



NCMAF / ECVAC

# Newsletter

News and Resources for  
Military and Veterans Affairs  
Endorsers and Chaplains

November 2011

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*"When you're the one people turn to for help and guidance, it can be very hard to seek it for yourself."  
Tony Scott Macauley, author of "A Dream Before Dying" on chaplains returning from combat zones*

## Chairman's Views

### Letter from NCMAF Chairman Steve Doan

Dear Colleagues,

Similar to "win win", "thinking outside the box", "paradigm shift", and "jumpstart" (catch phrases which have all gone before and seem to never die) the current catch phrase "new normal" will probably be with us for many years to come making it yet another oxymoron of our culture. Catch phrases often become so common and are applied to so many situations they seem ultimately to lose their meaning. A quick search of new normal on the internet reveals it's being applied to such varied issues as the economy, recovering from failed relationships, child rearing, healthy lifestyles, congressional gridlock, living with cancer, musical styles, and life after a reality TV show appearance. That being so, why did we select new normal as the theme for our upcoming conference?



Perhaps the most applicable use of new normal to explain our selection comes from a book by [Peter Hinssen](#) entitled appropriately enough "[The New Normal](#)." Hinssen says "(t)alking about the digital society could soon make you sound old and out of date - such is the pace of change. Advancement in technology is creating a 'new normal' where relationships with consumers are increasingly in a digital form. Businesses need to reinvent themselves to create new interactive business models. Technology is no longer an enabler. It has become a game-changer."

In a very real way we can and should consider our ministries as relationships with our consumers, either endorsers with their chaplains or chaplains with their personnel. And if we accept Hinssen, our relationships have been and are being changed by technology. We all know humans remain humans and human problems are in many ways unchanging. The way these problems get expressed, understood, continued, and hopefully resolved are however be dependent on the situation and that situation is ever more being changed by technology.

The change is sometimes overt and sometimes subtle. At our meeting we will have opportunity to hear from commanders, academics, leaders, and others regarding the context in which we now perform and facilitate ministry. We will also have, and perhaps more significantly, the opportunity to hear from each other and our chaplains. I am excited this year to know active duty chaplains are being invited to attend and participate in our process (if you have not signed up to bring one of your endorsed chaplains please do so soon - space is limited).

As we gather in community and engage each other in mutual support we may be surprised at what we achieve. By being primed to consider our new normal and consider how the context for ministry has changed we will challenge familiar and comfortable thinking. By exploring together the ever increasing role of technology in defining the lives, relationships, and expectations of those to whom we minister we will move forward. By doing this together and in dependence on God's grace we prayerfully will advance the cause to which we are all committed.

Collegially,  
Steve Doan

*A publication of the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF)  
and the Endorsers Conference for Veterans Affairs Chaplaincies (ECVAC)*

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**Letter from ECVAC Chairman John Murdoch**

Dear Colleagues,

As our annual meeting fast approaches I too have been prompted to consider what is meant by the term "new normal" as applied to chaplain ministry. After all we, as chaplains, address issues common to all humanity which have been with us since humans came into being. And as endorsers of chaplains, the situations may change but many of our issues remain constant. We as always must be concerned with training, equipping, mentoring, friending, challenging, correcting, encouraging, and praying for our chaplains regardless of who they are or where they may be. So what is the new normal in my calling?

My clearest conception of a new normal came as I reviewed a recent post on [Time.com](#) regarding an article which appeared in the 21 November issue of the magazine. Peter van Agtmael, the photographer for the article dealing with ways in which our current military is separated from the society it serves, [related](#) this personal experience from his visit to Fort Jackson to capture images to support the story.

"My escort around the base is a soldier with a Combat Infantryman's badge on his uniform, which he earned in Iraq. I tell him he is lucky he's gotten a quiet job working at the Public Affairs Office stateside given the frequent deployments, and he is silent for a while. Eventually he tells me that he'd received a traumatic brain injury when his humvee was hit by a roadside bomb. Now he has trouble concentrating and loses his equilibrium when he walks. Over time, his injury will prove fatal. The rest of the day he talks about his wife and children and about how much he misses being in the field."

It became clear to me as I read this very personal and in some ways sad but encouraging account, there really is a new normal. For the first time in history we have fought war where the wounded to casualty ratio is near 10:1 versus under 3:1. That means we should never be surprised or take for granted that someone related in some way to the military is not suffering from trauma, either physical, psychological, or spiritual, which may not be readily apparent in our initial contact. We are in a new situation in which our sensitivities must be elevated to be cognizant of this changed reality and in our pastoral role be prepared to respond in an appropriate fashion when the opportunity is realized. In other words, there are no more innocent conversations with those we serve in the military or VA system. This is the new normal.

In our annual meeting I am encouraged by the presence of Secretary Hickey and Chaplain Smith as both will address this new reality in thoughtful and helpful ways. My challenge for myself and the challenge I give to you is to prepare now for the information which will be shared. After all, ground which has been prepared for the seed is that which is most likely to grow a good crop.

I look forward to seeing you in January. Until then, enjoy this traditionally joyous and meaningful time of the year.

Collegially,  
John Murdoch



**The new Main Post Chapel on Fort Leonard Wood is a 32,900-square-foot facility.**

# Annual Conferences

## UPCOMING NCMAF AND ECVAC 2012 CONFERENCE

### "A Changing New Normal for Military Ministry -Commander and Chaplain Perspectives, Needs and Expectations"

#### National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF)

- Monday, January 09, 2012
  - New NCMAF Endorser Training 12:30 PM – 4:30 PM
  - Electronic Technology Training Workshop 7:30 PM – 9:00 PM
- NCMAF Annual Conference – January 10 – 11, 2012

#### Endorsers Conference for Veterans Affairs Chaplaincy (ECVAC)

- ECVAC Annual Conference –Wednesday, January 11, 2012

All above sessions will be held at the Hilton Mark Center Hotel in Alexandria, Virginia. The conference room rate is \$119 (single) and \$129 (double). You can make your hotel reservation now by calling 877-783-8258. Our special room rate block code is NCM. Be sure to use our NCM code when making your reservation. The deadline for making room reservations with our special group rate is December 15, 2011.

Your NCMAF and ECVAC registration materials and the meeting agendas are available to you [online](#).

The Armed Forces Chaplains Board (AFCB) will host their all endorser meeting on Thursday, January 12. The meeting this year will be held at the Hilton Mark Center.

