



Rex Eugene Carpenter

January 30, 1944 - April 20, 2026

Chaplain, Lieutenant Colonel, Rex Eugene Carpenter (US Air Force, Ret.) of Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, formerly of Hampton, Virginia, passed away on April 20, 2026 in Southfield, Michigan. Rex was born on January 30, 1944, in Wichita, Kansas, and raised by his parents Frederick B. Carpenter and Leta M. (Folsom) Carpenter in Benton City, Washington, along with his siblings Fred, Evelyn, Rose, and Philip. He met his wife Louise at Seattle Pacific College in Washington, and they were married in Jamestown, New York, on August 17, 1968. Rex is survived by his wife Louise Rennells Carpenter; his son Benjamin Bennett-Carpenter and spouse Marcelyn Bennett-Carpenter of Berkley, Michigan; daughter Heather Carpenter of Brooklyn, New York; son Joshua Carpenter and spouse Mattie Hawkinson of Oak Park, Illinois; son Philip Carpenter and spouse Elizabeth Lee Carpenter of Morrison, Colorado; his nine grandchildren: Nicolas, Gracey, Isaac, Caleb, Levi, Eliana, Esther, Joshua, and Ruby; and one great-grandchild: William.

Rex lived a life defined by service to God, to his country, and to the many people he guided throughout his years in ministry. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in Business/Economics from Seattle Pacific College, Master of Divinity from Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky, and a Doctor of Ministry degree from Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington DC. Rex served for thirteen years as a pastor in the Free Methodist Church, twenty-four years as a United States Air Force Chaplain, and thirteen years as the

Free Methodist Chaplain Endorsing Agent and Director of Chaplain Ministries.

In these capacities, he and his loving wife Louise of fifty-seven years served as partners in ministry across the United States, and beyond, including in New York, Nevada, Spain, Washington DC, New Mexico, California, Germany, Virginia, and elsewhere, with wide travels visiting chaplains around and beyond the United States. Rex also served three months to one year in the Middle East and Alaska.

Rex lived a life of purpose and devotion to Jesus Christ, to his family, and to chaplains in the military, hospitals, prisons, campuses, hospice, and industry. He loved the great outdoors, playing games, all kinds of sports, working hard, talking with people, and all-around having fun, seeking to make things good for everyone around him. Rex had an adventurous spirit, he was tenacious, and he gave his whole heart to every endeavor. He was very attentive to people, including family, loved ones, friends, colleagues, and anyone he encountered. He loved to tell stories and to hear other people's stories.

He was loyal and very generous in his time, attention, interest, and resources to those around him. He was a hard worker and took great satisfaction in fixing things that were broken or not working right. Rex was an upstanding person that people regarded as a man of honor, good will, and respect. Rex held fast to the faith that gave him daily strength, hope, and encouragement. In all things, he sought to bless people and to create a spirit of teamwork, cooperation, and love.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Chaplains Association of the Free Methodist Church (<https://fmcusa.org/chaplains>).

A visitation will be held for Rex on Saturday, May 2, 2026, beginning at 10:00 am and continuing until the time of service, 11:00 am, at Cedarholm Chapel,

Kirk in the Hills, 1340 W. Long Lake Rd., Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Pastor Dr. Keith Provost and Bishop Emeritus Richard Snyder will officiate the service, and a livestream of the service can be accessed at <https://kirkinthehills.org/worship/past-messages>. Burial is scheduled for Tuesday, May 5, 2026 at 2:00 pm at Ulysses Cemetery in Pennsylvania.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 2. 10:00 AM (ET)

Kirk in the Hills Presbyterian Church
1340 W. Long Lake Road
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302

Funeral Service

MAY 2. 11:00 AM (ET)

Kirk in the Hills Presbyterian Church
1340 W. Long Lake Road
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302

Inurnment

MAY 5. 2:00 PM (ET)

Ulysses Cemetery
516 N. Main Street
Ulysses, PA 16948

Tribute Wall

CB

“ *My dear Uncle Rex...what an incredible man and someone who deeply affected my life. He was such a great big brother to my Mom and our entire family adored him. He was sunshine in human form.*

I always admired and respected him for his obvious and warm love for his wife and kids. He had a way with words, a quick wit and could put you at ease. He also knew when to speak truth in a way that really made you stop and think.

He literally saved my life when I slipped at the top of a waterfall at my grandparents Packwood home when I was an kid. Everyone there says he flew so fast up the hill that he looked like a blur. I'll never forget slipping off the top of a waterfall, hanging onto a branch, looking up and seeing him reaching to pull me up. He was my hero in so many ways!

I will miss him dearly and look forward to seeing him again one day. I know he's with Jesus, his hero and Savior, and that brings comfort and tears of joy.

