

The Rev Carl Walter Wright Biographical Statement

Carl Walter Wright is an Episcopal priest and United States Air Force chaplain. He was born 12 August 1959 in Baltimore, Maryland, to the late Rev Monaelmer Wright and Eva Tyler Wright, both of Virginia. Carl's formative years were shaped by inner-city Baltimore. He graduated from the Baltimore Polytechnic Institute, a college preparatory High School, and trained at the Peabody Institute Conservatory of Music. He was assisting organist at his home parish, Saint James's Episcopal Church, Lafayette Square, an historic Black congregation. He later graduated from Loyola University, with a Bachelor's degree in Theology and Virginia Theological Seminary, with a Master in Divinity. Carl's adult years have included faithful service to the Church and to the military. In 1978, he enlisted in the Air Force for four years. Then, in 1985, upon graduation from Loyola, he was commissioned a Lieutenant in the Infantry and served in the Maryland National Guard and the US Army Reserve in Maryland and California. Also in 1985, the Episcopal Church commissioned Carl a Jubilee Ministries Intern, and, as a Postulant for Holy Orders from the Diocese of Maryland, he served in the Diocese of Los Angeles, with a special emphasis on ministry to AIDS patients. After graduation from Virginia Seminary he was Curate at Emmanuel Parish Cumberland, Maryland. At the outbreak of the Persian Gulf War, he was sent to minister to military inmates at the US Disciplinary Barracks, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He next served as Rector of another historic African American parish, Saint Mark's Church, Charleston, South Carolina. While in Charleston, Carl received the call to become an active duty Air Force chaplain. He has served in this capacity since August 1993. His assignments have included Iraq, Kuwait, Turkey, Germany, Korea, California, Montana, Texas, Utah, and Louisiana. In all of these locations he has taken a very active part in the life of the dioceses. The culmination of Carl's military ministry was his assignment to the Air Force Theater Hospital, Balad Air Base, Iraq in 2006. There he ministered to wounded soldiers and Iraqis. To this day, he keeps the names of the soldiers whose deaths he attended in his Bible. In addition to Church music, Carl loves Church history. Over the years he has authored articles on the history of Black Episcopalians, such as the late Rev Dr. Pauli Murray (first African American woman ordained an Episcopal priest) and the late Rt Rev Cedric Mills (first Bishop of the US Virgin Islands). He wrote an article that appeared in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese for the Military Services, "Can the Lord Set a Table in the Wilderness?" (March 2006); and several spiritual reflections for the Living Church, Utah Diocesan Dialogue, and other periodicals. His essay, "The Spiritual Airman" was picked up by the national Air Force News. In January 2009, Carl was invited to lecture at Church Divinity School of the Pacific Epiphany West conference on the topic "Ministry on the Front Lines." It was well received.