and the eight other key members or teams will begin their responsibilities as are outlined in the pages above.**
- 2.) The Chief or Designated Officer will notify the Mayor or Township official**
- 3.) After the member's family has been completely notified the Chief or DR will instruct the dispatcher to transmit the following message.**
- 4.) The members who are in Quarters at this time will assemble in company formation and stand at attention to receive the announcement.**

**Attention all Members of the \_\_\_\_\_ Fire Department, or all Members of Battalion Two, Please stand by to receive a message from Chief\_\_\_\_\_ .**

**“It is with deep regret that I as Chief of the \_\_\_\_\_  
Fire Department announce the death of  
(Fire Fighter or Rank, Name, of the \_\_\_\_\_ Fire  
Company) who lost his or her life in the Line of Duty  
while participating in operations of Fire Call  
(Number, Location, Date and Time). All of our prayers  
and sympathy are extended to his or her family at this  
time.**

- 5.) Upon receipt of this message the person on watch shall record this message in the company log book.**
- 6.) With the company standing at attention, the Chief or DR will order a right hand salute, at which time the Station Flag will be lowered to half staff and the front of the station shall be draped with black bunting, which will remain until seven days following the funeral.**
- 7.) A news conference or formal news release should be arranged as soon as possible so that factual information is available for dissemination.**
- 8.) The eight key members or teams outlined above will begin their duties. The Family Liaison and the chief or chaplain will approach the family and offer a Full Firematic Funeral.**

**THEY MAY ACCEPT YOUR OFFER OR REJECT IT,  
THEY ARE IN CHARGE AND THEIR WISHES WILL  
BE FOLLOWED.**

**The wishes of the member killed in the Line of Duty, recorded in the Emergency Contact Forms on file in the Department office can be shared with the family at this time.**

**If the family accepts the offer of a Full Firematic Funeral then this Key person or the Funeral Liaison Team, working with the Chief or DR, will take over and be responsible for the departments involvement in the funeral procedures.**

**9.) The following is a list of Four Types of Funerals which may be requested by the family or next of kin of your member. These services include Line of Duty Deaths as well as the passing of members outside the realm of our firematic duties.**

**A.) A FORMAL FUNERAL**

**This service would involve full honors which would begin at the member's home, formal services at the funeral home, church and cemetery. It would involve the use at least one pumper, active pallbearers, honorary pallbearers, funeral detail, color guard, bag piper, rifle squad, and a bugler. Honor Guard placing their gloves at the cemetery.**

**A Sample Service for your Chaplain to use is included later in this report**

## **A.) SEMI-FORMAL FUNERAL**

**This service includes a Firematic service at the funeral home the night before the funeral. At the church active pallbearers and honorary pallbearers, honor guard and funeral detail at the cemetery.**

**The placing of the glove can still be done, but it may be reserved for Life Members.**

**A Sample of this service are included later in this report.**

## **B.) NON-FORMAL FUNERAL**

**There will be no Firematic involvement at the funeral home, church or cemetery. The members attending would do so in a passive role, either at the viewing or at the church.**

## **C.) PRIVATE FUNERAL**

**In cases such as these the wishes of the family will be honored, and the Fire Company will not participate.**

**To honor a friend and member when the family desires a Private Funeral, a memorial service can be held at the fire station for the members to attend. Prayers and words of remembrance can also be offered at the time of that member's next company meeting.**

- In cases when our member is a Jewish Fire Fighter, this protocol can be followed. Prayers for a Jewish Service will be included later in this summary.**

## **CUSTOMARY FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR A FORMAL FUNERAL**

- 1.) Arrange for an Honor Guard to stand watch during the viewing, a minimum of four should be chosen. They need to be rotated about every twenty minutes.**
- 2.) Arrange for active pallbearers, six plus an officer. Be sure that extra gloves are on the truck.**
- 3.) Arrange for Honorary pallbearers.(Family old friends, company officers, retirees)**
- 4.) Arrange for funeral detail (All uniformed members in attendance)**
- 5.) Arrange for a bugler to play taps, two if possible.**
- 6.) Arrange for a Piper to play the Bag Pipes.**
- 7.) Arrange for a Color Guard and rifle squad.**
- 8.) Obtain an American Flag for the Casket.**
- 9.) Provide all members of the Fire Department with the information necessary to carry out their roles in the funeral.**
- 10.) Survey the area of the funeral services and make provisions for placement of all attending units and provide information for map preparation.**



**11.) Designate an area of assembly for all attending chief officers and dignitaries. ( the funeral home, church, school or fire station)**

**12.) Designate an area of assembly for all other members of the department and visiting firefighters.**

**Note: this area should be a block or two away from the funeral home or church, where ample parking and assembly are available. The group will then march as a unit to the church or funeral home to act as a funeral detail.**

**13.) Obtain sufficient rolls of black plastic tape along With a small round tipped scissors that can be carried in a pocket and made available in the assembly area for all uniformed personnel to place a horizontal black band over the breast badge of all participating officers and personnel.**

**14.) The Officer in Charge will coordinate all Commands during the movement of the casket as prescribed in this directive.**

## **SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR FORMAL FUNERALS**

**a.) A fire department pumper or pumpers in the case of multiple LODD, designated by the Chief, will be appropriately prepared with flowers and black bunting,**

**They will be stripped of hose for use to transport the casket.**

- b.) Arrange for the proper placement of all vehicles that will participate in the funeral procession.**

**NOTE: If a joint service is held and interment will be at two or more locations, separate processions must be established according to guest preference.**

- c.) A map of the areas involved will be prepared to expedite the proceedings and assist out of town guests.**

- d.) THE MAP SHOULD INCLUDE:**

- 1.) Location of Fire Departments**
- 2.) Location of Funeral homes**
- 3.) Location of Church**
- 4.) Location of Chief officer & dignitary assembly area.**
- 5.) Location of firefighter's assembly area.**
- 6.) Location of auxiliary parking area.**
- 7.) Location of hotels for out of town guests.**
- 8.) Location of food areas**
- 9.) Separate map or coding on a single map should designate location of multiple funerals and processions as required.**
- 10.) Any other information which might be necessary.**

- e.) On the map or separate sheet, a copy of the diagram should show the proper arrangement and movement of personnel for various ceremonies and locations as necessary.**

- f.) Arrangement for reproduction of sufficient quantities of the maps and firm commitment on delivery should be established.**
- g.) The Officer in Charge or designated representative will coordinate all commands during the movement of the casket and personnel.**
- h.) Proper arrangement with the police department or fire police should be made to handle traffic and parking at various locations involved and along the funeral procession route.**

**I.) Photography Coverage: A fire department photographer or private photographer should be assigned to cover the funeral.**

**J.) Media Arrangements:**  
**Establish guidelines for radio, Television and Press. at the Church, at the Funeral home**  
**Both inside and outside and at the cemetery.**

**K.) Arrangements for out of town guests**

**1.) Transportation**

- a.) Airports**
- b.) hotels, motels**
- c.) Funeral Services**
- d.) Cemetery**
- e.) Food service area**
- f.) cars can be borrowed or rented**

**2.) Arrange for housing for over night guests as necessary.**

### **3.) Arrange for food service areas**

**a.) for Chief Officers**

**b.) For dignitaries**

**c.) for firefighters**

**Note: Food service may be needed between morning and afternoon funeral services or following funeral services at more than one location. Consider help from Auxiliaries from mutual aid companies or a caterer. Depending on the number of personnel involved in the fatal accident, the number of out of town guests could range from a few hundred to several thousand.**

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS**

- 1.) All members will at all times maintain a clean, pressed, and properly fitted uniform for use at funerals and/or other formal functions.**
- 2.) All off duty members and those on- duty members, upon proper relief from normal duty, should make every effort to honor their fellow members by attending the funeral services.**
- 3.) All members of the fire department shall acquaint themselves with the prescribed courtesies of the fire department's funeral procedures as outlined in this operation guide.**

#### **4.) Honor Guard**

- a.) At least 4 Honor Guard are required.**
- b.) One member of the Honor Guard shall be designated as the Officer of the Guard. He /She shall be responsible for obtaining the necessary equipment( white gloves, black badge bands, etc) And for the scheduling of the Honor Guard members.**
- c.) Two Honor Guards, one for the head and one for the foot of the casket, shall be scheduled at ten minute intervals.**
- d.) Honor Guards' uniforms shall be dress uniform or dark suits, white gloves, black badge bands.**
- e.) Honor Guards shall stand at attention at their assigned positions for the duration of their ten minute tour of duty.**
- f.) Honor Guard may be used during viewings and prior to the service as custom dictates.**

#### **5.) Honorary Pallbearers**

- a.) Those designated as Honorary Pallbearers, usually retirees or members of the deceased's**

**company, shall at all times move ahead of the casket, as it is moved.**

- b.) The Honorary Pallbearers shall sit on the designated side of the church during the service.**
- c.) Dress for Honorary Pallbearers**
  - 1.) Retirees will normally wear proper attire.**
  - 2.) Active members will wear dress uniforms, if the department has them.**

**6.) Active Pallbearers**

- a.) The active pallbearer Detail shall consist of six pallbearers plus an officer.**
- b.) The officer of the detail shall contact the Funeral Director for detailed instructions.**
- c.) The pallbearers will remain covered at all times while acting in that capacity, and shall wear white gloves.**

**NOTE: If the order is given to uncover, it does not ever refer to them. If a prayer is offered, they remain covered. There is never an exception to this rule.**

- c.) The Pallbearers will not salute while acting in this capacity.**

- d.) The Flag shall be placed over the casket  
With the field of blue at the head over the  
deceased's left shoulder.**
- e.) If the casket arrives at the church from the  
funeral home, the pallbearer Detail shall  
position themselves to receive the casket in  
front of the church ( See diagram)**
- f.) During the service the pallbearers will sit on  
the designated side of the church with the  
funeral detail**
- g.) At the cemetery, after placing the casket over  
the gravesite and upon the Officers command ,  
the Detail shall raise the Flag to waist high over  
the casket and hold it there during the  
committal service conducted by the clergy or  
the chaplain. After the committal service is  
read, taps may be sounded. The Flag is than  
folded, upon the Officer's command, in  
prescribed military manner and presented to  
the next of kin.**

## **THE FLAG**

- 1.) Red stands for hardness and valor**
- 2.) White symbolizes hope, purity and innocence.**
- 3.) Blue stands for reverence to God, loyalty,  
vigilance, perseverance and justice.**

- h.) The Detail, on orders of the Officer, shall take their place with the funeral detail, once they rejoin the main Detail they will salute whenever the order is given with the rest of the Detail.**
- i.) During the graveside service, where the flag is not draped over the casket, the Pallbearer Detail, after placing the casket over the gravesite, on orders of the Officer shall step back with the funeral Detail and follow the procedures for the funeral detail.**

## **7.) FUNERAL DETAIL**

- a.) The members of the department, not otherwise detailed, will act as the funeral detail, in dress uniforms, but no gloves are required. They can be worn especially if the gloves are to be placed on the casket following the committal services.**
- b.) The Funeral Detail will arrive as a group from the staging area prior to the arrival of the funeral coach at the church and take position in front of the church, on the right side as indicated in the diagram**
- c.) For formal and semi-formal funerals, the Funeral Detail will take position in front of the**



**church in two facing ranks with senior officers closest to the church.**

- d.) As the Active Pallbearers move the casket from the coach, the Funeral Detail will be called to attention by the Officer in Charge. If the casket is draped with a flag the OIC will order a hand salute as the casket passes. The command shall be, "PRESENT ARMS"! To end the salute the order given will be, "ORDER ARMS!"**
- e.) After the casket passes, the OIC will order, "AT EASE!" and the Funeral Detail will file into the church according to rank and sit in the designated area of the church. Heads will remain covered in the church since we are following military protocol. Heads are uncovered if the clergy requests during a prayer or taking communion. (OIC should ask the clergy in charge for their directive)**
- f.) After the service, the Funeral Detail, on order of the OIC, will file out of the church and, in case of a formal funeral, take position on the right of the entry as indicated on the diagram.**
- g.) At a semi-formal service, the Funeral Detail will form facing ranks on both sides of the entry with senior officers closest to the hearse.**

- h.) As the Flag draped casket is brought out of the church, the detail is brought to attention and a hand salute is executed on the orders of the OIC. If no flag covers the casket, ranks stand at attention.**
- i.) The Funeral Detail rides as a group in designated cars to the cemetery or between the funeral home and the church.**
- j.) The Funeral Detail, at the cemetery, again forms two ranks according rank from the location of the hearse to the gravesite, with officers closest to the grave.(see Diagram)**
- k.) As the Flag draped casket is removed from the hearse by the Active Pallbearers, the Funeral Detail executes a hand salute on the orders of the OIC (“Present Arms!”)**
- l.) They will hold their salute until the order is given by the OIC , (“ OrderArms!”) If the casket is not covered with a Flag, the Funeral Detail stands at attention.**
- m.) After the casket is placed over the grave the Funeral Detail will form two ranks in front of the grave, the highest rank on the right. (See Diagram)**

- n.) If Taps are sounded, uniformed members should execute a hand salute on the order of the OIC. (Present Arms and again Order Arms!)**
- o.) During the religious graveside services, all personnel will bow at the words, "Let Us Pray".**
- p.) All personnel, except the Active Pallbearers, while holding the Flag, will follow the example of the officiating clergy. If he or she uncovers, they will uncover, if they remain covered, the Detail remains covered.**

**NOTE: These procedures and formations are accepted courtesies, they are to act as a guideline only and may be adjusted depending upon existing conditions at the funeral home, church, etc.**

## **INVENTORY OF NECESSARY EQUIPMENT**

- A.) On hand in the fire department stock room.**
  - 1.) Color Guard standards**
  - 2.) Flag for casket**
  - 3.) Black Plastic tape or elastic bands**
  - 4.) Round tipped scissors**
  - 5.) 12 pair of assorted size gloves**
  - 6.) Signs which read,"Fire Department Courtesy car, (Six should be inventoried)**
  - 7.) Black Bunting for Station**

**B.) Where to obtain necessary items:**

- 1.) Flags; locate VFW, local supplier**
- 2.) Color Guard American Legion and VFW**
- 3.) Band Local schools, other local fire departments.**
- 4.) Additional white gloves, Army Navy Store, local supplier.**
- 5.) Additional vehicles: Local car dealer, local rental car agencies (LODD will donate many times)**
- 6.) Signs: local graphic and sign shops**
- 7.) Black Bunting: local supplier.**

**PEOPLE YOU MAY WANT TO CONTACT**

- 1.) State Fire Commissioner**
- 2.) State Public Safety Officers Benefit Program**
- 3.) State Firemen's Association Secretary**
- 4.) Orange County Firemen's Association**
- 5.) Hudson Valley Firemen's Association**
- 6.) FASNY**
- 7.) Federal Public Safety Benefit Program**  
**633 Indiana Ave. N.W. Room 784**  
**Washington, DC. 20531**  
**(202) 376-8799**

# **SUGGESTED MEMORIAL SERVICES FOR DECEASED MEMBERS AT THE FUNERAL HOME**

## **I.) FORMAL SERVICE WHICH CAN BE USED FOR A LIFE MEMBER AN ACTIVE MEMBER OR A MEMBER KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY.**

**President**

Brother Secretary, has the roll of the  
\_\_\_\_\_ Company  
Been called?

