



Commander Robert E. Bradshaw

Chaplain, U.S. Navy



In 1984, Robert Bradshaw enlisted in the Air Force working first in law enforcement and later as an image interpreter. He left the Air Force in 1989. After that, Bradshaw attended the University of Florida earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Exercise and Sports Sciences, followed by a Master of Divinity degree at Bethel Seminary in San Diego. In 2001, CDR Bradshaw was admitted to the U.S. Navy Chaplain Candidate Program becoming an active-duty chaplain in March of 2004.

Following training, CDR Bradshaw was assigned as Battalion Chaplain in the Second Marine Division for Third Battalion Eighth Marines and Fifth Battalion Tenth Marines at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. While at Camp Lejeune, CDR Bradshaw was deployed to Haiti and to Iraq. In 2006, Bradshaw became Staff Chaplain at Yokosuka, Japan for roughly three years before being selected for the Naval Special Warfare Development Group as Command Chaplain serving on deployments to Afghanistan,

East Africa, and the Arabian Peninsula. In 2012, CDR Bradshaw became Command Chaplain in the Naval Special Warfare Training Center for four years followed by a year as Command Chaplain in the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force in Iraq. From February until July of 2017, CDR Bradshaw was Supervisory Chaplain at Naval Base Coronado, California, before becoming Deputy Command Chaplain for the Third Marine Aircraft Wing. In 2018, CDR Bradshaw was selected for the White House Military Office serving eleven months as Deputy Director for the Chaplain Directorate followed by twenty-four months in the same office as Director. In 2021, Bradshaw became Recruit Training Regiment Chaplain at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, South Carolina. CDR Bradshaw retired from the Navy at Parris Island in June of 2023 with General David Berger, then Commandant of the Marine Corps, in attendance to celebrate the chaplain's career.

Not long after arriving in Afghanistan in 2011, special forces suffered what has been called their "worst loss of life in modern times." A Chinook helicopter carrying 38 fighters, 31 of whom were special forces fighters, toward a landing zone during a nighttime mission, was shot down by rocket propelled grenades, killing everyone on board. Speaking at CDR Bradshaw's retirement ceremony at Parris Island, Rear Admiral Keith Davids, then Commander of Naval Special Warfare Command, recalled Bradshaw's response to the incident saying: "Chaplain Bradshaw rewrote the book on how to deal with casualties then, bringing in 25 chaplains to see to every need and task, from making sure the bodies were given dignified travel, to ministering to the comrades of our fallen team members, to ministering to every one of the families impacted. Robert went to each and every funeral. He literally remapped how not only the Navy and Marines deal with tragedy, but his methods are now standard practice for all four branches of the U.S. Military." Following retirement, CDR Bradshaw became chaplain at the Navy Seal Museum in Fort Pierce, Florida.