More details and schedules are available at [NCMAF.org](http://NCMAF.org)

### Conference Speakers

**Lieutenant General Darrell Jones, USAF**

[Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower, Personnel and Services](#)

**Vice Admiral John Bird, USN**

[Director, Navy Staff](#)

**Colonel Carl Coffman, USA**

[Commander, Ft. Myers/Henderson Hall Joint Base](#)

**Professor Robert Tuttle, J.D., Ph.D.**

[David R. and Sherry Kirschner Berz Research Professor of Law and Religion, The George Washington University, Washington, DC](#)

**The Honorable Allison Hickey**

[Under Secretary of Benefits, Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

**Chaplain William Smith**

[Togus VA Medical Center, Augusta, Maine](#)

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The NCMAF Chaplain/Endorser Survey was conducted this summer using the web survey service SurveyMonkey. All currently serving chaplains were encouraged to complete the survey regardless of their current status. NCMAF Endorsing agents and Chiefs of Chaplains were contacted and asked to encourage their chaplains to log on to the provided site and complete the questionnaire.

All survey participants were volunteers and were assured confidentiality in their responses. As chaplains were requested to participate voluntarily and there was no effort made to ensure unbiased representation of those currently serving as chaplains, the results of the survey cannot be considered to necessarily represent the views of chaplains with statistical reliability. That said, over three hundred chaplains did successfully complete the survey both on line and through use of self-administered paper copies providing a broad representation of those currently serving the military. Of those who participated

- 207 identified as being on active duty at the time of the survey
- 7 were Chaplain Candidate Program Officers (CCPO)
- 25% of those completing the survey have served as a chaplain five years or less and 24% have served 21 or more years
- 41% indicated they receive communications from their endorser frequently
- 47% totally agreed they were better chaplains today because of their endorser's ministry to them
- 73% totally agreed their endorser was committed to helping them achieve success as a military chaplain

When examining influences as to whether the chaplain viewed their endorser in a positive light, the frequency with which the chaplain received communications was the single biggest factor. This more than any other characteristic included in the questions seems to be the most important issue for chaplains when they consider their thoughts on the importance of their endorser's ministry to them.

The NCMAF Chaplain/Endorser Survey will be briefed and discussed more thoroughly at the upcoming Annual Conference.

## Chaplaincy News

### 2011 AFRICA MILITARY CHAPLAINS CONFERENCE BEGINS IN GHANA

**By Deborah Robin Croft,**  
U.S. AFRICOM Public Affairs, ACCRA, Ghana,

**Oct 4, 2011** — The first AFRICOM Military Chaplains Conference to take place on the African continent kicked off on October 3, 2011 in Accra, Ghana with 38 African military chaplains and seven U.S. military chaplains attending. The four-day, landmark event was co-hosted by U.S. Africa Command and the Ghanaian Armed Forces.

U.S. Africa Command Chaplain, Air Force Colonel Jerry Lewis, and Ghana Director of Religious Affairs, Reverend Colonel David Adotey-Asare, delivered opening remarks to the participants, followed by an official welcome from Ghana Armed Forces Chief of Defense, Lieutenant General Blay.

Among the countries participating along with the United States and the host nation, Ghana, are Liberia, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, Botswana, Burundi, and Namibia.



ACCRA, Ghana - Participants of U.S. Africa Command's Military Chaplains Conference greet each other, September 2011 in Accra, Ghana. This was the first military chaplain's conference hosted by U.S. AFRICOM on the continent of Africa (U.S. AFRICOM photo by Deborah Croft)

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Each country that can do so has sent one Catholic, one Imam, and one Protestant religious delegate.

Last year, the U.S. and African Military Chaplains Conference was held in Garmisch, Germany, where the participants expressed their wishes to one day hold the conference on the continent of Africa. The dream came true sooner than expected when Ghana volunteered to host this year's conference.

The annual conference provides a unique opportunity to assemble African nation chaplains and U.S. military chaplains to further each other's understanding of common challenges, exchange views, establish and enhance interpersonal and working relationships, and foster security cooperation. The theme for the 2011 conference is, "Partnering for Spiritual Strength." The forum is also a venue to work through issues that might impede the mission.

While addressing the participants, Colonel Lewis explained that there are two goals for the 2011 Chaplains Conference. "We are here because last year in Germany, some of our brothers from Africa shared that the best thing we could do was to enlarge the opportunity for other African nations with established chaplain corps to come together. With General Ham's blessing, we are here throughout the week to develop partnerships among ourselves and build bridges between Americans and African nations, because that is so important in today's context. The burdens are not getting lighter; the demands for spiritual care are only increasing because of the world we live in. Building bridges amongst each other is vitally important so that we can support one another, help one another and, as children of God, can encourage one another with the burden and responsibilities that you have and leading the spiritual welfare of your commands as well as your troops we need that spark of hope to carry that flame of hope. We share a common heart and caring. My hope is that we will get an opportunity to meet colleagues who are also carrying that flame."

The second goal for the conference, according to Chaplain Lewis, is to develop networks amongst African nation participants so they can collaborate and assist each other in developing warrior support programs and not have to work in isolation. He used a sports analogy to demonstrate the teamwork aspect of working to accomplish a spiritual goal.

"It's that network that becomes, I think, a change breaker. I think we all sincerely desire to be winners, especially when it comes to the spiritual wellbeing of our soldiers," he said. "I think that networking enables us to help enhance that goal. As I say, if you'll forgive me thinking about just kicking that ball, we're just trying to advance that ball just a little further down the field to enhance the kingdom of God."

The keynote speaker for the opening ceremony was Ghana's Catholic Archbishop Emeritus, Peter Sarpony, who explained how deeply spiritual the African people have always been throughout history and how Africa is losing its moral values to ever increasing materialism.

"Our ethos has been overshadowed by money madness," Sarpony said. "From people who respected human dignity, we have become people who simply disdain the worth of the human person. Indeed we need spiritual awakening very badly...Soldiers need the spiritual advice and encouragement of their chaplains. Ordinary men and women rush to church in numbers in the times of problems. We look for God in times of trouble. We, as chaplains must cash in on this natural human tendency."

After the opening statements and remarks, the participants broke out into smaller groups to discuss three topics that were agreed upon during the 2010 Chaplains conference in Germany. The topics include; healing and reconciliation, combat stress, training on the role of chaplains to wounded warriors, and advising leadership.



**CHAPLAIN OF THE MARINE CORPS MEETS WITH INCOMING FEMALE ENGAGEMENT TEAM**



Story by [Cpl. Katherine Kelehe](#)

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – Chaplain of the Marine Corps Rear Adm. Margaret Kibben visited and talked with the Marines and sailors of Regional Command Southwest's incoming Female Engagement Team aboard Camp Leatherneck, Helmand province, Sept. 22.