**Secretary**

The roll has been called and all have  
answered except Brother/sister \_\_\_\_\_

**Presiding Officer**

\_\_\_\_\_ has answered the summons of the  
Creator, and it is with solemn thoughts  
That we assemble here to pay tribute and  
affection to his memory.  
Tom was a loyal and faithful member of the  
\_\_\_\_\_ Company for \_\_\_\_ years dedicated  
to the protection and service of the Fire  
District of \_\_\_\_\_ in any time of need.

We rejoice in \_\_\_\_\_ unselfish spirit and  
devotion to the welfare of all people. Tom  
stood forth a person of character, a beloved  
firefighter, and fire police officer and a man  
held in high regard by all. No expression of  
ours can fill this vacant place held in the  
home and the fire department. We do,  
however, commend his friends and

loved ones to the loving care of our creator,  
who “Doeth All Things Well”

We can no longer be of service to \_\_\_\_\_ who  
served the fire district so well, but in living  
memory, let us here resolve to render a  
better service in his name.

### **Chaplain’s Prayer**

**Almighty God, Father of all whose love  
and mercy is limitless; we commend unto  
Thee, the soul of our brother/  
sister. \_\_\_\_\_ We thank you for the  
example given of the true spirit of  
greatness, which realized that it is nobler  
to serve than to be served. We pray that  
the cause \_\_\_\_\_ served so well may ever  
inspire us; and when our turn comes to  
answer your summons, that we may hear  
you, as we hope and pray that \_\_\_\_\_  
has heard, those gracious words, “ Well  
done, my good and faithful servant, enter  
now into the joy of the Lord.”**

**To thy loving care, and gracious  
provision, we commend all of \_\_\_\_\_  
loved ones.**

**O Lord, support each one of us until the  
shadows of life lengthen and the evening  
comes, and the busy world is hushed and  
our work is done. Then in your infinite  
goodness, grant us a safe lodging, a holy  
rest, and peace at last. Amen**

**Presiding Officer**

**The Firefighters 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm**

**The Lord is my Chief, He has chosen me to serve.  
He leads me to still the fire raging around me.  
He restores my soul to fight even when all seems lost.  
He has prepared for me a place in life.  
Devoted to service, honor, joy and fellowship.  
He anoints my soul with courage in the presence  
of my enemy, fire.  
Yes, even though I have chosen to walk through life,  
In the shadow of death, I will fear no fire, for He is with me.  
His strength will comfort me.  
And when life's final alarm for me has sounded,  
I will dwell in the stationhouse of the Lord, forever. AMEN**

**Chaplain:**

**THE FIREFIGHTERS PRAYER**

**When I am called to duty, God  
Wherever flames my rage,  
Give me strength to save a life  
Whatever be its age  
Help me to embrace a little child  
Before it is too late,  
Or to save an older person from  
The horror of that fate.**

**Enable me to be alert,  
To hear the weakest shout,  
And Quickly and efficiently,  
Put the fire out.  
And if, according to my fate,  
I am called to Thee,  
Please bless with your protecting hand  
My friends and family.**

**Chaplain:** Join Me in reciting the Lord's Prayer...

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever, Amen**

**NOTE:** The chaplain is free to include any personal thoughts that they wish to during this service

## **II.) BRIEF SERVICE**

**Presiding Officer:** Brother/Sister Secretary has the Roll of the \_\_\_\_\_ Company been called?

**Secretary:** It has, and all have responded Except brother/sister\_\_\_\_\_.

**Presiding Officer:**

**To the family of Brother/sister\_\_\_\_\_ and members the\_\_\_\_\_ Company /department, once again death has taken its toll from our ranks. To our brother/sister who answered the last call, we**



**assemble here to pay tribute to his/her memory which has been so well earned.**

**During his or her lifetime here, every best effort was given in servicing this community in which s/he lived, without hope of reward, but rather to make real that which has been written”to love our neighbor as yourself”. We that are left, bow our heads for a moment in tribute to (name) who has gone before us. The good that has been done will live after him/her. The privilege now is ours to labor where s/he died, that these efforts may not go for naught, and on this day resolve to carry on with greater effort, the examples of serving that have been set for us. To Live and labor so that when the final roll comes it may be said of us, “Well done, Good and Faithful Servant.**

**Chaplain: Closes prayer and benediction.**

## **SERVICE OUTLINE FOR DECEASED FIREFIGHTER**

- 1.) Firefighters march in two by two**
- 2.) Presiding Officer call Assembly to attention**
- 3.) General Statement by Presiding Officer**
- 4.) Introductory Prayer or Scripture by Chaplain**
- 5.) Reading of Scripture:**
  - a.) Psalm 23;Psalm 11, Psalm 107: 1-3,21-22, Psalm 16:2,5-9,11.**
  - b.) I Peter 1:3-9,Romans 14:7-8, I Tim. 6:12-16,2 Cor.5:1-9, I Cor.15:12-22**
- 6.) Words of the Chaplain**
- 7.) General Prayer and Benediction**
- 8.) Firefighters pay respects two by two(file out)**

## **SEMI-FORMAL SERVICE**

**This evening as the roll of the \_\_\_\_\_ Company has been called, all have answered except our brother \_\_\_\_\_.**

**\_\_\_\_\_ has answered the summons of the creator, and with solemn thoughts we assemble here to pay tribute to his memory. \_\_\_\_\_ was a loyal and faithful member of the \_\_\_\_\_ Company, where he served for over \_\_\_\_ years. He was dedicated to the protection and service of the \_\_\_\_\_ Fire Department in any time of need.**

**We rejoice in \_\_\_\_\_ unselfish spirit and devotion to the welfare of all people. \_\_\_\_\_ stood forth as a person of Character, a beloved firefighter and has held the high regard of all. No expression of ours can fill this vacant place held in the home and the Fire Department.**

**But this evening we do commend \_\_\_\_\_ family and friends into the loving care of our Heavenly Father, Who “Doeth All Things Well.”**

**Share Matthew 25:35-36 , When I was hungry, thirsty, naked, sick in any kind of need, you cared for me.**

**When did we see you in need?**

**Because you did these things even to the least of mine, you did them to me, Well done my good and faithful servant, enter now into my peace.**

**Reading of Psalm 23 “wonderful words of peace.”**

**Words of assurance from John 1:1 – 4**

# **A SPECIAL READING OF PSALM 23 for Fire Fighters**

<b>The Lord is my shepherd</b>	<b>“That’s Relationship”</b>
<b>I shall not want</b>	<b>“That’s Supply”</b>
<b>He makes me to lie down in green pastures</b>	<b>“That’s Rest”</b>
<b>He leads me besides still waters</b>	<b>“That’s refreshment”</b>
<b>He Restoreth my Soul</b>	<b>“That’s Healing”</b>
<b>He leads me in the path of righteousness</b>	<b>“That’s Guidance”</b>
<b>For His name’s sake</b>	<b>“That’s Purpose”</b>
<b>Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death</b>	<b>“That’s Challenge”</b>
<b>I will fear no evil</b>	<b>“That’s Assurance”</b>
<b>For thou art with me</b>	<b>“That’s Faithfulness”</b>
<b>Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me</b>	<b>“That’s Shelter”</b>
<b>Thou preparest a table before me</b>	<b>“That’s Hope”</b>
<b>Thou annointest my head with oil</b>	<b>“That’s Consecration”</b>
<b>My cup runneth over</b>	<b>“That’s Abundance”</b>
<b>Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life</b>	<b>“That’s Blessing”</b>
<b>And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord</b>	<b>“That’s Security”</b>
<b>Forever</b>	<b>“That’s Eternity”</b>

# **PRAYERS and POEMS**

## **THE FIRE CHIEF'S PRAYER**

**I am called to many duties, Lord, and now I've been called home. I've had to leave the ones I love to stand before your throne. I'll not complain, it's not my way, but there are some things I'll ask. And please, Lord, grant them to me for the loved ones I hold fast.**

**I dare to ask because I know how you've blessed in the past. I've learned to trust in your grace, O Lord, that's how I've come this far. So now, O God, I humbly pray this Fire Chiefs Prayer. Bless my wife and family--- so often left alone. They knew where I was going and trusted you to bring me home. Well, now I'm home and wait for them---keep them within the faith-- that one day, someday, we'll be together in this place. And O' Dear God, bless my men I trained them the best I could.**

**I tried to do your will with them and lead them as you would. I need to know you're with them, Lord, or else how can I stay and peacefully enjoy this place of endless day. This haven where there is no night, no fire to kill or burn, I guess that's why it's now my rest, my place, my turn. And, Lord, be with my community and keep it safe as it can be for all its folks are special and very dear to me. They are all my friends and by your grace I served them as best I could. So hear this Fire Chief's prayer, O'Lord, and grant it please--- I already knew you would. Amen.**

# **A FIREMAN'S PRAYER**

**Lord, we call upon You for strength and guidance,**

**Look kindly upon us in our needs today.**

**Teach us to always look to You for assistance, as our  
neighbors look to us.**

**Give us courage, and enable us to pass this courage to  
others.**

**Make us studious, and give us pride and joy in our work.  
When the alarm sounds, calling us to duty, give us speed and  
efficiency.**

**As we travel with sirens on, ride with us through the streets  
of our villages, shielding us from danger.**

**On the fire scene, may our officers and men always work as  
an Honorable, Courageous, and Victorious Team.**

**Walk with us through the terror of flame and explosion.**

**May our hearts be always ready, should we be summoned  
before our Eternal Chief, in the midst of our labors.**

**As we work to help our neighbors in need, we dedicate our  
lives humbly to Your praise and glory.**

**In both joy and sorrow, we ask only that You may be  
pleased with our service, and that when the Last Alarm has  
sounded for us, that we may receive our eternal assignment  
with You.**

**AMEN**

# IF TOMORROW NEVER COMES

In memory of all those who perished; the passengers and the pilots on the United Air and AA flights and the passengers and crew of flight 93 that crashed in PA. To the workers in the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and all the innocent bystanders and my friends in the Fire and Police departments of New York.

If I knew  
If I knew it would be the last time  
That I'd see you fall asleep,  
I would tuck you in more tightly  
and pray the Lord, your soul to keep.

If I knew it would be the last time  
that I see you walk out the door,  
I would give you a hug and kiss  
and call you back for one more.

If I knew it would be the last time  
I'd hear your voice lifted up in praise,  
I would video tape each action and word,  
so I could play them back in later days.

If I knew it would be the last time,  
I could spare an extra minute,  
to stop and say "I love you,"  
instead of assuming you would KNOW I do.

If I knew it would be the last time  
I would be there to share your day,  
Well I'm sure you'll have so many more,  
so I can let just this one slip away.

For surely there's always tomorrow  
to make up for an oversight,  
and we'll always get a second chance  
to make everything just right.

There will always be another day to say "I love you so,"  
But just in case I might be wrong, and today is all I get,  
I'd like to say how much I love you  
and trust you'll never forget.

Tomorrow is not promised to anyone,  
young or old alike,  
Today may be the last chance  
you get to hold your loved one tight.  
So stop waiting for tomorrow,  
And reach out for them today?

For if tomorrow never comes,  
you'll surely regret the day,  
That you didn't take that extra time  
for a smile, a hug, or a kiss  
because you were too busy to grant someone,  
their one last wish.

So hold your loved ones close today,  
and whisper in their ear,  
Tell them how much you love them  
and that you'll always hold them dear.

Take time to say "I'm sorry,"  
"Please forgive me," "Thank you," or "It's okay."  
And if tomorrow never comes,  
you'll have no regrets about today.

World Trade Center 9/13/01  
Chaplain Jim Van Houten

# **"Meet Me In The Stairwell"**

**By Rev. Jim Van Houten 9/13/01**

**Written for the families who had lost loved one on Sept.11<sup>th</sup> .I was focusing on the question constantly being asked "Where was God?" This was my answer!**

**You say that you will never forget where you were when you heard the news on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, neither will I.**

**I was on the 100<sup>th</sup> floor in a smoke filled room with a man who called his wife to say "good bye" I held his fingers steady as he dialed the phone. I gave him the peace to say, "Honey, I'm not going to make it, but its OK... I'm ready to go!"**

**I was with his wife when he called as she fed breakfast to their children. I held her up as she tried to understand his words and realized that he was not coming home that night.**

**I was in the stairwell of the 23<sup>rd</sup> floor when a women cried out to me for help. "I have been knocking on your hearts door for 50 years!, I Said, Of course I will show you the way home... Only believe in me now."**

**I was at the base of the building with a Priest named Father Mike, ministering to the injured and devastated souls. I took him home to tend my flock and his flock in Heaven. He heard my voice and answered!**



**I was on all four of those planes, in every seat, and with every prayer. I was with the crew as they were overtaken. I was in the hearts of believers there, comforting and assuring them that their faith saved them.**

**I was in Texas, Kansas, London. I was standing next to you when you heard the terrible news. Did you sense me there?**

**I want you to know that I saw every face. I knew every name---- though not all knew me. Some met me for the first time on the 86<sup>th</sup> floor.**

**Some sought me with their last breath. Some couldn't hear me calling to them through the smoke and the flames; "Come to Me... This Way... Take My hand." Some chose, for the final time to ignore Me. BUT I WAS THERE!**

**I did not place you in the tower that day, you may not know why, but I do. However, if you were there in that explosive moment of time, would you have reached for me?**

**September 11<sup>th</sup> was not the end of the journey for you. But someday your journey will end. And I will be there for you as well. "SEEK ME NOW WHY I CAN BE FOUND." Than, at any moment, you know that you are ready to go."**

**I will be in the stairwell of your final moments.**

**Signed: GOD**

# **THE STORY OF THE MALTESE CROSS**

**The badge of a firemen is the Maltese Cross. The Maltese Cross is a symbol of Protection; a badge of honor;and its story is hundreds of years old.**

**When a courageous band of Crusaders, know as the Knights of St. John, fought the Saracens for possession of the Holy Land. They encountered a new weapon unknown to European warriors. It was a simple, but horrible device of war. The Saracen's weapon was fire.**

**As the Crusaders advanced on the walls of a city, they were struck by glass bombs containing naphtha. When they became saturated with the liquid, the Saracens hurled a flaming torch into their midst. Hundreds of Knights were burned alive; others risked their lives in an effort to save their brothers from painful fiery deaths.**

**Thus these men became our first firemen, and first of a long list of courageous fire fighters. Their heroic efforts were recognized by fellow Crusaders who awarded each hero a badge of Honor...a cross similar to the one fireman wear today. Since the Knights of St. John lived for close to four centuries, on the island of Malts, in the Mediterranean Sea, the Cross came to be known as the Maltese Cross.**