Cindy

Cindy Buffo - May 02 at 01:18 AM

FA

“ *Free Methodist Chaplains Association purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Rex Eugene Carpenter.*



Free Methodist Chaplains Association - May 01 at 02:44 PM

FA

“ Free Methodist Chaplains Association planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Rex Eugene Carpenter.

Free Methodist Chaplains Association - May 01 at 02:44 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Rex Eugene Carpenter.



May 01 at 11:11 AM

SF

“ Stephen & Laura Coates & Family purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Rex Eugene Carpenter.



Stephen & Laura Coates & Family - April 30 at 09:25 AM

JN

“ I served with Rex on the Ramstein Air Base chapel staff toward the end of my assignment at Ramstein. Rex was a welcome addition to the staff and a great friend and colleague. I am saddened to learn of Rex's passing. We send our heartfelt condolences to his family. May light perpetual shine upon him.



Jeffrey Neuberger - April 29 at 01:37 PM

JN

I am standing immediately behind Rex (Jeffrey Neuberger)

Jeffrey Neuberger - April 29 at 01:39 PM

JO

What a wonderful blessing was Rex, and is Louise, to Belva and me and to my brother, Jim, and his wife, Sue! How we pray for Louise and her family and all who grieve Rex's departure!

John Ike Owen - May 02 at 10:53 AM

JN

“ 1 file added to the album *Air Force Chaplain*



Jeffrey Neuberger - April 29 at 01:32 PM



“ *Beautiful Dreams* was purchased for the family of *Rex Eugene Carpenter.*



April 29 at 01:03 PM

KR

“ I'm his nephew , Kermit "Ralph" Rucker III . The memory of my Uncle Rex that sticks out the most was when myself and a bunch of the family were all up visiting at Grandma and Grandpa Carpenters Packwood Wa. House . We all took a walk up to where the falls were and my sister (his niece) got to close to the top of the falls and got stuck in the slippery rocks . Everyone hesitated except Uncle Rex , he went barreling up there like a track star with extra purpose and definitely (I think) saved her life ! I have always thought of him as my hero and was for the whole family the whole time we were blessed by God to have him here with us ! What a hero for the Lord Jesus as well ! What an awesome and loving man , you will always be dearly loved by anyone who knew you !!!

Kermit Rucker - April 28 at 03:05 PM

NH

“ Nathan and Heidi purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Rex Eugene Carpenter.



Nathan and Heidi - April 27 at 06:29 PM

MF

“ Much Love and Sympathy, Ronna and Family purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Rex Eugene Carpenter.



Much Love and Sympathy, Ronna and Family - April 27 at 02:54 PM

LU

“ I had recently written about Rex in my annual report for the FMCA regarding significant contacts in the FMCA:

"Rex Carpenter was my first RO. He was capable, wise, sincere, and courageous. His sword is missed in the battle and I will always remember his care and support. May the LORD bless the remainder of his days."

I am so thankful to have known him and to be mentored by him in those early days of Chaplain ministry.

I know he now stands in glory with the LORD and has received his full reward for following Christ and serving in the Kingdom.

I hold on to the certain hope that we will see him again.

I know Rex was Air Force but I offer this Mariners' prayer:

- Father we know that this Mariner has heard the final Bosn's call and has gone ashore to Your side. We pray that You have received him saying, "Shipmate... the watch stands relieved." May he know that his ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done, from this fearful trip in life, his victor ship comes in with object won; May Heaven declare, "Exult O shores, and ring O bells! The Mariner is ashore, now with God he dwells." -

Rest well Chaps, we have the watch.

Chaplain David Pahs, USN

LCDR DAVID S. PAHS, CHC, USN - April 24 at 04:33 PM

LS

“ When Rex and Louise visited years ago and helped me to define a rural chaplaincy (after the academic one, and other FMC opportunities, fell through), we had a cookout at my house under a redbud tree by a little frog pond. I always think of that tree as Rex and Louise's tree; it is in glorious bloom now. Their wonderful presence and counsel are with me daily, but now in a special way - and someday, we'll meet under the Tree of Life.

Linda Schwab - April 24 at 01:47 PM

LI

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Liz - April 24 at 11:36 AM

DH

“ Loving and prayerful thoughts for Louise and all the family of Rex Carpenter. You have been a wonderful blessing to us over the years, always loved seeing you . . . and look forward to our eternal reunion in the “Sweet By and By” with our Savior and His eternal family 🙏 Dan & Linda 💕

Dan & Linda Hummer - April 24 at 10:31 AM

DH

“ Dan & Linda Hummer sent a virtual gift in memory of Rex Eugene Carpenter



Dan & Linda Hummer - April 24 at 10:13 AM

LI

“ One of the things I will always remember about Rex is how deeply he loved his wife and family. There was a time his wife asked him to go to the car and get some papers. He had a little trouble navigating to the car, but he was determined to do this for her. That was who he was- devoted, selfless, and always wanting to take care of the ones he loved most. His eyes would light up when his family came to visit him and his wife at their apartment. It was a quiet but powerful kind of love that left a lasting impression on me. Rex will always be in our thoughts. I am thankful for the many friends that Louise has at American House who have been asking about Louise with thoughtful concern.



