

Paul Ashford Carmean

Chaplain Major Paul Ashford Carmean was born at home (like his sister and brother) in Meadow Creek, WV on July 19, 1947. The non-attending doctor (Dr. J.W. Stokes) came three days later to see if he was still alive. He struggled with asthma and was once declared terminal.

At the age of 5, he caught his first fish on a home-made "broom handle and kite string pole" in the Meadow Creek's former mill pond. He later moved to Hinton to begin 2nd grade at Riverview School. There he tried to play basketball but at the recommendation of Coaches Jim Williams and Henry Noel, it was suggested that he be the "water boy" for the team. All during his home life at 1401 Temple Street, he shoveled snow, cut grass, sold vegetables out of their garden and he carried the Hinton Daily News for over 7 years, six days a week from 2nd Ave to Tug Creek. Wading and fishing with a real rod and reel in New River was always a treat.

Paul trusted Jesus Christ as his personal savior in 1958 at Riverview Chapel's time at Camp Summers and loved every church camp he could attend thereafter. In his Hinton High School days, he built his own low-power AM radio station (WPAC). After reading an article in Popular Mechanics, Paul stapled empty egg cartons to the walls of his bedroom to improve the acoustics of his broadcasts. In the evenings, he broadcasted from his bedroom to the West End of Hinton, he featured music and news from the Hinton Daily News with editor, John Falconer's permission. He would also recap the Summers County sporting events. Unfortunately, the FCC told him it wasn't legal to operate without a license so he had to shut his station down! He was a charter member of Summers County's first Citizens Band Radio Response Team (KLM 5473) augmenting fire and ambulance calls with supporting communications. He played the trumpet in the HHS Band for 2 years. He was blessed to have his favorite encouraging HHS teachers such as Mrs. Matthews, Mr. Garten and Mr. Crawford and growing up beside the "three smart Dressler kids". His parents and Harry Pilkington at the Chapel provided Paul's spiritual nourishment and guidance.

Upon graduation from HHS in 1965, he worked at the Western Auto Store on 3rd Avenue until 1966. By inspiration of his older brother, Charles, in the U.S.

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Air Force, he enlisted in the USAF which culminated in 21 years of proudly wearing the blue uniform. Barely escaping the Army draft, he had no desire to attend college or ask for a service deferment as the Viet Nam War era was taking every young man possible in the '60s. Both he and Charles would in time, be combat veterans ---later, even serving together at the same base in Florida. From 1966 until 2016, during his military and federal service time, he was awarded three Commendation Letters from Presidents Carter, Bush and Trump. He was also awarded 2 USAF Meritorious Service Medals, and 1 USAF Commendation Medal, 5 USAF Good Conduct Medal, the U. S. Air Force Chief of Chaplain's Meritorious Service Award for chapel ministry during his combat duty and many other career decorations. For his creativity, he was awarded 7 cash awards for technical/operational improvements to the Air Force. He was stationed at Vandenberg AFB, CA for over 11 years being a part of 537 Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (Minuteman & Titan II) test launches. He was chosen to be on the Base Commanding General's Protocol Team. In all of this, he also served with the U SAF Chapel program at 7 military assignments including one Viet Nam combat tour and one combat support tour in the Philippines. He led the music, taught classes, preached and visited combat victims in military hospitals. He retired as a highly decorated Senior Non-Commissioned Officer in 1987 at Eglin AFB, FL. To compliment his Air Force time, in 2003, he was appointed to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for 13 years of managerial service at the Clarksburg, WV location. He retired there with honors as a GS-13, Step 7 in 2016.

Along with his federal time, he was commended (licensed) by his home church (Riverview Chapel) as a minister/chaplain in 1979. Since that time he has been a self-supporting minister. Through the years he has served as a chaplain, camp counselor, assistant pastor, pastor, prison chaplain, hospital chaplain, minister of music and conducted evangelistic meetings in several locations, including the Riverview Chapel. Paul holds a BA and MS of Divinity (Pastoral Emphasis) from the Great Plains Baptist School of Divinity. He also completed non-accredited doctoral studies in 1985. He is a Liberty University grad from their Pastoral Counseling Institute. His ministry as a USAF-qualified military chaplain is endorsed by the Associated Gospel Churches Agency of Greenville, SC. He aggressively recruits chaplains and chaplain assistants for all of the military branches.

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Now Paul serves once again with the U. S. Air Force. This time it is the USAF Auxiliary Civil Air Patrol in Morgantown, WV for the past 19 years. He is currently an active duty Major being prepared for Lt. Colonel, he is the Deputy West Virginia CAP Wing Chaplain, Flight Chaplain, Downed Aircraft Incident Scanner, Character Development Instructor, Membership Chair, and Professional Development officer. He has graduated from the CAP Regional Staff College and the USAF CAP Regional Chaplain's Staff College and mentors younger ones in the 57,000 member nation-wide organization. He manages the WV CAP Chaplain Corps Reporting System for its 23 members. He has been awarded 2 WV CDI of the Year Awards, 3 Commander's Commendation Awards and The Chuck Yeager Aerospace Education Award. Many of his graduated cadets now serve in the military and civic occupations helping their mankind. He leads 2 Veteran's Day parades in his city each year and was chosen as the honorary Morgantown parade marshal in 2019. He provides grief counseling for fallen veteran's family members. He is a key team member for the Experimental Aircraft Association's Young Eagle Flight Program that provides young people their first airplane ride at 4 different WV locations each year. Hundreds of youth have benefited from his wealth of aerospace education knowledge. Paul leads a CAP representation to both Charleston and Washington, DC each year. He introduces young cadets to their government officials and obtains critical operating funds for CAP's aircraft, equipment and vehicle usage. He trains fellow Chaplain Corps members at the WV Annual CAP Conferences.

Paul has been married to Johnette Sue Grant (also a child of a railroading father) of Peru, IN for over 54 years and they have 2 grown children (Tim, a senior jet pilot and Sande, a public school special Ed teacher) plus being "Papaw" to 8 grandchildren. His hobbies are flying, boating and model railroading the C & O and Wabash in his basement in memory of their father's railroading days. In Morgantown, Paul and Johnette are associated with the outreach ministries of Grace Bible Church and the Board of Directors for the Father Son/Father Daughter Camp East in Waynesburg, PA for over 10 years. His life verse is 2nd Timothy 2: 19 and does not plan to quit serving His Lord God, even at 74 years old. Paul is ever grateful for being born, raised and now living once again in WV. He will always call Hinton "My Special Home Town, loaded with priceless memories and dear friends"!

Paul Ashford Carmean, We Salute You!

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