Kibben, a native of Warrington, Pa., and the first female to hold the Marine Corps' highest chaplain's billet, took time during her tour of RC(SW) to visit the servicewomen to show them how important she finds the mission of engaging Afghan women to be.

"I feel very strongly about what the mission of the FET team is," Kibben said. "It's a different element of military engagement."

Chaplain of the Marine Corps Rear Adm. Margaret Kibben, talks with the Regional Command Southwest Female Engagement Team, at Camp Leatherneck, Helmand province, Sept. 22. Kibben made it a point to stop and talk with the team during her tour in RC(SW) with Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. John F. Amos and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Michael Barrett.

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Kibben explained she feels it is crucial to the counterinsurgency mission for troops to build relationships with Afghans. This is one of the biggest parts of the FET mission- to go out in local villages and build relationships with Afghan women by talking with them and helping address their needs.

"It's going to help that transition from a military environment to a diplomatic environment, where in fact [the Afghans] will be able to sustain themselves," she explained.

During her visit with the nearly 40 female Marines and sailors of the group known as FET 11.2, Kibben talked with them about adapting to their new way of life, and her faith in the great things they are about to do. She told them she looks up to the women of the engagement team.

"There are two kinds of courage," said Kibben. "There's the courage that enables a Marine to put on their uniform and all the gear that goes with it, and to walk into a hostile territory and to perform what in fact is a very kinetic mission. That takes an awful lot of courage.

"Then there's this other level of courage. That's the courage that enables them to kind of step back from that role and go into somebody else's environment and get to know who they are. That takes an awful lot of personal courage, because you're actually sharing a part of yourself."

This visit with the incoming team was not Kibben's first time sitting down and talking with a female engagement team. In October 2010, Kibben met with the women of FET 11.1, the team 11.2 is getting ready to replace, during a tour of Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C.

After seeing FET 11.1 prepare to deploy, and now preparing to see them at the end of their tour, Kibben explained she feels as though she has come full circle how critical the FET mission is.

"She was very comforting, genuine and I believe she really lifted their spirits," said Gunnery Sgt. Nicole van Loo, the FET company gunnery sergeant and linguist manager, and a native of Stockton, Calif. "It was really appreciated."

Kibben, who is touring RC(SW) with the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. John F. Amos, and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, Sgt. Maj. Michael Barrett, will be returning to the states this week. Meanwhile, in the upcoming days, the servicewomen of FET 11.2 will be making their way out to the forward operating and patrol bases that will become their homes until the end of their deployment.

## LT. ASIF I. BALBALE FLEW TO AFGHANISTAN TO FACILITATE PRAYER SERVICES DURING RAMADAN

By [Jared Morgan](#) *Email the author* September 13, 2011

*Editor's Note: Navy chaplain Lt. Asif I. Balbale recently ministered services for coalition forces in Afghanistan during the holy Islamic month of Ramadan. Of the 47 chaplains serving in U.S. operations in Helmand and Nimroz provinces, Balbale was the only Muslim. Originally from Kuwait, Balbale has lived and studied in the U.S. for some 11 years, joining the Navy in 2004. The U.S. service member was flown to Afghanistan for the sole purpose of facilitating prayer services during Ramadan. It was his first deployment. Balbale shared his recent experience with Patch on the eve of the 10th anniversary of 9/11.*

**Patch:** What is it like for the local Afghans, seeing a Muslim in a U.S. military uniform?

**Lt. Asif I. Balbale:** It's a brand new experience for them. They are a little skeptical of looking at somebody in the uniform and then being an Imam. But as they get into the conversation and they get comfortable with the idea that I am a Muslim and I wear the uniform, it gets better. We are able to have a good conversation.

**Patch:** Where were you on 9/11?

**Balbale:** When 9/11 happened, I wasn't even in the military. I was going to school in Montana. At that time I was pursuing my bachelor's in oil engineering. I do remember that day; I was in my living room watching the second tower go down. The first thought that came to my mind was, 'What does this mean for American Muslims?' As time progressed, I was thinking 'How can we be a part of this nation? How can we be progressive Muslims, constructive citizens, and make the best of the circumstances that arise from the whole thing?' It was an unfortunate event and a tragedy in the history of our nation, which affected many lives. Sometimes



what we forget is that there were Muslims who died in that tragedy too, so it affected all of us equally. Any attack on our soil, as people who serve the nation, it has a personal touch to it.

**Patch:** How do you think Muslims were perceived after 9/11?

**Balbale:** In the immediate aftermath, there was some resentment, there was some anger. There was a lack of education of what Islam is all about, what Muslims are about. Over the years it has changed and partly it is because of the engagement of the Muslim community. The Muslim community has been much more proactive than it was before in explaining what their faith is about. ... That has helped a lot in changing the mindset ... it has given a better understanding to the people of America about Islam.

**Patch:** What is the hardest thing about this deployment?

**Balbale:** Sometimes the frustration would be to see the lives of innocent people impacted by the war. ... The acts of people who claim to have a better understanding of Islam—that is very frustrating. It's very frustrating to see an innocent child being hurt for no fault of his own, and when you know it is done by people who have somehow indirectly affected that life in the name of Islam. That is the most frustrating part, the most challenging part, I would say.

**Patch:** What do you think is al-Qaida or the Taliban's understanding of Islam?

**Balbale:** This country [Afghanistan] has been through many wars and they never had the opportunity to really have an education, so that is an issue. Literacy is very, very low over here. So the understanding is you're going to be poor, but it's not like ... there are people who have a better understanding, who understand what the Quran says, what Islam is about. But then there's a good majority of the population that can't even read and, of course, their understanding is not going to be that great, so that is an issue over here. And every culture has its own things, and sometimes we tend to mix the culture with the religion. ... And that's not unique to Afghanistan, you can find that in India, in Pakistan and any of the other countries.

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**News You Can Use**

**HOLY JOE'S CAFE... COFFEE FOR THE TROOPS**

United Church of Christ military chaplains have found an old way to invite U.S. soldiers into a safe and informal place where they can receive spiritual care and good coffee. Congregations and individuals can support the Coffee House Ministry and simultaneously participate in the UCC Coffee Project by sending Equal Exchange Coffee to the military chaplains in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kuwait. Thanks to you, now 125 chaplains are able to participate.

In August, 2010, four years after the launch of the coffee house ministry, Holy Joe's Cafe shipped its 117th ton of coffee to military chaplains for use in the coffee house counseling programs. Holy Joe's has now provided 23 million cups of coffee to U.S. troops.