**The Maltese Cross is your symbol of protection. It means that the firemen who wears this cross is willing to lay down his or her life for you, just as the Crusaders sacrificed their lives for their fellow man so many years ago. The Maltese Cross is a firemen's badge of honor, signifying that he works in courage...a ladder rung away from death.**

## **THE DASH:**

**I read of a man who stood to speak at the funeral of his  
friend.**

**He referred to the dates on her tombstone from the  
beginning . . . to the end.**

**He noted that first came the date of Her birth and spoke of  
the second with tears, but he said that what mattered most  
of all was the dash between - those years.**

**For that dash represents all the time the she had spent alive  
on earth, and now only those who loved her, know what that  
little line is worth.**

**For it matters not, how much we own; the cars, the house,  
the cash. What matters is how we live and love and how we  
spend our dash.**

**So think about this long and hard, are there things you'd like  
to change?**

**For you never know how much time is left. (You could be at  
"dash mid-range.")**

**If we could just slow down enough to consider what's true  
and what's real,**

**and always try to understand the way other people feel.**

**And . . . be less quick to anger, and show appreciation more  
and love the people in our lives like we've never loved  
before.**

**If we treat each other with respect, and more often wear a  
smile,**

**remembering that this special dash might only last a little  
while.**

**So, when your eulogy is being read with your life's actions to  
rehash . . .**

**Would you be pleased with the things they have to say about  
how you spent your dash?**



# **MEMORIAL SERVICES**

## **A RACE WELL RUN**

**By Rev. Jim Van Houten**

**During the late 1970's the summer Olympic games were held in Montreal Canada. The news reporters were talking before the 26 mile marathon about a young African runner who would be representing his country, he endured great hardships to get to the Olympics, but was not expected to even place.**

**Shortly after the ran began, the runners were making their way through the streets of the city when a car ran a stop sign and this young runner was hit and knocked to the ground. To bad after all his training that he was not even able to run the race the reporters said! But the reporters were wrong, this young man refused to quit, for hours he could be seen dragging his injured body along the course. Medical aid was offered, but he refused.**

**It was late in the evening when this young runner arrived at the stadium, once inside he had one lap to run around the track, to reach the finish line and complete the race. As he entered the stadium you could see that his strength was gone, he fell to his knees and although he was trying with all his might to get up, the pain was too great. All of a sudden a great cheer could be heard. The races were over for the day, yet people stayed to welcome this fellow and cheer him home about 25,000 people stood to their feet and shouted words of encouragement.**

**He found the strength, got to his feet and finished that last lap, he completed the race! No one could remember who won the gold, silver or bronze medals that Day, The hero of the day was this young man, who against all odds completed the race.**

As we gather here today at this conference, once again the names of many of our friends and brother firemen have been read, an honor roll of those who have completed their race and who have been called home to be with the Lord.

So as we remember them this morning I'd like to share the words of the Apostle Paul, written in 2 Timothy chapter 4 and verses 7 & 8 with you.

**I.) A LIFE WELL LIVED “I have fought the good fight”**

In the Old Testament we read that one day King David was visibly shaken and sad of heart. A close friend, Abner, a loyal commander of his army, and a distinguished hero had been killed. When King David recovered from his shock he turned to his servants and said: "Do you know that a prince and a great man has fallen this day in Israel?" 2 Sam.3:38

Words are poor tools in this hour to express the thoughts which we feel within our hearts with the passing of our loved ones and friends.

The gap is always wide between our love and our words, our feelings and our speech

But in a simple way let us reflect upon a few of the blessings which this hour brings to our hearts and minds.

God has given to us two special gifts for moments like this.

**A.) One gift is memory, that quality which enables us to look back over happy scenes and pleasant memories of yesterday.**

**B.) The other gift is hope, the vision to know that the shining sun is behind the heavy clouds of sorrow and loss which hang over us.**

**What a blessing a memory is! How thankful we are today that we can look back upon a few of the blessings which our loved ones and friends have brought to our lives!**

**Memories of past Conferences, past parades, fire scenes of the past. Times spent together in our company rooms.**

**Its not only fitting, it's important to mention their names, Not just our three friends who died in the line of duty, we certainly do honor them this morning.**

**But we need to remember all of our friends for at the mention of their names, a flood of memories are released.**

**ILL.) In 1962 I joined the Volunteer Fire Department in New Jersey With a close friend of mine named David Neudenburg. Dave enlisted in the army and served in Viet Nam; He was killed in October of 1968 while rescuing a wounded friend. Because his death was caused by an explosion there were no remains sent home. When I first went to the Viet Nam Memorial his name was not in the book.**

This was later corrected by Joel Cook founder of the MIA-POW organization. I returned to visit the Wall 4 years ago. Just seeing his name released tears which I'd been carrying for years. And with this a flood of memories began to pour into my heart and mind, before leaving I said a prayer and then placed our old Fire Company patch below the stone panel where his name is recorded.

A life well lived might be a long life it may be a short life, but it's a life filled with memories which can be passed on to others.

## **II.) A RACE WELL RUN “I have finished the course”.**

It has been said: "Faith grows a Believer, life proves a Believer, suffering confirms a Believer, and death crowns a Believer."

Our loved ones and friends who suffered so patiently, fought so valiantly have finished their course

Their lingering illness's were able to inflict suffering and pain upon their earthly bodies, but the illness could never touch their courageous spirits.

While they were afflicted, they were not crushed.

While they were perplexed, they were not driven to despair.

While Sickness may have struck them down, they were not defeated.



**Our dwelling place here is only temporary.**

**The words of Jesus tell us in John 14 that “In our heavenly Father’s house are many mansions, places prepared for each and everyone of us.”**

**We are not only the sons and daughters of men and women but we are also the children of God.**

**Our race here may not be a prefect one, It might be even filled by mistakes--- I know that my race of life has not been perfect.**

**But notice what the scriptures say is important—it’s finishing the Race. And with God’s help we not only are able to finish, we finish it in style.**

**ILL.) When I started my college career I planned to be a football coach, I loved the game, once upon a time I was very fast on my feet and I had good hands, I loved to play the position of wide receiver. But God had other plans for me!**

**One of my roommates went on to coach a high school team in Waverly, Ohio. He related this story to me. There was a young man named Jake Porter, Jake loved sports and was a member of the Football, basketball, wrestling and Track teams. He was never late for practice, never missed a game---  
- But Jake also never played! You see Jake had Downs Syndrome... he was on the team, but never played.**

**It was the Thanksgiving game and Jake was in his senior year and his coach wanted Jake to at least have a few seconds in the game,**

**If Waverly was way ahead, and they were the best team in the conference, Jake was to go into the game with only a few seconds left, he would get the ball and knee down as time expired, grounding the ball.**

**Well, Waverly was ahead 42 to 0 and so with 5 seconds remaining the coach called a time out. He went out to talk to my friend who was the coach of Waverly, they seemed to be disagreeing, and my friend wanted Jake to score a touchdown, so the Referees jointed the conference. At last the game was ready to continue, Jake was sent onto the field. The ball was snapped and then handed to Jake, who was ready to ground the ball, but instead his teammates shouted Run Jake, Run with the ball.**

**Well Jake did run, but he went in the wrong direction, but one of the referees stopped him, turned him around and sent him in the right direction. Jake ran as fast as he could directly in the entire Waverly team, but instead of tackling Jake the linemen open up a lane and running next to Jake they cheered him on. Twice Jake tripped, but members of both teams helped him regain his balance. Jake scored his first and only touch down, it was the highlight of his life!**

**All the Cheerleaders ran onto the field and cheered Jake, who was being carried on the shoulders of the members of both teams.**

**My friends in the race of life, I know that I'm like Jake Porter, there's been time I was running in the wrong direction.**

But the Lord Jesus stepped in to turn me around. There's been time when the angels cleared the way for me and kept me from falling. Psalm. 91 tells us "He will give his angels charge over us, lest we trip and fall over the stones of life."

With God's help we finish the Race.

**III.) A Crown Well Desired** "In *the Future there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness*"

We all like rewards, but all rewards we receive in this world are left here when we leave.

But this reward is given in Heaven. I'm not sure if these crowns look like fire helmets or not. But there given to all those who finish the race with the Lord.

We have honored our friends here today, by the reading of their names, the placing of the flowers and by the tolling of the bell.

Yet, in our heart of hearts perhaps we wish we could more.

ILL.) I wrote about a friend's funeral in the FASNY magazine and I like to share the story with you this morning in closing.

Last October I was called upon to conduct the funeral service of my friend Ray, who had past away after a brief illness. Ray had encountered some toxic fumes which burned his lungs and later caused his esophagus to rupture.

**Ray was a forty year member of the Totowa Boro Volunteer Fire Department in New Jersey.**

**Following the funeral service we slowly made our way first passing his house, and then passing his station house with his fire gear out side and then on to the cemetery .**

**Following the committal Service at the graveside, as chaplain, I turned to his chief and requested that the last call be given, the flag was folded and presented to his family and taps were played. It was at that time that his company stepped forward to honor Ray with an old tradition, a silent tribute, called "The placing of the Glove."**

**This is an old Navy tradition which began during World War I. All sailors were trained as firefighters, for a fire onboard ship placed everyone's life in danger. In the event that a sailor lost his life battling the flames, he was honored before his burial first by a salute and then by the placing of the gloves from the right hands of the honor guard upon his body.**

**So following this tradition his company stepped forward four men at a time, they came to attention, right hand salute, they then removed their right glove and placed it on his casket, as they marched away, the next four men approached saluted and placed their gloves. It is a very moving tradition to participate in, I can assure you.**

**But as the men were stepping forward these thoughts came to my mind, words which described what I was feeling, words that you might like to include, if you were to honor a member of your company with this Ceremony. Before I closed the service with a Firemen's Prayer I shared these thoughts with his family.**

# **THE PLACING OF THE GLOVE** **SERVICE**

In honoring our friend \_\_\_\_\_ the members of the department removed the glove from the right hand, it's first of all the symbol of our hand of strength It stands as a reminder of the years of service working together as firefighters as we have aided those in need.

Secondly, it represents our hand of friendship. We in the fire service have a special brotherhood a bond that ties us together. Even if we have seen this friend the day before, you will see us shaking hands in friendship.

And thirdly, this is the hand of Honor. That final salute does not end at the grave side, by placing the glove on the casket that salute remains with our friend until we meet again in the courts of Heaven as our Supreme Chief greets us with the words,

"Well done my good and faithful servant, enter into my rest."

Honored for a life well lived  
Honored for a Race well run  
Honored with a crown well deserved

Perhaps you would like to make this a tradition within your respective companies. It can be used at a Line of Duty Death, or at any funeral service of an active firefighter or life member. I concluded my service with this prayer for my friends company. Please feel free to use it as well.

**FIREMEN'S MEMORIAL SERVICE**

**Rev. Jim Van Houten**

**OCTOBER 10, 1999**

**Psalm 91 Verses 10,11&12**

**"No evil will befall you, and no plague will come near your dwelling.**

**He will give his angels charge over you, to guard you in all your ways, they will bear you up in their hands**  
**Lest you strike your foot against a stone"**

**Introduction:**

**It was Nathaniel Boon, Daniel Boon's uncle who was the inventor of the fire extinguisher. During an Indian attack, the roof of his cabin was set on fire. He used the barrel of one of his rifles, placed it in a bucket of water with the cleaning rod down the barrel.**

**When he pulled the rod out it caused a vacuum to occur and the barrel filled with water. He pushed the barrel up through a hole in the roof and pushed the cleaning rod in, the water was forced out through the touch-hole. After several tries the fire was out.**

**As firefighters, we are proud that we protect the homes and property of our neighbors.**

**But it's wonderful to know that the Lord has sent heavenly forces, angels, to watch over us as we respond to the needs of others.**

**It's great to know that they are watching out for us while we are at the fire scene, and that they are watching out for our families while we are away from them.**

**We have no idea how often there is extreme danger waiting around the next corner.**

**Sometimes there will be a time to pray!**

**III.) Dave La Forge is a firefighter in Canada, he was fighting a brush fire in British Columbia, fire changed direction, he was trapped, cut off. He began to pray!**

**Seconds after his prayer a raccoon appeared out of the smoke and began to chatter at him, he got on his hands and knees and followed the raccoon to safety.**

**His prayer was answered!**

**Sometimes we don't have time to pray or we are not aware of the danger!**

**III.) The guys from Nyack fought a tough structure fire at Nyack Missionary College, the college I attended. Old wood frame building, four floors, located on a steep side hill, it was at night, and the wind was blowing off the Hudson river. Not much left of the building, the over haul was completed near day break. There above them on the remains of the burned out beams of the third floor were two piano's, nothing holding them, with firemen walking below them for several hours.**

**Everyone got clear, and seconds later, they crashed to the ground.**

**Great to know that God has given his angel's charge over our care!**

**This is a lifetime promise:**

**We are remembering those of our ranks who have been called home to their final reward today.**

**This psalm concludes with the words" With long life I will satisfy them, and I will show them my salvation"**

**And angelic escort into the courts of heaven.**



**Memorial Service Orange County Volunteer Fireman's  
Association  
Rev. Jim Van Houten, Chaplain**

**HEROES**

**Revelation 7:9, 14-17**

**I'd Like to share a story with you this morning about a fisherman named John Napolii. John was a Volunteer Fireman in one of the small towns outside of San Francisco. John was returning with his catch of fish one foggy morning in 1955. He piloted his boat beneath the Golden Gate Bridge, into San Francisco harbor.**

**It had been the morning of a life time for him, after weeks of little to no fish, John had hit a school and his boat was loaded. The sale of this catch would help him keep his boat.. Which was to be auctioned off by the bank in only three weeks.**

**What he saw next horrified him. There were people everywhere in the water. A hospital ship, The Netherlands, had collided with an oil tanker. People were shouting, "Help me! Save me! I'm drowning!"**

**John Napolii carefully guided his fishing vessel to a cluster of drowning men. Quickly he began to pull them aboard one by one.**

**Soon the small fishing boat was overcrowded. And John Napolii made one of the hardest decisions of his life. He knew that the lives of those men were far more important than his small fortune of fish.**

**Within minutes he dumped his entire cargo of 2,000 pounds of fish, worth thousands of dollars, into the waters**

**of San Francisco Bay and pulled more than 70 people aboard his boat.**

**As far as this firemen was concerned there was something more important than profits--and that was people. In my book, that makes John Napolii a hero.**

**You see Heros are average people who care about others. Frank read about the Good Samaritan A short time ago. He was simply a person who cared!**

**III.)**

**In November of 1966 three soldiers were on patrol when a live grenade was lobbed in their direction. Instinctively a corporal named David Smith who had served in the Speculator Volunteer Fire Department before his service in Viet Nam, threw himself atop the explosive device before it detonated, saving his buddies, but losing his own life in their behalf. The other two men wondered why he would do such a thing for them. Then they recalled something that he had said only a short time before, "You gotta care.**