Sincerely,
American House Employees and Friends

Liz - April 24 at 10:07 AM

RH

“ Condolences for Rex's family. We grew up with Rex and his siblings in Benton City, WA. I have many fond memories of Rex and his family. Rest in peace, Rex.

Ron Harding - April 23 at 01:26 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Rex Eugene Carpenter.*



April 23 at 09:30 AM



“ *Stephanie Schell lit a candle in memory of Rex Eugene Carpenter*



Stephanie Schell - April 23 at 12:21 AM



“ *Stephanie Schell sent a virtual gift in memory of Rex Eugene Carpenter*



Stephanie Schell - April 23 at 12:20 AM



“ *Stephanie Schell sent a virtual gift in memory of Rex Eugene Carpenter*



Stephanie Schell - April 23 at 12:20 AM

SS

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Stephanie Schell - April 23 at 12:20 AM

SS

“ *Devoted himself to serving his country, community, and God.*

Stephanie Schell - April 23 at 12:19 AM

DS

“ My wife Digna and I have known Rex and Louise for over 50 years. We first met when attending Roberts Wesleyan College and Rex taught the Sunday School class for college students. Several years later we became better acquainted as Rex guided us through pre-marital counseling and then officiated at our wedding. We still follow some of the wise counsel he gave us so many years ago. Several years later, when I was serving as a hospital Chaplain, we reconnected with Rex and Louise through the Chaplain Association where they served as encouraging and uplifting guides. Through the years Rex was a friend, encourager, and mentor and we have experienced a blessed and privileged journey. Our memories of Rex will continue to be a blessing, comfort and source of joy for having known him. May God bring peace and comfort to Louise, his devoted partner in service and life. Our prayers are with the family. We praise God for Rex's life and look forward to seeing him again.

Bruce and Digna Swingle

Digna B. Swingle - April 23 at 12:09 AM

LV

“ What a wonderful man, a genuine gentle shepherd who took care of all of us chaplains along with his precious Louise. I will forever be grateful for his investment in my life and for his guidance in my early days of chaplaincy. He was a champion of people and his leadership and care for us carried us through good times and bad. His example along be remembered as the standard, and his wise ways and good sense of humor lightened our load. Thank you, Rex for a life well lived. Your legacy lives on and all those who you served. Although we will miss you terribly as will Louise, we will look forward to seeing you again in the company of our savior!

Linda Vecchiarelli - April 23 at 12:06 AM

DT

“ I am so sorry to hear of Rex passing! He served as our chaplain at Langley AFB in Hampton Virginia for several years and we were friends! Louise helped me in my business for several of those years! A wonderful couple! Louise, thanks for all you did for me! God bless you and your family as you grieve!
Dianne Tate

DIANNE L. TATE - April 22 at 08:01 PM

MH

“ Will always remember sweet words of encouragement and wisdom in our coffee conversation and will carry that advice forward



Mattie Hawkinson - April 22 at 07:09 PM

JG

“ When Rex was in town he made a point to take my wife and I to dinner to get to know me as a newly endorsed Chaplain with the FMC. He continued to provide exceptional care and ministry to me over time. Thank you Rex for your faithfulness to serve the Lord in so many ways for so many years.

Justin Gottuso - April 22 at 06:26 PM

LW

My heart goes out to his surviving siblings, Fred, Evelyn and Rose.

LaJean Whitcomb - April 22 at 08:27 PM

JE

“ Joy E. purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Rex Eugene Carpenter.



Joy E. - April 22 at 05:32 PM

DN

“ Rex was a blessing. In one sense, what more can be said. He and Louise were wonderful as Rex led the FM Chaplains Association. I don't cry often, yet hearing of his homegoing brings tears to my eyes. A wonderful, brave, caring person like Rex cannot be replaced. We must walk on, keeping these precious memories and blessings close at hand. I thank God for Rex.
Enjoy the start of your new eternity, my friend.
Dave Nicholson

David Nicholson - April 22 at 05:17 PM

TP

“ It is such a pleasure to know Rex and Louise and to have Rex as the Endorsing Agent for the majority of my time in the USAF chaplaincy. Patricia and I were so blessed while we were stationed at Osan AB, S. Korea to have the Carpenters visit us and encourage us with their support when we were so far from home. I had the pleasure of serving on the FMCA Executive Committee while Rex was the Endorsing Agent and Director. He was a spiritual and supportive servant-leader, cheerful and of good humor - a faithful man of God! Rex was the longest serving Endorsing Agent and Director of Chaplain Ministries (13 years) in the FMCUSA and he and Louise had a far-reaching impact on our chaplains and their families! It was an honor for Patricia and I to follow Rex and Louise as Co-Directors of Chaplain Ministries/Endorsing Agent. We rejoice that Rex is receiving the goal of his faith - eternal life!