Coffee may be an unlikely ally of the Gospel, yet in the hands of a chaplain it can enable meaningful ministry addressing an individual's normal reactions to extreme situations, allowing them to return to us as healthy functional human beings capable of loving and caring for others and themselves. By offering a place to come and relax, the "Coffee House and Café Ministries" provide our military chaplains a place to establish rapport with and minister to the needs of our sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, husbands and wives—our troops. In these safe spaces soldiers come to talk and develop perspective on their experiences in war.



At this time our troops find themselves in difficult and sometimes life-threatening situations. Their daily experiences extract an extreme physical, emotional and psychological toll. Many of them are young and inexperienced in dealing with such extreme issues. Our chaplains are a first line defense against the emotional and psychological issues faced by our troops.

Here is a short flier on [Holy Joe's Cafe Coffee Ministry](#) for you to download.

Here is a [Holy Joe's Cafe Brochure](#).

**PROFESSIONAL SPIRITUAL & PASTORAL CARE**

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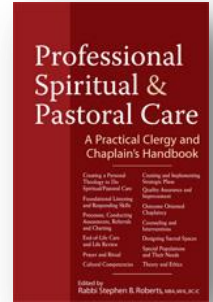
***A Practical Clergy and Chaplain's Handbook***

Edited by Rabbi Stephen B. Roberts, MBA, MHL, BCJC

*The first comprehensive resource for spiritual and pastoral caregivers—a vital resource for clergy, seminarians, chaplains, pastoral counselors and caregivers of all faith traditions.*

This essential resource integrates the classic foundations of pastoral care with the latest approaches to spiritual care. It is specifically intended for professionals who work or spend time with congregants in acute care hospitals, behavioral health facilities, rehabilitation centers and long-term care facilities.

Offering the latest theological perspectives and tools, along with basic theory and skills from the best pastoral and spiritual care texts, research and concepts, the contributors to this resource are experts in their fields, and include eight current or past presidents of the major chaplaincy organizations.



**NEW DD FORM 2088 EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY**

The Armed Forces Chaplains Board that the new DD Form 2088 is out and is effectively immediately. You will find the updated form on our website in the 'Links' section. To verify that it is the new form, check the expiration date in the upper right corner and it should read Oct 31, 2014.

**CARE GROUP SENDS TROOPS TAMPONS AND PRAYERS**

By [Anne Ernst](#), November 18, 2011

Not every soldier thinks it's important to have feminine hygiene products readily available, but to women who serve in the military overseas, those items are as precious as gold. And to Mike McNutt, well, it's just awful that any woman should have to think twice about it.

So he takes personal responsibility to see to it that the Bay Area chapter of Adopt-a-Chaplain has plenty of those unmentionables to send out in its care packages.

When McNutt, a Vietnam vet, learned from an active duty female soldier that feminine products—pads and tampons—were in short supply at her base overseas, he marched into the nearest discount store, bought every package of pad and tampon on the shelf and took them to Adopt-a-Chaplain where he has been a longtime volunteer.

"The basket was full," he says sweeping his hand up and over to illustrate the mound he had in his shopping cart.

McNutt, 74, of Cupertino is among dozens of volunteers from around the Bay Area who work with Adopt-a-Chaplain (AAC) to collect, package and ship care packages to military chaplains all over the world so they in turn can share the goods with deployed soldiers.

Chaplains give the group a "shopping list" of items troops most want or need; things such as beef jerky, lip balm, sunscreen, handwipes, and school supplies for local children are among the long list.



The boxes are ready to ship to overseas troops. Credit: [Anne Ernst](#)

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Until a few months ago the Saratoga garage of Gary and Jan Campbell stored things such as hotel-size toiletries, energy bars, candies, magazines, books, music CDs, and of course feminine products. Near the rafters hung a handful of large plastic bags filled with thousands of brand new Beanie Babies troops use to make friends with village children in Iraq and Afghanistan—kids who are apt to point out an IED or the “bad guys,” Campbell said.

AAC was down to a meager supply of Beanie Babies when a woman from Nebraska drove to California with 7,000 of them.

The things they need for the troops somehow just seem to show up on their own, says Ben Ferguson, a minister, veteran and one of the founders of AAC.

“It’s a God thing. We seem to know before they do what they need,” he says.

AAC operations have since moved to Calvary Church of Los Gatos where volunteers gather twice weekly for three weeks each month to fill boxes and ship them out.

“After five years we thought it was time to give back (the Campbell’s) garage,” Ferguson says.

AAC is unaffiliated with Calvary Church or any other particular church for that matter, though prayer is a part of every step in the giving process. Packaging sessions include a prayer, and there are religious items in stock such as prayer cards, ribbon crosses made by volunteers, and Christian music CDs. Prayer is the most common request by the chaplains, AAC says.

Included in each box is a postcard for the receiving chaplain to send back to AAC with feedback and a wish list.

“If possible, could you please send about 10 Matchbox cars (Hot Wheels). We have several Afghan children in our combat surgical hospital (CSH), and they really enjoy the cars. God bless,” wrote Chaplain Christopher Earley on one card.

Special requests of anything from a microwave to a trumpet are filled whenever possible, too. Whether it’s a flag sent for Independence Day or bite-size candy at Halloween, the items inside are as important as the message the box represents on its own.

“The boxes are a tangible reminder that someone cares about them,” Ferguson says.

Adopt-a-Chaplain accepts goods and monetary donations. Visit [www.adopt-a-chaplain.org](http://www.adopt-a-chaplain.org) for more information.

## Items of Interest

### CHAPLAINS PUSH FOR UNIFORM RELIGIOUS BADGES

Sep 08, 2011 by [Lauren Markoe](#)

WASHINGTON (RNS) With a cross on his lapel, it’s easy to spot a military chaplain in uniform. But the same might not be true if the chaplain’s badge displays a prayer wheel, a crescent moon or tiny Torah scrolls.



And when the sole, newly commissioned Hindu chaplain starts wearing her symbol - which is still in the design stage -- how many will recognize it as the sign of a chaplain?

Not many, said Rabbi Arnold Resnicoff, a retired military chaplain who served as command chaplain for the U.S. European Command. “Military personnel will not identify symbols for chaplains if so few people wear them,” he said. “We need a universal insignia that automatically symbolizes the presence of a chaplain.”

Resnicoff welcomes the prospect of an even more diverse military chaplaincy in the future, but that’s likely to only worsen the problem of unfamiliar insignias.

His solution is a revamped chaplain’s insignia, which includes one element that is the same for all chaplains alongside a separate symbol that indicates a chaplain’s particular faith.