**"You gotta care." That's what being a hero is all about.**

**I.) IT'S ABOUT PEOPLE WHO CARE.**

**They care more than other people care.**

**That's what makes them heroes.**

**Heroes come in all shapes and sizes.**

**They come in all colors and from every conceivable background. But unlike ordinary people, when the time of testing comes, they do what they have to do simply and solely because they care.**

**You don't make that kind of risk because you draw a paycheck. You don't pay that kind of potential price to move up in the organization.**

**You take that kind of risk because you care.**

**Heroes are people who care.**

## **II.) HERO'S ARE ALSO PEOPLE WHO MAKE TOUGH DECISIONS.**

**The fisherman John Napolii chose to put the lives of his fellow human beings over his own financial well-being.**

**Corporal David Smith chose to sacrifice his own life to save his buddies. These were courageous human beings making tough decisions.**

**Tough decisions are made every day by people who care. They're made in the home, on the job, in government, in health care--in every important area of life.**

**Heroes are not afraid to take a stand. They make tough decisions.**

## **III.) AND HEROES MAKE PAINFUL SACRIFICES.**

**Heroes are committed people who are willing to pay the price of their convictions.**

**There was a time when dreadful battles raged in Scotland. In one of these battles the Marquis of Huntly was captured. His captors demanded that he renounce his loyalty to King James--or else lose his head on the chopping block.**

**It took him no time at all to respond. He was ready. He spoke with firmness:**

**"You can take my head from my shoulders, but you will never take my heart from my king."**

**That is an answer worth remembering: "You can take my head from my shoulders, but you will never take my heart from my king."**

**Our lesson from the book of the Revelation is a picture of Heaven. The language is symbolic but the lesson is real.**

**John sees before the throne of God a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They are wearing white robes and holding palm branches in their hands.**

**Who are these people?**

**They are persons who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore, says John, "God . . . will spread his tent over them. Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the center of the throne will**

**be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."  
(NIV)**

**Who are the people standing before the throne of God?  
They are those who stood  
their ground in the time of testing.**

**They are those who gave their lives for their faith.**

**They are those whose sacrifices made it possible that  
we might gather in the sanctuary  
this day.**

**Who are these people dressed in white robes? They are  
men and women, young and old from every nation and race  
on earth. They are bound by one bond--they sought to walk  
in the footsteps of the Master.**

**And now they reside with God where they will never  
suffer again.**

**Who are these people dressed in white robes?**

**They are people of courage and compassion, people  
who cared more than other people care, who were not  
afraid of tough decisions, who were willing to sacrifice for  
their faith.**

**The question that confronts us this day is, will we be  
among them? How much do we care? How willing are we to  
stand in the hour of testing?**

**The picture we have in the book of Revelation is a  
wonderful vision of the rewards  
that come to those who have patiently waited and  
worshiped and worked for Christ.**

**ILL.)**

**Several years ago, Charlotte Adelsperger was diagnosed with breast cancer. Charlotte was a Volunteer Fire Fighter in her community.**

**During her treatment, she found a common bond existed among cancer patients; these women learned to lean on one another for encouragement. That was twelve years ago. Today a healthy Charlotte runs in local races to raise money for cancer research.**

**In her first event with Race for the Cure, Charlotte recalls how, as she neared the race's end, the announcer called out,**

**"Here comes another survivor. Let's bring her in!"**

**And the crowd's enthusiastic cheers pulled her across the finish line. This is how Charlotte imagines Heaven will be. As each new soul passes from death into eternal life, the saints will stand and cheer them across the finish line. "Here comes another one who persevered. Let's bring her or him in!"**

**What was wonderful picture this is of the Hero's of last September the 11<sup>th</sup>, the Firemen, the Police Officers, The Civilians, the Military at the Pentagon's well as the brave people onboard that plane in Slackville Penn.**

**Hero's. Hero's, everyone.**

**People who care. People who make tough faith-based decisions, people of integrity and courage, people who are willing to make whatever**

**sacrifice is necessary to see God's kingdom established.  
Are you among that number?**

**Can Christ count on you to be a hero of the faith?**

# **No Greater Sacrifice**

**By Rev. Jim Van Houten**

**Chaplain Hudson Valley Firemen's Association**

**Romans 5: 7 & 8**

**Introduction: Story about the elderly mountain climber and guide on the Matter Horn, who was called upon to go up onto the mountain during a fierce storm to rescue a group of novice climbers. He fought his way up for hours and at last reached them, and brought them safely home. But, he was told there was still two more missing, the storm had intensified and the temperature had dropped even lower... But he went after them anyway.**

**He did not return this time and search teams brought his body down a few days later, he had frozen to death in the bitter temperatures. He was buried at the base of the mountain and a stone was placed there with his name and the dates of his birth and death... but no one could agree on the proper epitaph. His close friend Sir Edmond Hilary came to the sight and said inscribe these words "Jacob Coberly" dates of birth & death and then these words "He Died Climbing"**

**He had given his life in an effort to save others**

**He Died Climbing in an effort to reach others who needed to be rescued. These words have inspired hundreds of rescue workers who have visited the site over the years.**



**He fulfilled the words of John gospel chapter 15: and verse 13 where Jesus said" Greater love has no man then this, that a person lay down or risk their life for a friend.**

**This morning I'd like to share some thoughts about the Greatest Sacrifice that anyone can make... the giving of their lives.... No Greater Sacrifice...**

**The apostle Paul writes about such devotion and sacrifice in Romans chapter 5 and verses 7 & 8.**

**I.) Paul begins by saying "For hardly, for a self-righteous person will one die."**

- a.) Self- Righteous people can be difficult to be around**
- b.) Some of them can really get on your nerves, can't they?**
- c.) Some of you are thinking about someone right now that fits this group of people.**
- d.) You would rescue them... but you'd have to think about it first.**
- e.) You know.... Some Times we clergy fit into this group**

**ILL.)**

**Billy Graham told a story about a meeting at a church, which had several speakers, everyone was limited in time. But the first speaker got up and went on and on and on in a**

**self-righteous monotone voice. The Moderator attempted to get his attention several times at last he took the gavel and tossed it at the fellow attempting to hit him on the shoulder to get his attention. But he missed and the gavel went over the speaker and into the audience and it struck a lady in the head as she was sitting in the front row, and it knocked her out.**

**The mediator left the platform to assist her and with the help of two paramedics they revived her. As she opened her eyes she said, "Please hit me again, I can still hear him."**

f.) You know chaplains don't have to be that way; we don't need to be self-righteous. Jesus didn't act in a self-righteous way and we don't need to either.

G.) I'd like to tell you about a friend of mine who as a chaplain showed everyone that we can:

Follow the example of Jesus Christ our supreme chief.

And not be stuffy about it.

ILL.)

My friend's name was Father Mychal Judge, he was a Franciscan priest and he served as a Chaplain in the New York City Fire Department.

Father Mike would go for walks and he'd get lost, because all day long, especially while he walked he would be in prayer for people he knew. He would walk along just talking away to the Lord... Father Mike prayed for everyone!!!

In the last hour of his life he could be seen praying for the firemen and the victims who were dieing. On September the 11<sup>th</sup>.

When the attack occurred I knew that Mychal was going to be there and that it was very serious, little did I realize the extreme magnitude of the situation? Mychal was giving last rights to a fellow fireman, when the Lord called him home to be with him.

### **No Greater Sacrifice... He gave his life for others**

Mychal had written a prayer, which he was famous for:  
Listen To These Words!

**"Lord, take me where you want me to go.  
Let me met who you want me to meet.  
Tell, me what you want me to say.  
And Keep me out of your way!"**

## **II.) Paul speaks again in verse 7"Though for a good person some would even dare to die."**

- a.) Our country has been changed completely over this past year.
- b.) We were a nation void of Hero's and Heroin's, we had been forced to look up to Sports Figures and Movie Stars...And they let our young people down time after time.

c.) When we speak about a Hero or Heroin some people become uncomfortable,

**YOU SEE IT RAISES THE QUESTION  
WHAT WOULD THEY BE WILLING  
TO DIE FOR, AND IN MANY CASES THE  
ANSWER IS NOTHING OR NOBODY**

ILL.) Last August the actor Paul Newman was asked if he was a Hero, No he said, Did he know any Hero's... he thought for awhile and then said,"QUOTE" "I guess my dog Harry is a hero, he's happy most of the time and has never bitten a single person"

d.) Well on September 11<sup>th</sup> that all changed, we saw one of the greatest displays of courage in our nations history.

e.) We witnessed men calling their wives and families to say goodbye before entering those twin towers.

f.) There were Catholic firemen requesting last rights and Protestant fireman requesting a prayer of faith before they went in to rescue as many lives as possible... many of the men and women of the Fire Department, Police Department and Emergency Service Workers knew that they were not going to be coming out.... But they went in anyway.

**YES, FOR GOOD PEOPLE THERE ARE THOSE WHO  
WOULD EVEN DARE TO DIE**

**AND YES, THEY ALL DIED CLIMBING All 343 of them!**

ILL.)

On September 14<sup>th</sup> we found a New Testament which belonged to one of the Fireman in the rubble of the South Tower at ground zero. It was folded open to psalm 23; there was the heavy smugged imprint of a firemen gloved finger on the page. Yes, there were those who entered the building, their faith in the Lord, lifted by the prayers of their comrades and they went to save the lives of others. I was able to get this New Testament back to his widow.

g.) America now looks upon the Men and Women in our Fire Departments, both volunteer as well as Professional with a new sense of Honor and pride... We need to continue to serve them with dedication and pride.

ILL.)

On the evening of September 14<sup>th</sup> I had been offering a prayer at St Paul's Church, I was walking in the cemetery when I noticed a man coming around the corner from the Millennium Hotel. A fireman was asleep on a couple of chairs in that small ally. His helmet was on his stomach and his dust mask was on his chin. This fellow stopped and quietly walked up to him. Now I thought he was going to pick his pockets, and I was ready to yell.

Instead he took the dust mask ever so carefully off his chin and placed it over his mouth. He then went back around the front of the Hotel. He returned again about 5 minutes later with an old blanket, he shook it out, and carefully covered this firemen.

He stepped back, he snapped to attention and saluted him, he must have been an ex-marine. After the salute he disappeared into the night.

**We all need to be sure we set a Good Example!**

**III.) Paul goes on to say, "But God demonstrates his own love to us, In that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."**

- a.) We are reminded that Christ set the perfect example for us to follow; He was willing to give his life for everyone!**
- b.) And just as all these Firemen Died Climbing to save others, so it was that Jesus died on a Cross-, after climbing that hill outside of Jerusalem 2000 years ago. He died for all of our sins.**
- c.) 2000 years later the people of the world still look up to Him because of the way he conducted himself. We need to set a good example to others to follow as well.**
- d.) We all need a strong faith that will help us to serve our communities in even a greater way.**
- e.) So that if we are ever called upon to put our lives on the line we will be able to do so without hesitation, realizing that our Faith in Christ will see us through.**

**ILL.) I'd like to close with this poem**  
**"Meet Me In The Stairwell"**

**You say that you will never forget where you were when you heard the news on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, neither will I.**

**I was on the 100<sup>th</sup> floor in a smoke filled room with a man who called his wife to say "good bye" I held his fingers steady as he dialed the phone. I gave him the peace to say, "Honey, I'm not going to make it, but its OK... I'm ready to go!"**

**I was with his wife when he called as she fed breakfast to their children. I held her up as she tried to understand his words and realized that he was not coming home that night.**

**I was in the stairwell of the 23<sup>rd</sup> floor when a women cried out to me for help. "I have been knocking on your hearts door for 50 years!, I Said, Of course I will show you the way home... Only believe in me now."**

**I was at the base of the building with a Priest named Father Mike, ministering to the injured and devastated souls. I took him home to tend my flock and his flock in Heaven. He heard my voice and answered!**

**I was on all four of those planes, in every seat, and with every prayer. I was with the crew as they were overtaken. I was in the hearts of believers there, comforting and assuring them that their faith saved them.**

**I was in Texas, Kansas, London. I was standing next to you when you heard the terrible news. Did you sense me there?**

**I want you to know that I saw every face. I knew every name---  
- though not all knew me. Some met me for the first time on the  
86<sup>th</sup> floor.**

**Some sought me with their last breath. Some couldn't hear me  
calling to them through the smoke and the flames; "Come to  
Me... This Way... Take  
My hand." Some chose, for the final time to ignore Me. BUT I  
WAS THERE!**

**I did not place you in the tower that day, you may not know  
why, but I do. However, if you were there in that explosive  
moment of time, would you have reached for me?**

**September 11<sup>th</sup> was not the end of the journey for you. But  
someday your journey will end. And I will be there for you as  
well. "SEEK ME NOW WHY I CAN BE FOUND." Than, at any  
moment, you know that you are ready to go."**

**I will be in the stairwell of your final moments.**

**Signed: GOD**



# **Firematic Funeral Service for Ray Putten Vink My Closest Friend**

**By Rev. Jim Van Houten**

## **Introduction:**

**Story about Dr. Charles Reilly, country Doctor who helped everyone, had his office upstairs above the local feed store. One cold winter night the good Doctor was called out to help a lady in child birth. The Child was delivered and the mother was fine, but the Doctor was socked to the bone in the cold rain as he returned to his office.**

**There was no other Doctor's for miles and the cold he developed turned to pneumonia, the towns folk tried to help him, but their efforts were in vain. Doctor Reilly died, and the town was heartbroken, he needed to be honored!**

**A tomb stone was purchased, but what should they inscribe upon it? A Town meeting was held, and many ideas were proposed, At last a young man came in carrying the Doctor's sign, here are the perfect words, they read, Doctor Charles Reilly, "OFFICE UPSTAIRS"**

**This morning as we are gathered together to celebrate Ray's life, I'd like you all to remember that my friend Ray is not lying here this morning, for Ray's Soul, that God given part of him which will live forever, is with the Lord Jesus Christ, He is receiving his eternal reward... And the day will come when I will see him, and be with him once again, in the courts of heaven.**

**There are Four thoughts which I'd like to share with you this morning as we remember the Special Person that Ray was to us all!**

## **I.) REST**

**I first meant Ray on our first day of high school; we sat next to each other, Two Dutchman Van PuttenVink and Van Houten. Our National heritage was the same and we both played the trumpet, but those were not the things which led to our friendship.**

**Ray would leave at lunchtime every day; he would go home to care for his Mother who had M/S. He would lift Ruth out of her wheel chair, care for her**

needs and then make her comfortable for the afternoon... after which he returned to school

I realized that moment that Ray was different, in a good sense, He had real Character! A real work ethic.

Those were the days when we never tired, we could be up all night, and go to work or school, and never miss a beat.

