



USSVI CB CHAPLAIN GUIDELINES

United States Submarine Veterans, Inc. Charleston Base Chaplain Guidelines

Original: July 2007 Rev: September 2026

Ref: (a) USSVI Chaplain's Manual, February 2026

PURPOSE: This document provides working guidelines to the Charleston Base Officers and Board of Directors (BOD) regarding the office of Base Chaplain.

- 1) These guidelines are approved by the BOD and may be amended by the BOD whenever the need becomes apparent.
- 2) These guidelines are not to be construed as all inclusive or to be strictly adhered to but to be used as a guide for the Chaplain to complete his duties.
- 3) Choosing the Base Chaplain:
 - a) The Base Chaplain is appointed by the Base Commander. He should serve as long as he is able to be of service, until he desires to relinquish his appointment or the Base Commander feels there is someone better qualified for the position.
 - b) The Base Chaplain should be familiar with the Bible, be able to pray, be comfortable with speaking in public and be a compassionate person.
- 4) The Base Chaplain duties will include, but not limited to:
 - a) Offer opening and closing prayers at each meeting.
 - b) Offer binnacle report at each meeting.
 - c) If requested, conduct short memorial or funeral services for deceased shipmates. (see para 6) Funerals and Memorial Services)
 - d) Assist in the planning and conduct of an annual memorial service of some type.
 - e) Assist shipmates in time of spiritual need. Ensure everyone understands that anything said to the Chaplain in counseling or discussion will remain confidential.
 - f) When possible, visit those shipmates and their family members who are sick and in need of comfort, whether in the hospital or at home.
 - g) When possible, visit those shipmates and their family members who are bereaved and in need of comfort.
 - h) Be responsible for managing a Memorial Fund (amount to be determined by the BOD.)
- 5) Memorial Fund:
 - a) The Chaplain will have access to funds to operate his office (yearly budget amount to be determined by the BOD.) An account will be given to the Base Treasurer for any funds expended or any reimbursements required.
 - b) Memorial Funds will be expended as follows:
 - i) Postage for mailing cards to sick and bereaved.
 - ii) Supplies for printing/buying cards to mail.

- iii) Memorial Service needs: EP Certificate holders, shadow boxes, dolphins, brass plates, etc.
- iv) In case of death or illness:
 - (a) Contact shipmate's immediate family (wife/parents/children) as soon as the issue is known

6) Funerals and Memorial Services:

- a) Deceased Submarine qualified shipmates will fall into one of three categories:
 - i) Non-USSVI members (SS qualified but not members)
 - ii) USSVI Members at Large (MAL) or members of another base
 - iii) USSVI Charleston Base members
- b) Non-USSVI members:
 - i) The Chaplain will ensure information, when known, concerning any shipmate's passing is promulgated to the base membership. Info will include all pertinent details of services. All base members will be encouraged to attend the wake/viewing/services and wear their vests as a sign of support to the family.
- c) USSVI Members at Large (MAL) or members of another base:
 - i) When contacted by the family of the MAL or the leadership of another base, the Chaplain will offer whatever assistance needed, dependent on available Charleston Base resources at the time of the services. All efforts will be made to ensure support for the departed shipmate's family/base.
- d) USSVI Charleston Base members:
 - i) When notified of the death of a Charleston Base member, the Chaplain will make contact with the family as soon as possible. Additionally, he will promulgate to the membership as many details as known. Once service arrangements have been made, the chaplain will promulgate that info to the membership.
 - ii) If the family requests, the Chaplain will conduct the service to the best of his ability. He will work with the funeral home and family to ensure the wishes of the family is met whenever possible. In preparation for the service the Chaplain will call upon the base leadership for assistance as necessary.
 - iii) A typical service will consist of the following elements at a minimum:
 - (1) Chaplain remarks
 - (2) Music (Navy Hymn, Amazing Grace, etc.)
 - (3) Scripture (if requested by family)
 - (4) Presentations:
 - (a) Eternal Patrol Certificate
 - (b) Dolphin Shadow Box – Gold or Silver
 - (c) Commemorative Coin – Charleston Base or Holland Club
 - (5) Bell Tolling
 - iv) The Chaplain will promulgate the prescribed uniform for the service. He will discuss this with the family and adhere to their wishes. The uniform will be either:
 - (1) Vest Uniform – cover (use decided by chaplain): SUVBET vest, blue shirt (long or short sleeve), dark tie (dolphin tie preferred), khaki pants, dark shoes
 - (2) Charleston Tuxedo – no cover worn: navy blue blazer, full sized dolphins or pocket fob, khaki pants, dark shoes
 - v) The Chaplain will promulgate an order of service to base members who will be participating in the services.