“A priest is still a priest. A rabbi is still a rabbi. A minister is still a minister,” Resnicoff said.

Unlike military chaplains in other countries who often minister only to members of their own faith groups, American chaplains provide spiritual guidance to members of their own flock, those of other faiths and service members who profess no religion.

Currently thousands of Christian clergy and dozens of clergy of other faiths serve as chaplains in the U.S. military.

When he was a military chaplain, Resnicoff said he was often asked what the Torah scrolls on his uniform meant. Maj. Ibraheem Raheem, a Muslim Army chaplain, has joked that soldiers who see the crescent moon on his uniform sometimes ask him if he is an astronaut.

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Top brass at the Pentagon have endorsed Resnicoff's idea of a universal-yet-denominational insignia, if not his actual sketches. "I like the idea of developing a new chaplain insignia that represents both the unity and diversity of the chaplain corps," said Major Gen. Cecil Richardson, chairman of the Armed Forces Chaplains Board.

As the Army prepares to welcome its first Hindu chaplain, "the time is right to look at the bigger issue of chaplain insignia across the services," he said.

For the universal clergy symbol, Resnicoff envisions an open book, with a shepherd's crook on one of the pages. The crook, the original symbol of U.S. Army chaplains, adorned the uniform from 1880 to 1888, and conveys the idea of a chaplain as a tender of the flock.

On the other page of the book, Resnicoff would place the symbol of the individual chaplain's religion. There are already competing ideas.

The National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces, the largest umbrella group of organizations that endorse chaplain candidates for military service, supports Resnicoff's idea in principle.

Last month, it presented two other possible designs for Richardson's board to consider: a circle and a shield. Designed by retired Chaplain Lyman Smith, either would serve as a background for the particular religious symbol.

Smith, a Presbyterian, wrote in support of his design: "The concept of a shield is not necessarily foreign to any faith tradition but also does not play a major role for any faith group."

Resnicoff said he's partial to the shepherd's crook because of its history with the military, but would welcome any design that encompasses the chaplains' dual missions to serve both followers of their own traditions and any others who seek spiritual counseling.

Richardson has asked an advisory committee to collect proposals for a new insignia and to make a recommendation to his board. The final decision will be made in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

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## **FORT LEONARD WOOD DEDICATION FOR LARGER NEW CHAPEL**

By: Darrell Todd Maurina

Posted: Tuesday, November 1, 2011 8:35 am



Fort Leonard Wood's new Main Post Chapel  
(Army Public Affairs photo by Marti Yoshida)

FORT LEONARD WOOD, Mo. (Nov. 1, 2011) — It's already in use, but senior officials in the Army chaplaincy will come to Fort Leonard Wood's new Main Post Chapel today for a ribbon cutting and chapel dedication service.

Held at 9:30 a.m. today at the new building located at the corner of Constitution and Minnesota avenues, the 32,900-square-foot facility replaces Soldier Memorial Chapel as the post's largest chapel. Soldier Memorial Chapel and the other existing chapels will remain in use; expansion of the mission of Fort Leonard Wood has created a need for significant increases in space available for worship services, and among other activities, the new chapel will host large worship services that previously had to be held in on-post theaters.

In a prepared statement issued last week by public affairs personnel, Lt. Col. Keith Jackson, the project officer for the new chapel who is himself a chaplain, said the main sanctuary seats 618 with room for expansion to 1,200 seats. In addition to worship services, the chapel has classrooms for religious education and a fellowship hall with kitchen facilities.

"The facility includes state-of-the-art, integrated, audio-visual and computer technology capabilities between the sanctuary, classrooms and office areas," Jackson said.

The post's senior chaplain, Col. James Watson, said the chapel has been needed for years.

"As Fort Leonard Wood expanded rapidly with the basic training mission, we saw a huge increase in the number of people attending services, especially in the summer months. A long time ago we recognized the need for increased space. So this chapel gets us up to speed on what we've really needed for 10 years," Watson said in a prepared statement. "The Army works to build soldiers who are stronger in mind, body and spirit, and this new chapel helps in that effort by building up faith and hope. It is also the centerpiece or stage for observing so many special moments in people's life cycles including birth, marriage, and memorial ceremonies. The chapel is the foundation to that whole spiritual process."

The guest speaker will be Brig. Gen. Patrick Dolan, the Army National Guard's Assistant to the Chief of Chaplains. Dolan, an ordained Roman Catholic priest who assumed his current role in January, was born in an orphanage and in addition

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to his military career has achieved considerable success in two different academic fields, earning masters degrees and doctoral degrees in both chemistry and theology. His Ph.D. in theology is from the University of Indiana; his doctoral degree in theology is from a Roman Catholic university in Rome.

Dolan spent five years on active duty with service in Korea, Ecuador, Kuwait and Iraq. He's also served as the state chaplain for the Kentucky National Guard headquarters.

Those attending today's chapel dedication may need to leave early if they're coming from off-post locations. Beginning at 9 a.m. and running until 1 p.m., the Waggener Gate on the west end of Fort Leonard Wood leading to Polla Road and Waynesville will be closed for a training exercise. While all other gates are expected to be open, post personnel said commuters using the North Gate, East Gate or South Gate should allow extra time for travel.



**ARLINGTON MEMORIAL RECOGNIZES JEWISH CHAPLAINS**

By [Hamil R. Harris](#)

Air Force Major General Cecil Richardson shared the unique life of a military chaplain during special services at Arlington National Cemetery this week to dedicate a monument honoring 14 rabbis who died while serving in the U.S. military. Among those on the plaque that now stands on "Chaplain Hill," is the name of Rabbi Alexander Goode, a former resident of the District, who died with three other chaplains aboard the [USS Dorchester when he was sunk by a German torpedo during WWII](#).

During the program, which was held in the Arlington amphitheater, Richardson called all military chaplains "warriors," who are much more than members of the clergy in uniform. "We go where warriors go, we do what warriors do. We live with our warriors, we are the priest, ministers and rabbis and imams to our warriors."

Richardson went onto say that it is critically important that everyone who served as a chaplain be represented on Chaplains Hill.