Ray was always figuring out ways that we could do more things and go more places. Time is short he'd say, lets not waist it

ILL.) Printed cards with my mothers name on them, From the desk of Mrs. Katherine Van Houten, Now each time she writes you a note rip it up and rewrite it on these cards, and then you sign it, they go into the file and if they check the signature they will all match, We were on the go all the time.

After we graduated I went to college and later on the seminary, Ray would pick me up every Friday night at King's College and bring me back on Sunday Night. We would work together all weekend, no time for rest!

As the years pasted Ray became active in the Totowa Boro Fire Department, In fact it was Ray who got me to join our department.

He joined the Masons and helped in all of their benevolent activates.

He joined the American Legion and enjoyed helping out a dinners and functions

He was married, raising a family, working full time and still caring for his Mom. There wasn't much time for rest... as the years past!

When this illness came upon him, after the surgery, a great battle was being fought to recover....

Early Sunday morning the Lord said, Ray come home to be with me, In my perfect place of REST... A Place CALLED HEAVEN

We have the beautiful Words of Psalm 23 to give us the description of the place of Rest.

**THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD, I SHALL NOT WANT**

**PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP IS DISCRIBED HERE**

**ILL** after high school I had an unplanned change in my life, I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, It changed me completely from the inside out.

**I** shared this with Ray, and he also accepted Jesus as his savior, once we are **HIS** we are His forever. No man can ever pluck them out of my hand.

**READ THE REST VERSE 4 Valley of the shadow**

**ILL** World Trade Center South tower I was working with a search and rescue team. Each time the alarm sounded, we ran for cover, the remaining steel of the tower stood above us. Someone began quoting psalm 23, as we came to verse 4 I thought, **DEATH IS ONLY A SHADOW** and shadows can't hurt you. We stopped running from then on, if the alarm sounded we said," It's only a shadow." Death is nothing to fear since the Lord is with us!

**II.) REWARD**

**Lots of Rewards in this life:**

**Rewards of a successful FISHING TRIP How Ray loved Fishing**

**Rewards of FRIENDSHIP Ray was my best friend for 44 years we tried to talk to each other every week or so.**

**Rewards of being in the Fire Company Ray loved the Fire Service helping in the community**

**Loved serving his Country & loved our Flag! He loved his friends at the Legion.**

**Reward of the Masons helping others**

**GREATEST REWARD OUR FAMILY MARISSA** you were very special to your Dad. The day you were born he called me five times to tell me details about your birth.

Since I have two daughters Ray would say," Anyone can have boys, but to have daughters that's the best!!"

## **Reward of Heaven**

**John 14 In my fathers house** I remember coming to my Dads house at 2:00 A.M. in snow storm. My friend and I were welcomed because it was My Father's house. So it is in heaven, we are all welcome into our Heavenly Fathers house what ever the hour might be.

**Many mansions** Ray always wanted to build a Windmill to live in, last month we talked about life changes that he intended to make. Ray said will you help me build that Windmill, I told him you bet I still have the plans.

When I get to heaven I expect to see Rays place, you can see a Windmill a long way away.

### **JOHN chapter 14**

Jesus said, I'm going to prepare a place for you, and if I go, than I will come again and receive you onto my self. That where I am, there you may be also.

## **III. REUNION**

The Martin's always had a reunion, big family everyone gets together, Today Ray is with Dutch and Ruth

Ray an I would attend the annual dinner for our friend Louie Coppa, all old friends together, today Ray is with him.

**Our Fishing Trips were Reunions** loved to spend the time together

We are gathered together, it's a Reunion a sad one but a reunion

But when we get to heaven that reunion will be in better

**In the book of I Thess. Chapter 4 we read, The day will come when the trumpet of the Lord will sound, and there will be the voice of the shouting of the Arch Angels. Then the dead will rise first, we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and, SO SHALL WE EVER BE WITH THE LORD**

## **IV.) REMEMBERENCES**

- 1.) I remember traveling with Ray, trunk full of tools, stopping to help people along the way. He would never accept a dime, just loved helping others.**
- 2.) I remember Ray as a friend who was at my side at a moments notice, for 44 years of my life.**
- 3.) I remember when Ray first meant Marilyn. She came at the right time for he was suffering from the deepest hurt in his life. She lifted him from that depression and gave him a reason to go on.**
- 4.) I remember Ray calling me when Marissa was born, when she was in pictures, When she graduated from High School, when she started college, and than graduated. When she started with court TV. And most recently he called to tell me about Brooke “I have two new Fishing and hunting partners he told me, Marissa and Brooke. He was so very proud!**
- 5.) I remember years of encouragement from my friend, he would always be there especially in my darkest hours. And his words were always positive. They made a difference.**

**Lets all share our memories with each other today, and in so doing Ray will live on in our lives and in our Hearts until we are together once again.**

## **Dix Hills Fire Department**

### **Departmental Funerals**

#### **Level 1 Funeral – Line-of-Duty**

- Job-related Traumatic injury
- Job-related Non-traumatic injury

#### **Level 2 Funeral – Active Member**

#### **Level 3 Funeral – Inactive member**

- Affiliate Member
- Non-job-related Death

## TABLE OF CONTENTS:

### Part I: General Guidelines

- 1.1 Line of Duty death
- 1.2 The primary goal
- 1.3 The department's responsibilities

### Part 2: Pre-incident Planning

- 2.1 Department Chaplain
- 2.2 Personnel Information
- 2.3 Photographs
- 2.4 Local Support Agencies
- 2.5 Funeral Directors
- 2.6 Ceremonial Clothing and Equipment
- 2.7 Key Positions
- 2.8 Honor Guard and Color Guard

### Section 3: Funeral Types

- 3.1 Definitions
- 3.2 Types of Services
- 3.3 Suggested Funeral Service Options:

### Section 4: Funeral or Memorial Service Planning Considerations

- 4.1 Honor Guards
- 4.2 Pallbearers
- 4.3 Transportation:
- 4.4 Meals
- 4.5 Family Liaison Officer
- 4.6 Initial Family Support -
- 4.7 Department Chaplain
- 4.8 Procession
- 4.9 Caisson –
- 4.10 Flower
- 4.11 Formations
- 4.12 Taps
- 4.13 Firing Party.
- 4.14 Musical Selections
- 4.15 Last Alarm Service
- 4.16 Readings
- 4.17 Eulogy
- 4.18 Crossed Aerial Ladders
- 4.19 Static Equipment Display
- 4.20 Burial in Uniform
- 4.21 Presentation of Department Badge
- 4.22 Closed Casket
- 4.23 Walkthrough
- 4.24 Post-service Reception
- 4.25 Memorial Fund
- 4.26 Flags at Half-staff
- 4.27 Badge Shrouding

4.28 Flag Presentation

Part 5: Key Assignments For Department Funerals

- 5.1 Definitions
- 5.2 Survivor Action Officer
- 5.3 Notification Officer
- 5.4 Family Liaison Officer
- 5.5 Funeral Officer
- 5.6 Procession Officer
- 5.7 Service Officer
- 5.8 Final committal Service Officer

Part 6: Other considerations

- 6.1 Inclement weather
- 6.2 Services outside the local area
- 6.3 Out-of-town fire and rescue service personnel
- 6.4 Department members and apparatus

Part 7: Ceremonies

- 7.1 Family requests
- 7.2 Pallbearers and color guards
- 7.3 Procession – to service
- 7.4 Procession – following the service
- 7.5 Procession – to final committal

Appendix 1 – Dix Hills Fire Department Emergency Contact Information

Appendix 2 – Funeral Home Formations

Appendix 3 – Church Formations

Appendix 4 – Committal Service Formations

Appendix 5 – Pallbearers' Location When Marching

Appendix 6 – “Last Alarm” Ceremony

Appendix 7 – Sample Order of Events

Appendix 8 – Survivor Action Officer's Responsibilities

Appendix 9 – Family Liaison Officer's Responsibilities

Appendix 10– Funeral Officer's Responsibilities

Appendix 11 – Procession Officer's Responsibilities

Appendix 12 – Funeral Service Officer's Responsibilities

Appendix 13 – Final Committal Service Officer's Responsibilities



## Part I: General Guidelines

- 1.1 When a member of the Fire Department or the Rescue Squad dies in the line of duty, several considerations are crucial for those dealing with the tragedy. These include:
  - a. *Identifying and meeting* the needs of the surviving family
  - b. Ensuring that the *needs and wishes of the family always come before* the needs and wishes of the department
  - c. Providing *ongoing emotional and spiritual support* for the next of kin
  - d. Using *good organization, coordination and communication*
  - e. Maintaining *flexibility*
  - f. *Monitoring constantly* not to overload any individual
- 1.2 The *primary goal* of the department should be to *work with the family, the funeral director* and others involved *to ensure that the fallen firefighter receives a fitting tribute*. At all times the department must carry out the wishes and desires of the surviving family regarding the funeral ceremonies.
- 1.3 The *department's responsibilities are not the same as those of the funeral director*. Department personnel should work with the funeral director in the best interest of the departed members family.

## Part 2: Pre-incident Planning

Pre-planning is essential to ensure the department meets the needs of the family and department members.

- 2.1     Department Chaplain – The department should maintain an active chaplaincy program. The chaplain should be contacted immediately whenever the death of a member is imminent or confirmed, regardless of the circumstances involved. The chaplain's services will be available to the surviving family, before, during and after the funeral.
- 2.2     Personnel Information – The department should maintain an Emergency Contact Information Record on all department personnel. The department will use it to assist in the treatment of personnel following serious injury, and in the notification of next of kin following a serious injury or line-of-duty death. At the very least, the form will contain the following information:
  - a. Complete name of the department member
  - b. Name and address of next of kin with specific directions to the address as needed
  - c. Names of parents and children/dependents, including those who may not live with the member.
  - d. The member's religion and church affiliation and membership
  - e. See recommended form from the National Fallen Firefighter's Federation – attached.
- 2.3     Photographs – The department should arrange for individual photographs of all department personnel and should maintain current photographs in department personnel files. The photos may be needed for immediate identification after an incident. After a line-of-duty death, there will be requests for photos from the media and other sources.
- 2.4     Local Support Agencies – The department should periodically contact local public safety agencies to maintain a current resource list of:
  - a. Honor guards and color guards
  - b. Bands, buglers, pipers
  - c. Firing parties
  - d. Bells for "Last Alarm" service
  - e. Vocal and instrumental performers
- 2.5     Funeral Directors – The department should contact and provide the local funeral directors a copy of the department's funeral procedures. This will allow them to understand local protocols before a line-of-duty death occurs.
- 2.6     Ceremonial Clothing and Equipment – The department should have the following available for use during department funerals:
  - a. Badge and name tag presentation frame
  - b. An extra badge for each rank in the department as well as the name of a source for obtaining a duplicate name tag on an emergency basis
  - c. Presentation flags (U.S., state, municipality, fire department)
  - d. White gloves in sufficient numbers for the Honor Guard and eight pallbearers.
- 2.7     Key Positions – The department should maintain and annually update a list of personnel selected to serve in the following key positions:
  - a. Survivor Action Officer
  - b. Notification Officer
  - c. Family Liaison Officer
  - d. Hospital Liaison Officer
  - e. Funeral or Memorial Service Officer

- f. Procession Officer
- g. Service Officer
- h. Final Committal Officer

Personnel selected to serve should receive a manual and training on the responsibilities of key positions. The manual should contain copies of department procedures relating to funerals or memorial services.

2.8     Honor Guard and Color Guard – The department should encourage personnel to participate in a department Honor Guard and Color Guard that will function during department funerals and at other appropriate times. If possible, the department should provide the following:

- a. Class A (“dress”) uniforms with cap, white shirt, black tie, and white ascot, for all members.
- b. White gloves for all members
- c. White shoulder braiding for all members
- d. Patent leather low-quarter shoes for all members
- e. Parade flags (U.S., state, municipality and department) with holders
- f. Two display axes with chrome or brass heads.

### Section 3: Funeral Types

The death of a department member may occur under a variety of circumstances. Based on the circumstances, the department should provide appropriate services from the planning of the funeral through the survivor follow-up process. To ensure all members are honored in a consistent manner, the department should adopt a policy on the types of services it will provide. The following is an example of what some departments have adopted:

#### 3.1 Definitions:

- a. Line-of-Duty: The death must be the result of a traumatic injury suffered in the line of duty.
- b. Job-related traumatic injury: A blow to the body by an outside force, e.g., crushing injuries suffered in a building collapse, apparatus accident or fall. Burns, smoke inhalation and such climactic injuries as heatstroke or frostbite are considered traumatic injuries.
- c. Job-related non-traumatic injury: A non-traumatic injury that is strongly believed or has been proven to be attributable to the job. Examples are stress, heart attacks, strokes, diseases and mental illness (suicide).
- d. Active member: A member of the department serving in an active capacity.
- e. Inactive member: A former member of the department.
- f. Affiliate member: an individual who has served in some capacity with the department, such as a commissioner, trustee, dispatcher, etc.
- g. Non-job-related death: Deaths, natural and traumatic, that are not related to the departmental duty.

#### 3.2 Types of Services

- a. Level One: A line-of-duty or job-related death. This may include an inactive member whose death has stemmed from an injury sustained during active duty
- b. Level Two: A non-job-related death of an active member.
- c. Level Three: A non-job-related death of an inactive or affiliate member.

#### 3.3 Suggested Funeral Service Options:

Level One	Level Two	Level Three
American Flag	American Flag	American Flag
Badge Shrouds	Badge Shrouds	Badge Shrouds
Bagpipers		
Bell Service	Bell Service	Bell Service
Bugler		
Color Guards		
Crossed Ladders		
Eulogy	Eulogy	
Fire Engine Caisson	Hearse	Hearse
Fire Service Flag	Fire Service Flag	Fire Service Flag
Flower Unit	Flower Unit	
Honor Guards	Honor Guards	Honor Guards
Honor Detail	Honor Detail	
Pallbearers	Pallbearers	Pallbearers
Level One	Level Two	Level Three
Station Bunting	Station Bunting	Station Bunting
Vehicle Bunting		

Walkthrough	Walkthrough	Walkthrough
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#### Section 4: Funeral or Memorial Service Planning Considerations

There are many ways for the department to offer help for the funeral or memorial service. Some families will welcome all offers of help, while others may choose to have no departmental involvement. *The family must always be allowed to make that choice.*

- 4.9 Honor Guards – If the family requests an Honor Guard, the Funeral Officer should coordinate with Honor Guard personnel to schedule honor guard activities according to the family's and funeral director's wishes. The following basic rules apply to these activities.
  - a. Two honor guard members should be posted at the casket. During viewing hours, they should be posted at the head and at the foot.
  - b. There should be a minimum of four honor guard members for each set of viewing hours.
  - c. Honor guard members should rotate at 15-minute intervals. Relief guards should march up together. Posted guards should come to attention and smartly make the transfer and then march off together.
  - d. Posted honor guards should assume the position of parade rest.
  - e. American and departmental flags (or a state flag, if there is no departmental flag) should be posted at the casket.
  - f. Honor guard members should wear Class A uniform with white gloves. They should use black mourning bands over uniform badges.
- 4.10 Pallbearers – Should the family choose to use department members as pallbearers, it is the Family Liaison Officer's responsibility to ask which department members the family would like to use. There should be between six and eight pallbearers. They should wear Class A uniforms with hats and white gloves.
  - a. Due to their specific responsibilities, pallbearers are exempt from following the majority of orders given to the remainder of the formation
  - b. The Funeral Officer, assisted by the Funeral Director, should give instructions on removing, handling, and transporting the casket.  
If a fire engine serves as a caisson, pallbearers should hold a practice session the day before the funeral. If this is not possible, pallbearers should report to the funeral home several hours before the beginning of the service for a protocol briefing and practice.
  - c. If the casket is draped with a flag to present to the next of kin, three pallbearers will be instructed on the proper method of removing, folding, and presenting the flag. Two pallbearers will fold the flag and present it to the third pallbearer who, in turn, will present it to the next of kin. The Final Committal Officer will coordinate the flag folding. Flag folding instructions appear in the Appendix.  
If the casket is not draped with a flag, the department can present a pre-folded flag to the next of kin.
  - d. If department engines serve as caisson and flower vehicle, pallbearers should ride on them. If engines are not used, the department will provide the pallbearers other department vehicles for the procession.
- 4.11 Transportation:
  - a. The department should offer a department vehicle and driver to the immediate family during the viewing and funeral period. The Family Liaison Officer normally arranges for this service.