Tim Porter - April 22 at 04:34 PM

JW

“ Rex and Louise have been a great source of blessing and encouragement to Martha and me over our years of chaplain and pastoral service. He always made us feel special and cared for, with their personal visits, treating us to wonderful dinners, and assurance of prayer and spiritual support. He was a very kind and empathetic leader and friend. His faith in and love for Jesus was firm, even in the midst of great suffering. Our love and prayers are extended to Louise and their family.

Jon Wright - April 22 at 03:14 PM

PP

Rex and Louise have been mentors to Tim and I for many years. We still remember when they came to visit us in South Korea while we were stationed at Osan. It was such a labor of love...love they demonstrated over and over with all the chaplains and their families under their care for over 13 years! We will miss Rex greatly and will treasure the moments we had with him but we know he is enjoying the fruits of his labor now in the arms of Jesus. Our love and prayers are with Louise and family.

Patricia Porter - April 22 at 04:26 PM



“*When I faced a career setback and considered trying another profession, Rex was instrumental in guiding me back on course to fulfill the calling God had placed upon my life. Having just retired from military chaplaincy, I look back and realize I would have never made it to this point were it not for God's grace operating through the encouragement of Rex and Louise Carpenter.*

John Hubbs - April 22 at 02:35 PM

“ I met Rex and Louise on a plane headed from Germany to Hampton, VA. I had boarded, found my seat and prepared for a long trip, squashed between two people I didn't know. I'd already found the poker game I liked playing and signed on. I'd been to a church service on the base that morning, and heard an announcement saying that Rex and Louise Carpenter were headed off to Hampton, VA that afternoon. That's interesting, I thought.

I'm not good with names, but their names stuck with me. Rex and Louise. After church I gathered my stuff, and headed for the airport. I knew the journey was going to be a long one, but I was prepared. I found the poker game I love playing on the screen in front of me, so all I needed to do was sign on as soon as I found my seat. Two other people had already signed up, so I knew the game would be good.

The plane took off and I was already winning. I relaxed a little. (I like to win.)

Laughter erupted in the seats in front of me. I perked up. These folks were having a blast.

I managed to garner a peek , hoping to get in on the joke. In the seats in front of me I could see a map spread out between them. "What we need," said the man, "is divine intervention!" His wife giggled even harder.

I couldn't believe what I was hearing. Without even a second's thought, I unlatched my seatbelt, and draped myself over their seatbacks. "Are you the Carpenters?" I asked.

They looked at one another and turned their heads to see me. "Yes, the man said, "How'd you know?"

"I heard your names mentioned during church this morning. I'm terrible with names but yours stuck with me. I live in Hampton, close to the base. I'll be happy to help you."

"Divine intervention!"Rex said. "We were just talking about it!" As it happened, Rex and Louise found a house they loved in that neighborhood. They moved in, and my wife and I became fast friends with the Carpenters. When something fun was going to happen, the four of us were always ready to play.

Their journeys to visit chaplains in faraway places kept them busy,

*but there was always time to play when they came back home.
Divine intervention. None of none knew how divine God's plan for
us was going to be.*

Jan Hunter - April 22 at 02:10 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the
family of Rex Eugene Carpenter.*



April 22 at 02:09 PM

SP

“ Listening to this handsome young man, standing in the registration line at Seattle Pacific College, telling his friend about his summer, I was alerted to something special about him. Not long after, it became clear that he had to be someone special because he was dearly loved by my treasured roommate. As years passed, they married and had children. My husband, Al, and our family, followed their progress as they served their Lord Jesus in so many places around the world. My husband, myself and our family treasured each visit with Rex and Louise, shared prayer requests, and laughed with them as my dad and Rex tried to best each other with jokes that kept us all laughing. Rex’s life as a chaplain was the encouragement Al needed as he stepped into a life as police and fire chaplain in our city.

Our hearts ache at knowing we won’t be able to share life (even at a distance) with Rex until we “graduate” and sit with him and my dad, Ernie, laughing with Jesus for eternity over shared jokes.

We watched Rex love Louise well through all sorts of challenges that they shared together, holding each other close and trusting God to guide them through all they faced.

Thank You, Lord, for introducing Rex (and Louise) to our family.

What a precious gift Rex’s life has been to each of us Pattersons.

Sallie K Patterson - April 22 at 01:08 PM