Ernie Heaton (C), one of the two known survivors from the USAT Dorchester waves as he attends the dedication ceremony of the Jewish Chaplains Memorial October 24, 2011 in Arlington, Virginia. (Alex Wong - GETTY IMAGES)



Mostly service members gather on Chaplains Hill at Arlington National Cemetery to view the new memorial for 14 Jewish chaplains who died in service to our nation after a dedication ceremony is held at the amphitheater Monday, October 24, 2011 in Arlington, VA. (Katherine Frey - THE WASHINGTON POST)

In addition to the monument for Catholic and Protestant chaplains, there is now a Jewish Chaplains Memorial for the Jewish rabbis who served. On the hill, there is also a fresh grave that belongs to Simeon Kobrinetz, 83, a rabbi and former Air Force chaplain who later became director of the Chaplain Service of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Kobrinetz, who died last month of renal failure at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, was the first Air Force rabbi to reach the rank of brigadier general. His son David Kobrinetz attended the dedication of the memorial because he said one of father's final efforts was to help to place a monument for the rabbis on "Chaplain's Hill."

"As important as the recognition is for rabbis, their families and Jews across America," David Kobrinetz said. "even more important is the recognition that we are people of one nation, despite our differences."



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**CHAPLAIN GETS FLAGGED**

**Karen Wendkos**, November 09, 2011, Jewish Exponent Feature

When she learned that 14 Jewish chaplains were going to be honored at Arlington National Cemetery last month, local resident Beth Chernoff knew something was missing.

Chernoff, who had enrolled in ROTC at Temple University and served in a military intelligence unit in Northeast Philadelphia in the 1980s, had read about Chana Timoner, the first female Jewish chaplain to serve on active duty in the armed forces.

"Rabbi Timoner served six honorable years, often demonstrating skills that amazed her male counterparts," Chernoff said. "She brought kosher food to Fort Bragg, and at Christmas and Chanukah arranged for donations of needed clothing, toys and appliances so that enlisted men, women and families would have a happier holiday."

Timoner, of New Haven, Conn., was stationed in Korea, which is where she became ill. She died shortly after returning home, said Chernoff.

Her name was not on the plaque with the other fallen chaplains honored at Chaplains Hill on Oct. 24 because she had been medically discharged two months prior to her death in 1998, at age 46.

Chernoff, who knew something from personal experience about the importance of chaplaincy work, believed that Timoner should be acknowledged in some way. (Her own father, Aaron Chernoff, a Civil Affairs reserve officer from Philadelphia, had traveled around the country voluntarily providing prayerbooks and other religious material to posts with no assigned Jewish chaplain.)

She contacted Timoner's widower, Julian, who revealed his desire to receive an American flag, as is customary at funerals of military personnel.

A librarian by profession, Chernoff put her research skills to use.

She arranged for a flag to be presented at a separate ceremony in Washington the night before the dedication ceremony for the chaplains' memorial.

First flown over the U.S. Capitol, the flag was presented to Timoner's widower by retired Rear Adm. Rabbi Harold Robinson, former director of the JWB's Jewish Chaplain's Council.

Chernoff had a gift of her own for Julian Timoner -- a wooden flag case inscribed with the symbols of his wife's life: a Star of David, an Army branch emblem and the chaplain corps motto, "Pro Deo et Patria" (For God and Country).

Chernoff said she was "honored to have even a small role in this history-making event."

Julian Timoner, who now lives in central Florida, spoke with pride about his late wife's commitment. "Shortly after enlisting, at age 39, she told me how much she loved the army and knew this was her life's mission."

He recalled that on one of his visits to her at Fort Monmouth, N.J., she announced that she was going on active duty and that she would be the first female rabbi on full-time active duty in the army.

He said the flag presentation in Washington, D.C., was "amazing," and added that he was sure that "Chana would have loved every minute."



Chana Timoner

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## GERMAN MILITARY CHAPLAINS CAUGHT BETWEEN WORD OF GOD AND HORROR OF MAN

Charles Lewis Nov 6, 2011 – 5:18 PM ET

The incident Doris Bergen uses to highlight her main research interest took place in Ukraine in 1941. The Germans had just broken the non-aggression pact with Stalin and had rolled into the Soviet Union hell bent on global domination.

In a small town a special Nazi killing squad arrived and proceeded to kill all the Jewish adults. But they were not sure what to do with the 90 or so children — so they placed the youngsters into a school until someone could figure out their fate. They were locked inside for several days without food or water.

Then, two Wehrmacht soldiers heard the anguished cries coming from the school and felt moved to help.

“So they went to the two chaplains and the soldiers told them you have to do something about this,” said Prof. Bergen, who teaches history at the University of Toronto.

“The chaplains went to the military commander and asked if the children could be released. Eventually the commander radioed to Berlin to find out what they should do and they were told the kids were to be killed. And so the children were killed.”

For Prof. Bergen, the people in this story that grabbed her attention were the military chaplains and the role they played not just in this incident but throughout the war. More to the point, she wanted to understand how often well-intentioned men of God inadvertently helped facilitate the Nazi horror.

On Tuesday, Prof. Bergen will present a lecture at a Toronto synagogue on this topic titled “Witnesses to Atrocity: German Military Chaplains and the Holocaust.”



Prof. Bergen  
Credit - Peter J. Thompson/National Post

As exemplified by the story in the town, the chaplains showed they had a conscience by their request to spare the children. They also relieved the soldiers of their burdens of guilt by acting on their concerns.

German chaplains throughout the war would continue to see horrific scenes, especially on the Eastern Front, but that did not get in the way of their religious mission to the soldiers. They never took part in the killings but nor were they ever successful in stopping the killings from going ahead.

And like so many other “ordinary soldiers, they just got used to it.”

The picture she has drawn is nuanced and complex.

“I’m an historian, not a judge,” said Prof. Bergen, who is writing a book about German chaplains during the Second World War. “It’s not my job to say they deserve to go to heaven, they deserve to go to hell. I’m not interested in that.

“[Studying this] you are forced to think that these were people who were just ordinary, like most of us. In that sense I’m trying to get beyond the judgement that they should have done this or they could have done that.”

As her research revealed, the chaplains who served the Wehrmacht during the war were not hard-core Nazis, and nor were they party members. They were, she said, a part of the German mainstream — the kind of character who could offend no one but at the same time give the war effort a stamp of legitimacy and boost morale. In an odd way, she said, they facilitated the horror.

“Being a chaplain in the German army had always been a prestigious position and the Nazis wanted people who represented that old military tradition,” said Prof. Bergen. “They also needed people who could speak to everyone and not sow discord or division. They wanted people who were not troublemakers.”

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German soldiers during the battle of Stalingrad. Military chaplains performed their duties despite witnessing many horrific scenes throughout the war.

The chaplains themselves were mostly motivated by the same thing that motivates most ordinary people everywhere, she said. They wanted to do a good job, make their families proud and serve their country.

They also wanted to bring the word of God to men in the field and in the case of Catholic chaplains to deliver the sacraments to their co-religionists.