- b. The department should ensure that the next of kin have limousine service available on the day of the funeral.
- 4.12 Meals – The department should plan to provide meals for the deceased member’s family at least until after the funeral. Friends of the family and members of the department may help provide these meals. The Survivor Action Officer, in conjunction with the Family Liaison Officer, will determine the need and coordinate providing the meals.
- 4.13 Family Liaison Officer – Regardless of the circumstances surrounding the death, or the deceased member’s status in the department, a Family Liaison Officer should be assigned to make contact with the family. The officer will determine the amount of involvement the family wants from the department. The officer will provide this information to the Survivor Action Officer. The Family Liaison Officer will assist the family throughout the process.
- 4.14 Initial Family Support - The department will determine this based on the family requests as relayed by the Family Liaison Officer. The department should assign appropriate key personnel as the needs arise. **The department should not act on assumptions without contacting and getting the consent of the immediate family.**
- 4.15 Department Chaplain – The amount of involvement the chaplain has will be determined by the family. One option is a shared responsibility between the family’s clergy and the department chaplain. Should the department chaplain be requested, the following are areas of responsibility:
- a. Comfort and support for family members
  - b. Prayer services at the funeral home
  - c. Church services
  - d. Final committal
  - e. Follow-up support for the family
  - f. Departmental or community memorial services
- 4.16 Procession – The family may request a procession from the funeral home or church to the place of final committal. The procession involves staging vehicles at the funeral home or church prior to the funeral, directing vehicles as they leave for the place of final committal, and staging of vehicles upon arrival there. Specific considerations include:
- a. Department vehicles used as caisson, flower car, and for transportation
  - b. Coordination with the funeral director to determine the procession route, including a drive by the deceased member’s fire station and/or home. If the procession passes the fire station, apparatus should be parked on the apron with emergency lights on. Members should assemble outside, come to attention as the procession passes, and toll a muffled bell as the caisson or hearse passes.
  - c. Static displays of apparatus along the procession route.
  - d. Crossed ladders or aerial equipment at the funeral home, church, or place of final committal entrance.
- 4.17 Caisson – A department engine may be appropriate as a caisson to carry the casket. If an engine is used, personnel must take it out of service for a period of time and prepare it as follows:
- a. Thoroughly wash and wax the engine
  - b. Add available mourning flags or bunting
- The operator of the engine should be in dress uniform. In the event of inclement weather, an enclosed hearse should carry the casket and the apparatus should serve as a flower car.

- 4.18 Flower Car – A department engine may also serve as a flower vehicle. If so, personnel must take it out of service and prepare it as indicated above for a caisson. The hoses and dividers need not be removed.
- 4.19 Formations – Special formations may be appropriate at the following points:
- Walkthrough of all attending members at the funeral home or church
  - Honor Guard formations on either side of the casket's path from the funeral home to the hearse or caisson
  - Honor Guard formations on either side of the casket path during entry to and exit from the church
  - Honor Guard formations on either side of the casket path from the hearse or caisson to the place of final committal.
- 4.20 Taps – Taps may be sounded by one or more buglers at the place of final committal. The location of the bugler should be approximately 75 feet from the final committal site.
- 4.21 Firing Party – A military-type firing party may be used at the final committal. If so, the party will fire three volleys 75 feet from the final committal site.  
The salute may startle people at these services. The family should consider this in making a decision on this option.
- 4.22 Musical Selections
- A band, a piper, an organist, a choir or soloists may play or sing during various funeral ceremonies.
  - The Family Liaison Officer should discuss this option with the family and communicate its wishes to the Funeral Officer.
- 4.23 Last Alarm Service – A traditional bell-ringing ceremony at the end of the church service or committal service usually signifies the member's last alarm. A short reading accompanies the ringing of the bell. See Appendix
- 4.24 Readings – Numerous scripture passages and fire-service-related readings are appropriate during the funeral services. The Family Liaison Officer will work with the family to determine if they would like any readings and who should read them.
- 4.25 Eulogy – A eulogy may be appropriate at any point in the funeral ceremonies. The family should decide who will deliver the eulogy and when it is fitting. The Chief, a clergy member, the department chaplain, or a close family friend from the department may be asked to perform this task. the Family Liaison Officer will make the necessary contacts and advise the Funeral Officer.
- 4.26 Crossed Aerial Ladders – If the family wishes to have the crossed aerial ladders at the entrance to the final committal site, the Family Liaison Officer will forward this request to the Survivor Action Officer for approval and coordination.
- 4.27 Static Equipment Display – During the processions, the family may choose to have a static display of department apparatus and crews at attention and saluting the passing casket and family vehicle. This final tribute may be set up at the funeral home or church, at key locations along the procession route, at a fire station on the procession route, or at the place of final committal entrance. The Family Liaison Officer will communicate this request to the Survivor Action Officer.

- 4.28 Burial in Uniform – If the family chooses to bury the deceased member in the departmental uniform, the Family Liaison Officer will deliver the uniform to the Funeral Officer or funeral director. If the family selects non-departmental clothing, the Family Liaison Officer should deliver this.
- 4.29 Presentation of Department Badge – As a part of the funeral service at the funeral home or church, the Chief may present the badge and name tag worn by the deceased member to the next of kin. The items should be in a framed display containing a departmental uniform patch. Administrative and support personnel will work with the Chief to obtain the badge and name tag actually worn by the member and to obtain duplicates to be placed on the burial uniform.
- 4.30 Closed Casket – If the family requests a closed casket, the family may wish to place a picture of the member in uniform along with the member's dress hat on top of or next to the casket.
- 4.31 Walkthrough – A walkthrough of members at the funeral home may occur to pay tribute to the deceased member. If so, the Funeral Officer will schedule the walkthrough and have members form line by company. The formation will pass single file by the casket with each member stopping briefly to pay tribute. (Usually by means of a hand salute)
- 4.32 Post-service Reception – A reception may be held following the funeral. A church hall, school cafeteria, fire station, or other facility may serve for this purpose. The Survivor Action Officer will coordinate the event and ask department members to assist in the set-up and break-down of this event.
- 4.33 Memorial Fund – Department members and local organizations may want to start a memorial fund for the member's family. The Survivor Action Officer should work with local financial organizations in establishing this fund. The family should be involved in deciding how this will occur. The officer will emphasize to the family the importance of working with a local bank to avoid legal complications.
- 4.34 Flags at Half-staff – Upon notification that a member has died, the Chief will direct that all station flags be lowered to half-staff. They will remain at half-staff until 1700 hours the day of the final committal. When the American flag is at half-staff, no other flags will fly on the same pole. In the case of a line-of-duty death, the Chief will request that the local officials ask other facilities to fly their flags at half-staff.
- 4.35 Badge Shrouding – The shroud should appear on badges at the time of notification of the death and should remain on the badge until after the funeral and final committal. For line-of-duty deaths, the badge shrouds will remain in place for a 30 day mourning period. If the chaplain's badge contains a cross, a crescent, tablets, or the Star of David, the chaplain's badge remains uncovered.
- 4.36 Flag Presentation – When the casket is draped with a flag, an appropriate flag presentation ceremony should take place immediately before the conclusion of the committal service.



Part 5: Key Assignments For Department Funerals

- 5.1 When a department member dies, the department must focus on the family's needs and wishes and give them the highest priority. The support offered by the department will vary depending on the type of death, as described in Part 4.  
To support the family, a department must be prepared to manage a series of interrelated responsibilities. These duties extend from initial notification of next of kin through continuing support after the final committal service.  
A department should have a funeral plan that will enable it to staff the needed assignments should a death occur. The department should identify and train personnel to handle these assignments. Depending on the size of the department, it may need to combine many of the following major assignments.
- 5.2 Survivor Action Officer  
The Chief may assume the position of Survivor Action Officer but will probably assign another senior officer this function. As a direct representative of the Chief, the Survivor Action Officer should receive the full cooperation of the entire fire department.  
The officer is responsible for managing several important activities, the principal concerning being the ongoing welfare of the next of kin. The officer will give whatever assistance is necessary to assist the family.  
The Survivor Action Officer may appoint the following positions as needed and delegate responsibilities as required to successfully complete all assigned duties.  
The detailed Responsibility Sheets for all officers are in the section following the appendices.
- 5.3 Notification Officer  
The Federation of Fire Chaplains provides comprehensive information on how to make notifications as part of its Chaplaincy training resources.
- 5.4 Family Liaison Officer  
The Family Liaison Officer provides the Survivor Action Officer with regular updates on the family's status and needs  
Because of the critical nature of the liaison's role and the around-the-clock coverage required, a department should appoint a back-up liaison to provide relief as needed.  
**All officers must work closely with the Family Liaison Officer to ensure that the family understands their options and that their wishes are honored.**
- 5.5 Funeral Officer  
The Funeral Officer's role is to serve as intermediary between the funeral director and the other department personnel involved in funeral or memorial service activities.  
**This officer is not a funeral director and should not interfere in funeral management.**
- 5.6 Procession Officer  
The Procession Officer arranges and directs the funeral procession from the funeral home to the church, if there is a church service, and to the final committal site. It is most necessary that this Officer maintain a working relationship with the local police precinct officers and the patrol officers.
- 5.7 Service Officer  
If the family had decided to have a religious service, the Service Officer coordinates with clergy selected by the family.

5.8 Final committal Service Officer

The Final Committal Service Officer provides coordination to all the individuals responsible for the final committal service.

Part 6: Other considerations

- 6.1 Inclement weather may impact upon funeral services. If severe weather conditions are anticipated, personnel involved in coordinating the funeral services should work with the Survivor Action Officer and Family Liaison Officer to implement alternative plans.
- 6.2 If services will occur outside the local area, the department should coordinate all planning steps with officials and agencies in that location. If possible, representatives from fire and police departments in all the communities involved should participate in the planning.
- 6.3 For a line-of-duty death, a large contingent of out-of-town fire and rescue service personnel will want to attend the funeral, if there will be a procession from the funeral home to the church, ask these fire and rescue personnel to report directly to the church for staging prior to the start of the procession from the funeral home.
- 6.4 All department members and apparatus may take part in the procession from the funeral or memorial site to the place of final committal. If there will be a procession of department members marching to the church, only members from the Dix Hills department should participate.

Part 7: Ceremonies

- 7.1 If the family requests, the following personnel may take part in the ceremonial portion of the funeral:
- a. A Chief
  - b. Six or eight pallbearers
  - c. A Color Guard of for department members and one officer
  - d. A bugler and piper, pipe band, or drummer.
- 7.2 Due to the important role of pallbearers and color guards, a practice session should occur the day before the funeral. If this is not possible, these personnel must report to the funeral home several hours before the service for a protocol briefing and practice. The funeral director will instruct the pallbearers on how to handle the casket.
- 7.3 If the procession will include department members marching from one point to another, the Procession Officer must coordinate with the Funeral Officer, Service Officer, or Final Committal Officer to establish an assembly point, order of alignment, and route for the march. If marching is to occur, a drummer should be part of the parade contingent to provide a steady cadence. Cadence should **not** be called verbally.
- a. Determine an appropriate assembly point for department personnel participating in the march. Visiting personnel will assemble at the end point of the march.
  - b. Basic alignment for the elements of a march is:
    1. Color Guard
    2. Pipe band/drummer
    3. host department members
    4. apparatus caisson or hearse
      - I. The Officer-in-Charge (OIC) will walk immediately in front of the caisson or hearse
      - II. Three pall bearers will march on either side of the caisson or hearse
      - III. Two pall bearers will ride on the tailboard of the caisson or walk immediately behind the hearse, if there are only six pallbearers, two Honor Guard members will assume this position – Check if this is permitted in our jurisdiction.
    5. Family's cars
    6. friend's cars

Note: If the immediate family of the deceased member desires to join in the march, family members will fall in immediately behind the caisson or hearse and will receive an Honor Guard escort.
  - c. If the casket is being driven from the funeral home to the church, the following actions should occur:
    1. Determine an assembly point several blocks from the church for department personnel and the pipe band/drummer.
    2. Assign an assembly point for visiting departments at the church on the church side of the street.
    3. Immediately after loading the casket at the funeral home, transport the color guards to the department meeting location.
    4. Have the pallbearers board the apparatus, with two of them remaining on the rear step – Check if this is permitted in our jurisdiction.
    5. With a police escort, have the apparatus proceed slowly to the meeting point with the department contingent.
    6. Line up the procession in the same order as listed above.