“The motives of the chaplains were not unusual,” said Prof. Bergen. “Still, their noble, personal and professional motives turned them into a legitimating force in a war of annihilation.”

To become a chaplain required rigorous screening. The names were brought forward by the local civilian bishop. Then the names had to be cleared by the ministry that dealt with church affairs and then cleared by the military’s chaplaincy office. Finally, they were cleared by the Gestapo.

If the candidate had spoken out against the regime he was immediately disqualified, but he did not need to be a screaming anti-Semite.

Still, like most Germans of the era, they likely held many negative views about Poles and Jews. The Poles were persecuting ethnic Germans and held German land. The Jews were communists, the Jews killed Christ, the Jews were not real Germans. “You didn’t even have to be a Nazi to participate in those ideas,” said Prof. Bergen. “Those were the mainstream ideas.”

This area of interest began for Prof. Bergen while writing a book on the German Christian movement of the 1930s. These were hard-core Nazis who wanted to eradicate the Jewish element out of Christianity.

“So they had to get rid of the Old Testament. They said it was a Jewish book and we don’t need it,” she said. “Then they said Mary was a Roman. They made up all kinds of crazy stuff.”

It was in the midst of that research, which eventually became a book titled *Twisted Cross: The German Christian Movement in the Third Reich*, she found a letter written to Hitler in 1935 from a Lutheran pastor who lived in Luseland, Sask. The letter writer wanted to return to Germany to serve the Nazi regime.

Prof. Bergen’s parents were ethnic Germans from Ukraine, and Mennonites, who had settled in Saskatchewan so the coincidence of having the same home province as the letter writer naturally struck her. But it also triggered for her a larger thought: For all her work she had done on the Holocaust, she had never given much thought to the role of Christian chaplains who served the cause of the Nazi Germany.

The chaplains were always in a strange position, she explained. Pure Nazi ideology was at its core pagan. The SS, for example, never allowed chaplains in their midst. Hitler probably would have thought Nazism was enough for the troops, she said. At the same time, 95% of Germans were baptized Christians who continued to belong to the mainstream churches. German soldiers had the words *Gott mit uns* (God with us) on their belt buckles.

“What I tried to show that the chaplaincy was in an uncomfortable position, that they were also in a position of suspicion.” In the field, the chaplains had to keep adjusting themselves. While there were many who wanted their services there were fanatical Nazis among the troops who hated the chaplains and would taunt them.

“That pushed the chaplains into a position that wouldn’t offend some of the troops. It pushed them in a direction to make their lives easier.”

Even the Bibles they handed out were boiled down to just the Gospels. Even the Epistles of Paul, a major part of the New Testament, were excised because Paul was a rabbi. “The pastor may have loved the Old Testament but then thought, ‘Why antagonize anyone. Why make the job harder. It’s easier just to leave it out.’”

*National Post*

## Historical Note

### **OUT OF OUR PAST: BRAVE CHAPLAIN EARNS MEDAL OF HONOR**

Only three Wayne County (Indiana) men have received the nation's highest honor for military bravery -- the distinguished Medal of Honor. Two of them were in the Civil War. The first one was Elihu Mason. The second one was a chaplain from Boston Township named John Milton Whitehead.

The Rev. Whitehead was born near Boston, Ind., (when it was called New Boston) on March 6, 1823. He later became an Army chaplain in the 15th Indiana Volunteer Infantry.

On Dec. 31, 1862, when Union forces engaged Confederate soldiers at the battle of Stones River, Tenn., Whitehead risked his life to save his comrades. For this he was presented the highest military honor for bravery that the nation can bestow, the Medal of Honor. His April 4, 1898, citation reads: "Went to the front during a desperate contest and unaided carried to the rear several wounded and helpless soldiers." The fight at Stones River had the highest percentage of casualties on both sides for all major battles of the Civil War. The contest, though inconclusive, saw Northern losses at 12,906, and southern losses at 11,739.

In Whitehead's own words: "On the night of Dec. 30, 1862, my regiment, the 15<sup>th</sup> Indiana, was ordered to cross Stones River, at the ford. The command was obeyed, but as we advanced up the hill on the opposite side, we met the enemy in force and, countermarching quickly, recrossed the river. ... Early the next morning our colonel cried, 'Get your men up! Our pickets are falling back! The enemy is advancing!' In a second we were all astir, and at the dawn of that day the bloody battle of Stones River commenced. ... Our position was between the river on our left and the railroad and turnpike on our right, and directly in front of the enemy's corps. The firing from the Confederate batteries was terrible and destructive.



"Our regiment was ordered to hold our position on the left, nearest to the river, at all hazards. Three times we charged Jackson's Brigade and three times we put the enemy to flight, capturing a greater number of prisoners than there were men in our command when we went into battle.

"But this was accomplished only with a fearful loss of life. Of my own regiment every other man was killed or wounded; that is, half were gone... Though a non-combatant, I was with my regiment during the entire affair, comforting the dying, carrying off the injured, caring for them and praying.

"During the struggle, Captain Robert J. Templeton fell fatally wounded. I carried him to the rear and remained at his side until he breathed his last. I copied his last message and sent it to his friends at home. My own next-door neighbor from Westville, Indiana, Captain James N. Foster, dropped mortally wounded into my arms, the same ball killing two other brave soldiers.

"Colonel I.C.B. Surnan, of the Ninth Indiana, was shot twice, one ball severing the artery in the arm, the other penetrating the body and lodging between two ribs, whence I pulled it out with my fingers. One boot was filled with blood where he lay bleeding his life away. I dressed his wounds and helped him on his horse and he rode back into the raging battle.

"John Long, a private, had one leg shot to pieces. He cut the dangling limb off with his own pocketknife and hobbled off using his gun for a crutch, until I took him up and carried him to the rear.

Calvin Zenner of Company G received a fatal wound. I carried him back. A number of soldiers gathered around their expiring comrade as I offered a prayer for him, and they sang, 'O Sing to Me of Heaven' ... He soon closed his eyes and ceased to breathe. After nightfall, when both armies were quiet along the front lines, I helped to bring the wounded to the general hospital, carrying those who could not walk on my shoulders to the ambulance."

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Whitehead helped hundreds of wounded soldiers during and after the battle, and it was written of him in "Deeds of Valor: How America's Civil War Heroes Won the Congressional Medal of Honor" that the Wayne County chaplain "was help to many hundreds of wounded soldiers and brought comfort and solace to a great number of dying ... [and] also preached at many a hero's graves."