7. Direct the pallbearers to dismount and march as follows:
    - I. The OIC in front of the apparatus
    - II. Two or three pallbearers on each side of the apparatus
    - III. Two pallbearers on the rear step – Check if this is permitted in our jurisdiction.
  - d. When the procession arrives, the following actions should occur:
    1. As the procession nears the location of the service, move the color guards to the side and allow the pipe band/drummer and department members to pass.
    2. Near the entrance to the service area, assemble the pipe band.
    3. Line up the national, state and local dignitaries near the entrance leaving room for the Color Guard.
    4. When marching department members arrive at the location of the service, move them to the other side of the street. When they are in place, give the command **“Right face.”**
    5. When personnel line the street on both sides and face the center, begin the Color Guard march toward the service location followed by the apparatus or hears. Leave a space between the Color Guard and hearse. The service assembly OIC commands **“Present arms”** (hand salute)
    6. As the Color Guard arrives, assemble it near the front of the church
    7. Move the apparatus to the front of the service location and shut off the engine.
    8. Have the service assembly OIC command **“Order arms.”**
    9. Assemble pallbearers at the rear of the apparatus, with two in the hose bed, and prepare to remove the casket.
    10. Have the Honor Guard OIC command **“Present arms.”**
    11. Have the pipe band play as the pallbearers carry the casket to the entrance of the service location. If the chaplain or another cleric performs a blessing at the rear of the apparatus, the pipe band should delay playing until the pallbearers begin to move.
    12. Have the pallbearers escort the casket to the front of the service area.
    13. Have the assembled department personnel file into the area and take positions in the designated seating areas.
- 7.4 Following the close of the service, the following ceremonies should take place:
- a. Department personnel file out and assemble in specified areas in the following order:
    - I. Visiting service personnel
    - II. Department personnel
    - III. National, state and local dignitaries
    - IV. Color Guard
  - b. At the funeral director’s signal, the pallbearers move to the front of the location of the service and escort the coffin to the rear.
  - c. The service assembly OIC commands **“Detail, attention.”**
  - d. When the casket arrives at the rear of the area, the OIC commands **“Present arms.”**
  - e. If used, the piper/pipe band plays.
  - f. The pallbearers move slowly to the rear of the hearse or apparatus to load the casket.
  - g. After loading, the pallbearers face each other and the OIC commands **“Detail, present arms.”** The pallbearers give a hand salute.
  - h. The OIC commands **“Order arms”** for all personnel.
  - i. The Color Guard officer commands **“Color Guard, dismissed.”**
  - j. The OIC commands **“Detail, dismissed”** to the pallbearers.

- k. The color guard, bugler/piper, and OIC enter the waiting department vehicles for transportation to the place of final committal. The pallbearers will ride on the caisson or other apparatus directly behind the caisson.
  - l. Fire and rescue personnel and national, state and local dignitaries prepare to leave for the place of final committal.
  - m. The Procession Officer and assistants direct vehicles taking part in the procession to the place of final committal.
- 7.5 Upon arrival at the place of final committal, the following ceremonies will take place:
- a. The department personnel and Color Guard take up positions in formations as determined by the Final Committal Officer.
  - b. If space permits, the Color Guard assembles near the place of final committal.
  - c. The bugler is 75 feet away from the grave and will await the command from the OIC.
  - d. When the caisson or hearse is in position, the pallbearers take up positions at the rear and remove the casket.
  - e. The pallbearers carry the casket and place it on the grave stand. The family and other guests follow.
  - f. As the pallbearers begin to move the casket, the OIC commands **“Detail, attention”** and all department personnel come to attention. When the pallbearers place the casket on the gravestand, the OIC commands **“Parade rest.”**
  - g. If the family wants the casket draped, two pallbearers will drape it with an American flag. If the casket is not draped, an already folded flag will be placed on the casket for presentation.
  - h. The chaplain and/or cleric will conduct the committal service and lead in the final prayer.  
NOTE: If not part of the funeral or religious service, the “Last Alarm” ceremony may occur at this point. The OIC orders **“Present arms”** prior to the ringing of the bell, the hand salute should occur during the playing of Taps.
  - i. The OIC next commands **“Detail, attention”** and **“Present arms.”** A hand salute follows, the Color Guard presents arms and dips the departmental flag. The hand salute occurs during the playing of Taps.
  - j. The bugler plays Taps.
  - k. The OIC commands **“Order Arms.”**
  - l. At the conclusion of Taps, the Honor Guard removes the American flag from the casket and folds it. The Honor Guard Officer presents the folded flag to the Chief who, in turn, presents it to the family. The Chief can say: “On behalf of a grateful department, we thank you for the service of (the departed member’s name) to the Dix Hills Fire Department.
  - m. The funeral director gives words of thanks on behalf of the family and indicates the conclusion of the services.
  - n. The OIC commands **“Detail, dismissed.”**

## APPENDIX 1

### DIX HILLS FIRE DEPARTMENT EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

The information that you provide will be used **ONLY** in the event of your serious injury or death in the line of duty. Please take the time to fill it out fully and accurately because the data will help the department take care of your family and friends.

#### **Personal Information**

Last Name	First Name	Middle Name
Home Address		
City	State	Zip
Phone Number: (     )		

#### **Contact Information**

Family or friends you would like the department to contact. Please list in the order you want them contacted. If needed, provide additional names on the back of this sheet.

**NOTE:** If the contact is a minor child, please indicate the name of the adult to contact.

Name:
Relationship:
Home Contact Information: Address: Phone:
Work Contact Information: Name of Employer: Address: Phone: Pager/Cell Phone:
Special circumstances – such as health conditions or need for an interpreter

Name:
Relationship:
Home Contact Information: Address: Phone:
Work Contact Information: Name of Employer: Address: Phone: Pager/Cell Phone:
Special circumstances – such as health conditions or need for an interpreter

List the names and dates of all of your children:	
Name	DOB:
Name	DOB:
Name	DOB:

List the department member(s) you would like to accompany the Chief to make the notification:
Name
Name

List anyone else you want to help make the notification. (for example, your rabbi or minister)
Name:
Relationship
Home Contact Information:
Address
Phone
Work Contact Information:
Name of Employer:
Address:
Phone:
Pager/Cell Phone:

### **Optional Information**

Please make certain that someone close to you also knows this information

Religious Preferences:		
Religion:		
Place of Worship:		
Address:		
Funeral Preferences:		
Are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Services?	Yes	No
If you are entitled to a military funeral, do you wish to have one?	Yes	No
Do you wish to have a fire service funeral	Yes	No
Please list your membership in department service, religious, or community organizations that may provide assistance to your family:		
Do you have a will?	Yes	No
If yes, where is it located or who should be contacted about it? _____		



List all life insurance policies you have:		
Company	Policy Number	Location of Policy
Is all information current? (beneficiary names, contact info, etc. This information may determine who gets Federal benefits)		
Special Requests		
If you are an organ donor, coordination with the medical officials will be necessary. List any request in this section:		

*Form last updated on* \_\_\_\_\_

This form was reprinted from the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation's *Taking Care of Our Own* materials.

Appendix 2

Suggested Funeral Home Formations

DIX HILLS FIRE DEPARTMENT MEMBERS

Dept. Chief  
and  
Political  
officials

APPARATUS/HEARSE

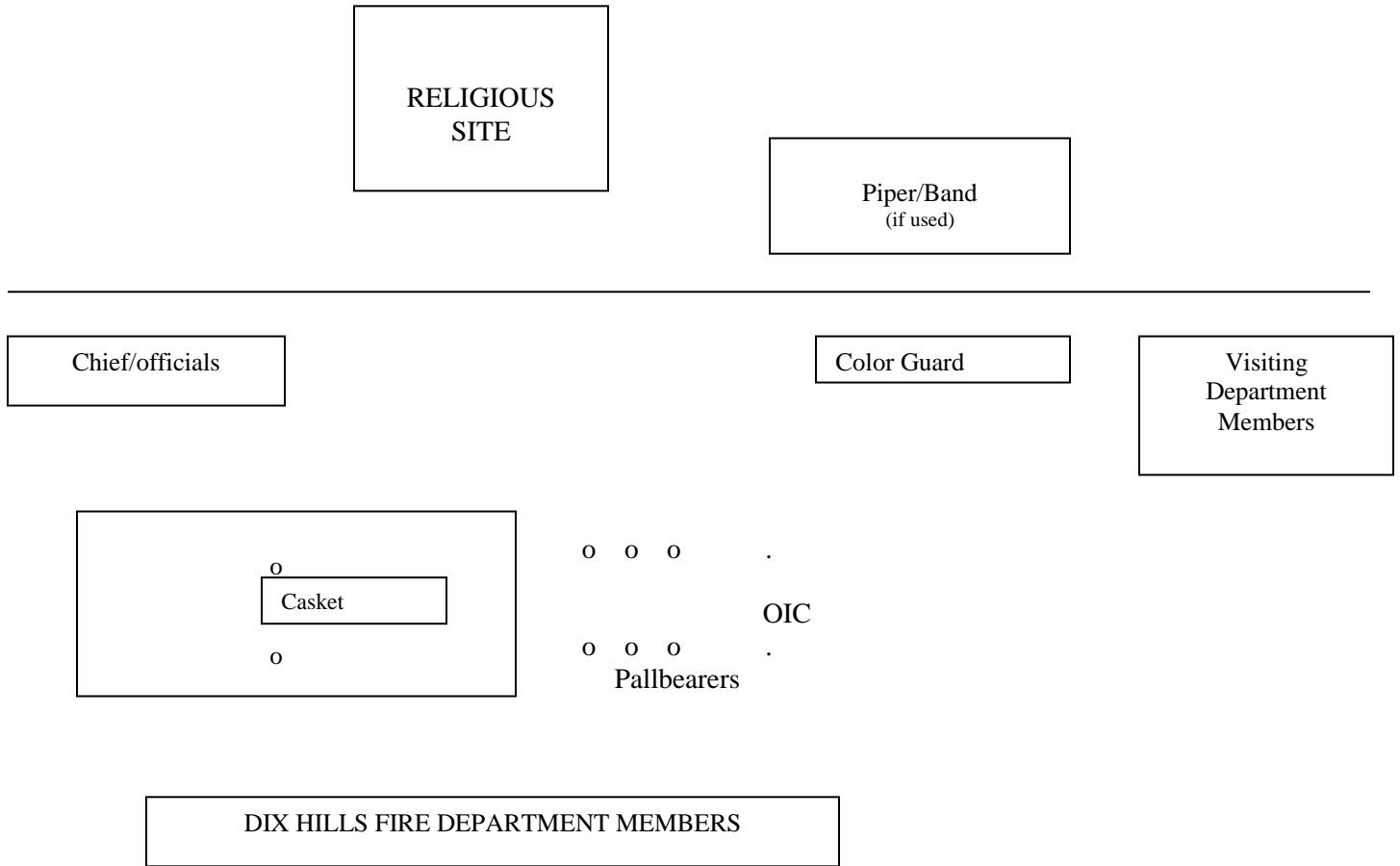
Color  
Guard

VISITING DEPARTMENTS

FUNERAL  
HOME

# APPENDIX 3

## SUGGESTED FORMATIONS AT RELIGIOUS SITE



APPENDIX 4

SUGGESTED FINAL COMMITTAL SERVICE FORMATION

FAMILY  
SEATING

CASKET

o Chaplain/Clergy

PALLBEARERS

o  
OIC

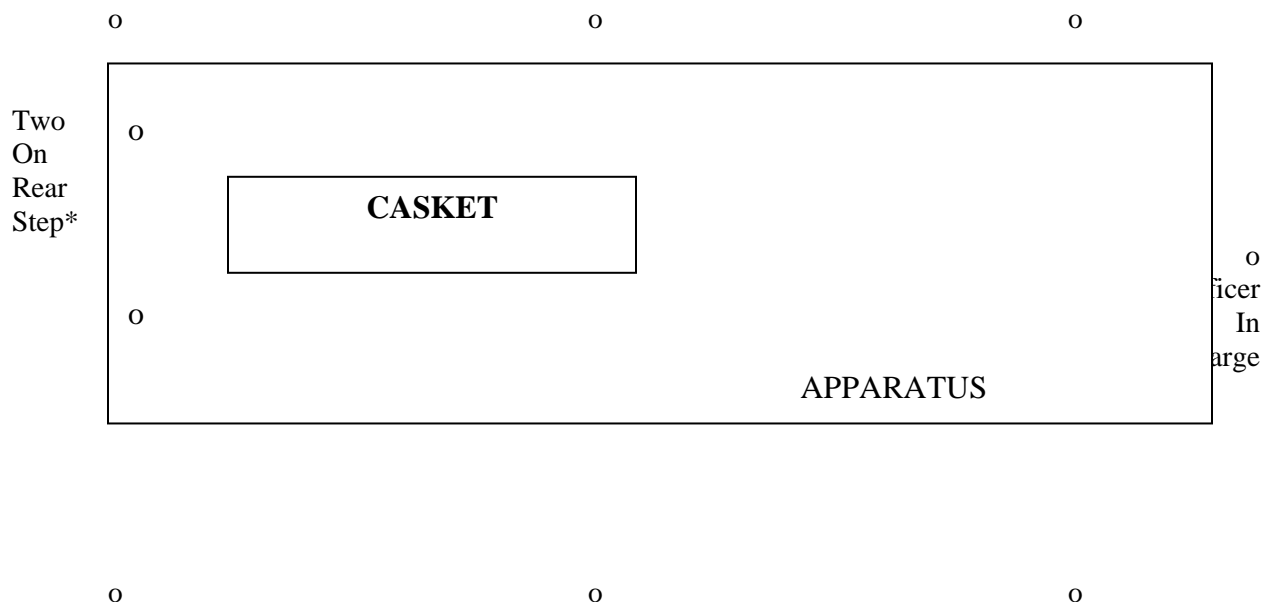
o  
Chief

DIX HILLS FIRE DEPARTMENT MEMBERS  
VISITING DEPARTMENTS

o BUGLER/PIPER  
(if used)

## APPENDIX 5

### PALLBEARERS' LOCATION WHEN MARCHING



\*Note: Only if this practice is allowed in jurisdiction.

APPENDIX 6  
SUGGESTED “LAST ALARM” CEREMONY

The chaplain or a department member reads the following:

Throughout most of history, the lives of firefighters have been closely associated with the ringing of a bell. As they began their hours of duty, it was the bell that started it off.

Through the day and night, each alarm was sounded by a bell, that called them to fight fire and to place their lives in jeopardy for the good of their fellow human beings. And when the fire was out, and the alarm had come to an end, the bell rang three times to signal the end.

And now, our Brother (Sister) \_\_\_\_\_ has completed his (her) task, his (her) duties well done, and the bell rings three times in memory of, and in tribute to his (her) life and service.

The Officer-in-Charge calls everyone to Attention.

The Color Guard is called to Present Arms.

The bell is struck three times.

The Color Guard is called to Order Arms.

The department members are seated (if in a religious site or funeral home)

The chaplain offers a closing prayer.

Appendix 7

SAMPLE ORDER OF EVENTS

Funeral Service for (Rank) John Doe  
Dix Hills Fire Department

October 1, 2003

1:00	Arrival of hearse at site of religious service
	Honor Guard Posted Color Guard Posted
1:30-2:00	Arrival of guests, department personnel, and fire apparatus
	Fire personnel place in formations Explanation of commands to be given Attention Present Arms Order Arms
2:00-2:15	Arrival of family and processional
	Pallbearers remove the casket Procession enters the site of religious services Clergy Color Guard Pallbearers and casket Honorary pallbearers Family and friends Department members Visiting departments
2:15-3:15	Funeral Service (Some Options)
	Readings Eulogy Sermon (Homily) Presentation of badge
3:15-3:30	Funeral recession
	Clergy Color Guard Pallbearers and casket Honorary pallbearers Family and friends Department members Visiting departments

3:30-4:00	Procession to place of final committal (Order of vehicles Lead escort DHFD engine Hearse (it may be the same if an apparatus serves as caisson) Family limousines Pallbearers' vehicle Honorary pallbearers' vehicle Honor Guard DHFD Chief's vehicle Other department vehicles Police vehicles Local officials' vehicles Visiting department vehicles Other emergency service departments Vehicles of friends or other private vehicles Rear escort
4:00-4:15	Graveside processional Color Guard Department members Visiting departments Honorary pallbearers Clergy Pallbearers and casket Family Friends
4:15-4:45	Graveside service options*  Opening prayer Words to the family Final prayer Last Alarm Ceremony Taps Presentation of the flag Benediction Dismissal
4:45	Graveside recessional  Color Guard Department members Visiting departments Honorary pallbearers Clergy Pallbearers Friends Family



**\*The family may choose to have the body or ashes placed in a crypt. In this case, the same protocols apply, but the Final Committal Service Officer should modify them appropriately to fit the specific circumstances.**

## APPENDIX 8

### **Survivor Action Officer's Responsibilities**

1. As a directed representative of the Department Chief, the Survivor Action Officer should receive the full cooperation of the entire department. The Survivor Action Officer will appoint assistants and delegate responsibilities as required to successfully complete all assigned duties.
2. The Survivor Action Officer is responsible for the management of several important activities. The principal concern is the ongoing welfare of the next of kin. The officer will render all necessary assistance to help the family through the crisis.
3. The Survivor Action Officer coordinates and supervises the activities of a number of key personnel assigned to handle the specific aspects of the funeral arrangements and to assist the surviving family. These key personnel include:
  - a. Family Liaison Officer – Remains on call to the surviving family 24 hours a day to assist and support as needed. Provides the Survivor Action Officer with regular updates on the family's status and needs. This officer probably needs a backup to provide on-going assistance over a multi-day period.
  - b. Funeral Officer – Provides coordination and interaction with the Funeral Director and other personnel on funeral arrangements.
  - c. Service officer – Provides coordination and interaction with the church/synagogue to arrange the funeral service.
  - d. Final Committal Officer – Provides coordination with others involved in the funeral arrangements in order to arrange all details at the final committal site.
  - e. Procession Officer – Arranges and directs the funeral procession.
4. Additional duties for the Survivor Action Officer include:
  - a. Assuring that next-of-kin notification has been properly accomplished.
  - b. Officially notifying all department members of the death and passing on the order to have flags lowered to half-staff.
  - c. Notifying the following personnel and agencies of the death:
    - I. Officials from other local government offices.
    - II. Other fire, rescue and police departments
  - d. Making appropriate follow-up contacts when the funeral arrangements and schedules have been determined.
  - e. Working with the Family Liaison Officer to determine the desired method of collecting the deceased member's personal items from the firehouse.
  - f. Conducting a coordination meeting with the key personnel as soon as possible so that everyone understands the family's wishes regarding options chosen for the funeral ceremony. Once the funeral procedures are established, instructing all key personnel to make the appropriate contacts and setting a date and time for a final coordination meeting.

- g. Conducting a final coordination meeting with key personnel to:
  - I. Establish schedule and timetables.
  - II. Identify times and places for group gatherings as required by the ceremonies.
  - III. Contact all appropriate individuals and agencies with the schedule, meeting places, and special instructions
- h. Serving as a key contact person for outside agencies, news media, and other departments in relation to the death and subsequent ceremonies.
- i. After obtaining family approval through the Family Liaison Officer, making appropriate arrangements for a post-funeral reception and a facility to handle a large group of people.
- j. Arranging for a department member to be on hand at the residence to assist the family and provide for security during the funeral funeral-related activities. Additional meals for immediate family members will be provided as needed.
- k. Contacting neighboring departments and arranging for mutual aid stand-in departments during the funeral.
- l. Ensuring accessibility to the family for the duration of the funeral process.
- m. Coordinating meals for the family and assuring ongoing family contact by the Family Liaison Officer.
- n. Alluring that all department functions continue as requires.

## APPENDIX 9

### **Family Liaison Officer's Responsibilities**

In every incident involving the death of a department member, or when the death of an injured department member appears imminent, the Chief will assign a Family Liaison Officer. This individual will perform the following duties:

1. Be readily available with a department vehicle, pager, and portable radio for the entire funeral process
2. Immediately report to the deceased's residence or that of the next of kin, or to the medical facility or morgue, and provide reassurance and support to the family. Ensure that the **NEEDS OF THE FAMILY** come before the wishes of the department or any other officials.
3. Be prepared to discuss all aspects of the funeral process and relay to the Chief the family's wishes on the level of the department's involvement in the funeral process. These considerations include:
  - a. What the department can offer in the way of assistance if the family is eligible for and chooses a "line-of-duty" funeral
  - b. Churches, synagogues or funeral homes with seating capacity large enough to accommodate attendance at the funeral. First, any alternate churches, synagogues or funeral homes will need to agree that the family minister or department chaplain will officiate or assist at the service.
  - c. Department funeral ceremonial options (i.e., gun salute, presenting of the flag, playing of taps, last alarm, the ladder archway, etc.)
  - d. Proper recognition for the family and friends during the funeral and funeral procession.
4. Ask the family to select six or eight primary pallbearers and the optional honorary pallbearers. Make suggestions only if the family asks for some.
5. Assist the family in determining:
  - a. The type of final committal
  - b. The funeral home to use
  - c. The clergy to use
  - d. The place of final committal
  - e. Whether to bury the deceased in a department uniform and, if so, to obtain one.
  - f. Alternate clothes for burial and arranging to deliver them to the funeral director
  - g. A photograph of the deceased and arranging to deliver it to the funeral director
  - h. Length of the wake and a tentative schedule
  - i. The length of the funeral service to include:
    - I. Readings and readers
    - II. Music and musicians
    - III. Deliverer of the funeral tribute and/or eulogy
    - IV. Inclusion of a "Last Alarm" bell service
  - j. Ceremonies at the place of final committal:
    - I. Band or Piper
    - II. Singing
    - III. Honor Guard/Firing Party
    - IV. Readings
    - V. Last Alarm Service

- VI. Taps
    - VII. Use of an engine or a caisson or a hearse
    - VIII. Use of an engine or ladder truck to carry flowers
    - IX. Personnel walking alongside the caisson or riding in the procession
  - k. Any other special considerations
6. Be available to the family on a 24-hour basis to assist in any way necessary.
7. Address the following items with the family:
- a. Autopsy report
  - b. Obtaining birth certificates, marriage certificates, death certificates (worker's compensation), VA or military records.
  - c. If requested, identify an attorney for the family.
  - d. Determine the benefits for which the survivors may be eligible.
    - I. Department benefits due to surviving beneficiaries
    - II. VA spouse and children's benefits and burial benefits
    - III. Social Security survivor benefits
    - IV. State benefits for survivors of fallen firefighters
    - V. Educational assistance and scholarship programs for spouses and children
    - VI. Life insurance payouts.
  - e. Identify accountants or financial advisors to assist with financial planning and taxes.
  - f. Offer to identify professional assistance in doing the following:
    - I. Transfer ownership of property and vehicles to survivors.
    - II. Review all outstanding bills before payment by survivors for legality and accuracy. This should include last illness, previous debts, and funeral expenses. Some bills may be covered by insurance.
    - III. Change name on all bank accounts
    - IV. Check on mortgage insurance.
    - V. Consult an attorney on any damages resulting from the circumstances of the death.
8. Be constantly alert for ways to help the family of a fallen department member to cope with the tragedy. Immediately relay any special needs to the Chief to obtain the resources to meet those needs.

## APPENDIX 10

### **Funeral Officer's Responsibilities**

1. Coordinate with the Family Liaison Officer and the funeral director to insure that the funeral wishes of the deceased member's family are carried out.
2. Attend all meetings called by the Survivor Action Officer to determine the following:
  - a. The schedule of events and the length of the funeral service
  - b. Whether department vehicles will serve as a caisson or flower carrier. If they are not used, make alternate arrangements with the funeral director.
3. If the member's immediate family has not requested limousine service from the funeral home on the day of the funeral, ask the funeral director to provide the service and send an invoice for the service to the department.
4. Coordinate with Honor Guard members to establish an Honor Guard schedule at the funeral home and at the site of the funeral service.
5. Coordinate with the departments involved and with the funeral director a formal walkthrough of uniformed personnel. This includes seating arrangements.
6. Work with the department chaplain or clergy member designated by the family to coordinate any prayer services to be conducted at the funeral home and forward this information to the Survival Action Officer.
7. Develop a schedule for uniformed personnel to follow the day of the funeral at the funeral site. This includes:
  - a. Arrival time for uniformed personnel and specific instructions as to where to gather
  - b. Briefing and practice of formations that will be present when the casket is removed
  - c. Briefing on proper protocols for entering and leaving the funeral site.
8. Coordinate vehicle staging with the Procession Officer, including arrangements for department vehicles. Ensure the availability of sufficient personnel to properly direct and stage incoming apparatus and vehicles.
9. Obtain from the Family Liaison Officer the uniform or other clothing that the deceased will wear during viewing and deliver it to the funeral director.
10. Coordinate with the Family Liaison Officer on special reading or eulogies for the funeral.
11. Obtain white gloves for all department pallbearers.

## APPENDIX 11

### **Procession Officer's Responsibilities**

The Procession Officer is responsible for coordinating the procession from the funeral home to the site of the funeral service or other service area (if necessary) and from there or other funeral site to the place of final committal. Duties include:

1. Attend all coordination meetings to determine the following:
  - a. Name of the funeral home
  - b. Name of the church or other service location
  - c. Name of the place of final committal
  - d. Use of an engine as a caisson or a conventional hearse
  - e. Use of an engine as a flower carrier
  - f. Schedule of events the day of the funeral
  - g. The logistics of the procession:
    - I. Honor Guard
    - II. Band or Pipers
    - III. Pallbearers
2. Establish a system for staging and coordinating vehicles at all locations where funeral activities will occur. Coordinate the vehicle staging with appropriate key personnel (service officials, officials at the site of final committal). Ensure that sufficient personnel are available at all staging locations to efficiently direct and stage apparatus and vehicles.
3. Coordinate with the Family Liaison Officer to determine any special circumstances affecting the procession. These may include:
  - a. Passing the department member's, station, or other special location
  - b. Special static displays of equipment and personnel at locations on the procession route
  - c. The use of crossed aerial ladders at the entrance to the site of final committal or other location. If used, contact the Survival Action Officer to obtain the necessary apparatus.
4. Contact the local law enforcement authorities for assistance in working with the funeral director to:
  - a. Establish routes for the procession.
  - b. Determine traffic control needs.
    - I. Traffic rerouting and street closings at the funeral home and funeral site. Contact the appropriate government agency or department to obtain barricades if needed.
    - II. Traffic control at any special assembly point.
    - III. If necessary, post "No Parking" signs around the funeral home, funeral site and any other assembly points.
    - IV. Directing of staged vehicles as they line up for procession(s).
  - c. Arrange for procession escorts.
5. Develop maps showing the procession route and other needed information. Maps will be handed out at the briefing at the funeral site prior to the beginning of the service and sent to attendees from out of town. Post them on the department's website along with times and required dress.
6. Align vehicles in the procession in coordination with the funeral director:
  - a. Lead Escort
  - b. Fire department vehicle used as flower carrier

- c. Hearse or engine used as caisson
  - d. Family vehicles
  - e. Pallbearers (if not riding on flower vehicle and caisson)
  - f. Honorary pallbearers
  - g. Honor Guard/Color Guard
  - h. Chief's vehicle
  - i. Other department vehicles
  - j. Local law enforcement vehicles
  - k. Local officials' vehicles
  - l. Vehicles from other departments
  - m. Vehicles from other police departments
  - n. Vehicles of family friends and other private vehicles
  - o. Rear Escort
7. If department apparatus serve as a caisson and/or flower vehicle, contact the Survivor Action Officer and determine which apparatus will be used. Ensure the following preparations have been made:
- a. Apparatus is thoroughly cleaned
  - b. Apparatus operators wear full dress uniforms while driving.
  - c. Deceased member's bunker gear is placed in a riding position on the caisson with the bunker boots turned backwards.
  - d. If used, bunting and/or funeral flags are affixed to the apparatus.

8.

## APPENDIX 12

### **Funeral Service Officer's Responsibilities**

The Funeral Service Officer has the primary responsibility of coordinating all the activities and ceremonies at the church or funeral site. Duties include:

1. Attend coordination meetings and obtain the following information from the Survivor Action Officer and Family Liaison Officer:
  - a. Schedule of events
  - b. Location of the service
  - c. Clergy involved, including the department chaplain
  - d. Readings and readers
  - e. Type and length of service
  - f. Requested ceremonial items:
    - I. Badge presentation
    - II. Special readings
    - III. Special eulogies
  - g. Music and musicians
  - h. Information on the deceased member, both departmental and personal. Give this information to the person delivering the tribute or eulogy.
2. Contact the Procession Officer and coordinate vehicle staging at the service location
3. Make seating arrangements for those attending the service. In addition to family members, provide dedicated seating for:
  - a. Pallbearers
  - b. Honor Guard
  - c. Uniformed personnel
  - d. Dignitaries
4. Determine the formations to be used and coordinate them during the arrival and removal of the casket from the location of the service. Review military commands for the formations and issue them when appropriate.
5. Develop a program for the service and give it to the Family Liaison Officer to discuss with the family. Ask if they want any special prayer cards and, if so, provide a draft to the funeral director.
6. After approval by the family, provide a draft to the funeral director for reproduction. If a program for the service is needed, coordinate this with the department chaplain and the clergy.



## APPENDIX 13

### **Final Committal Service Officer's Responsibilities**

The Final Committal Service Officer is responsible for the preparation and coordination of events at the site of the final committal. This starts from the time procession vehicles arrive and people exit the vehicles. The officer is also responsible for liaison with personnel who manage and operate the final committal site. Duties include:

1. Attending coordination meetings and obtaining the following information from the Survivor Action Officer and Family Liaison Officer:
  - a. Type of final committal:
    - I. Burial
    - II. Placement in a crypt
    - III. Cremation
  - b. Family requests:
    - I. Final Alarm Service
    - II. Taps
    - III. Firing party
    - IV. Reading and readers
    - V. Music and musicians
2. Schedule and coordinate the sequence of events that will take place at the final committal site. This includes coordinating any special requests received from the Survivor Actions Officer or Family Liaison Officer.
3. Develop the type of formations for uniformed personnel and their locations. Issue appropriate orders consistent with military standards.
4. Ensure that the officials at the final committal site take care of all necessary items, such as:
  - a. Overhead protection for immediate family
  - b. Seating for the immediate family
  - c. A public address system if needed
5. Ensure that Honor Guard members are thoroughly familiar with folding and presenting the flag to the next of kin.
6. Coordinate with the Survivor Action Officer to see if any family members have medical conditions requiring emergency medical personnel and equipment at the site.
7. Upon dismissal of the formation, announce the location of the post-funeral reception, if any.