Surnan, who Whitehead had aided by digging a bullet from his ribs, later testified, "When I was severely wounded at the Battle of Stones River, Chaplain Whitehead gave me his assistance; he was all bespattered with the blood of the injured he had cared for. He seemed to be an angel among the wounded ... single-handedly with grapeshot whizzing about, carrying injured and dying men from the field of battle, after which he knelt and prayed for them. Yankees and Johnny Rebs alike are under one Supreme Maker ... and into His hands a vast number were delivered that day, in that place. Reverend Whitehead prayed for all and thought nothing of the danger he was in, attending the maimed, looking after the dead, directing and assisting in burial."

"In camp, on the march and on the field of battle ... John Milton Whitehead's services were performed admirably and without the hope for reward or promotion."

According to "Deeds of Valor," that night, "while both armies were quiet along the front lines," the Boston Township native "fetched more wounded to a general hospital further back, carrying those who could not walk on his shoulders, to awaiting ambulance wagons."

Whitehead died at the age of 86 on March 8, 1909, and is buried in Topeka, Kan.

Only three Civil War chaplains have won the nation's highest honor for military bravery.

One of them was the Rev. John Milton Whitehead from Wayne County. In fact, he was the first chaplain ever to be awarded this honor in the nation's history.

Researched and written by Steve Martin, reference librarian.

## Recruiting Information

### Army

#### ARMY CHAPLAIN RECRUITING

Lane M. Stockeland, CH (LTC)

U. S. Army Recruiting Command, Medical Recruiting Brigade, Chaplain

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Special Categories Recruiting Team (Roman Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Orthodox) Chaplain

(MAJ) Peter Dubinin

Office phone: (301)677-6611

Cell: 502-802-1595

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### Air Force

#### ACTIVE DUTY CHAPLAIN RECRUITING

HQ Air Force Recruiting Service

Chaplain Corps Accessions Office

550 D Street West, Ste 1

San Antonio, TX 78150-4527

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Email: [chaplains@randolph.af.mil](mailto:chaplains@randolph.af.mil)

Website: <http://www.airforce.com/chaplain>

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### RESERVE CHAPLAIN & CHAPLAIN CANDIDATE RECRUITING

#### RESERVE CHAPLAIN & CHAPLAIN CANDIDATE RECRUITING

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Ch, Maj Paul T. Gunn  
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[Paul.Gunn@us.af.mil](mailto:Paul.Gunn@us.af.mil)

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 Air National Guard  
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 Toll Free: 866.839.7438  
 Fax: 703.607.5295  
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**AIR NATIONAL GUARD RECRUITER**  
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**Navy**

Navy Recruiting now has a FACEBOOK page titled "US NAVY CHAPLAIN CORPS". On it, chaplains, students, and prospective applicants for all Navy Chaplain programs can find a wealth of information, and interact with chaplains on a variety of topics.

FACEBOOK: US NAVY CHAPLAIN CORPS <http://www.facebook.com/navychaplain?ref=ts>

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**[Veteran's Administration Chaplain Career Opportunities](#)**

All opportunities to apply for employment can be found on the [USA JOBS](#)\* or at [VA Careers](#). VA has immediate openings for Roman Catholic Chaplains. Additional information can be found in the [USA JOBS Announcement for Roman Catholic Chaplains](#)\*.

Additional employment information:

- [How to Apply Pamphlet](#)
- [VA Chaplain Qualification Requirements and Application Procedures](#)
- [List of Ecclesiastical Endorsers](#)

***L i n k s   Y o u   C a n   U s e***

- [Military One Source](#)
- [Military Health System](#)
- [Department of Veterans Affairs National Center for PTSD –](#)
- [The Military Chaplain's Association](#)
- [The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life](#)
- [Religious News Service](#)
- [Christian Reformed Church Resources for Soldiers](#)
- [J.M. Dawson Institute of Church State Studies – Baylor University](#)
- [Religion Clause](#)
- [U.S. Department of Defense – Defense Link](#)
- [Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty](#)
- [Warrior Care](#)
- [Religious Diversity and Accommodation \(Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute\)](#)
- [Armed Forces Chaplains Board](#)
- [National VA Chaplains Center](#)
- [Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America](#)
- [Hooah4Health](#)

## Executive Director's Note

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### **TOUGH TIMES NEVER LAST, BUT TOUGH PEOPLE DO!**

Dear Colleagues,

Three years ago I led my letter with the above quote and referenced Robert Schuller as the possible originator and certainly the popularizer of this saying. You may be aware the Crystal Cathedral, Schuller's long sought worship center, and its surrounding campus was sold with the approval of a bankruptcy judge to the Roman Catholic Diocese of Orange to satisfy debts incurred by the ministry he founded. It would seem tough times have in a very significant way made an impact on Schuller's lasting legacy much sooner than any may have anticipated.

Is this then the new normal? Institutions which have flourished being reduced to bankruptcy almost overnight, instability and lack of confidence in the future? Indeed, much has changed in this new millennium and we would be foolish to think change is now complete and a stable normal is possible.

We are also to be faulted if we do not emphasize that which is constant and will never change – the need we have for faith in our lives. In fact, in such times of instability our need for faith may not increase but our awareness of it might. As a voluntary organization of faith groups dedicated to providing ministry within the military and veterans ranks, we know that the awareness of the need for ministry has increased dramatically in the past several years. The question before us as we approach our annual meeting is not so much if the need is still there but rather what does that need now look like and how do we resource to meet it.

For the immediate future, resources appear to be shockingly hard to acquire. As this letter goes to press we are still wrestling with the federal budget and the impacts which may be realized by our active forces and veterans of all types. We may see drastic reductions both in numbers of personnel serving and the benefits available to them and those who have served in the past. The response to the change in force structure will be part of our new normal.

We are also faced again with the need to anticipate the ongoing ministry needs of those who have been forever affected by their service in the last decade after the wars in which they fought have been officially made part of our nation's past. The legacy of the Vietnam veteran continues to hang over the conscience of our country. Though our recent wars have been perceived in a far different way than was Vietnam, the plight of our veterans may be strikingly similar as the pressure may be lifted to provide support when their voice in the political arena is displaced by voices crying louder to be heard. This too is part of our new normal.

And for our organizations, NCMAF and ECVAC, we cannot but be concerned for our financial viability as the new normal unfolds. As I said before, resources are difficult to attain and long valued institutions have crumbled. From our standpoint, receipts are down considerably from those achieved just five years ago. We have moved to cut expenses with vigor while seeking to maintain our voice. But the road ahead does not look straight and level unless changes come into play.

Please consider how you can help to maintain these essential venues for the chaplaincy. In times past, we received significant contributions from chapel communities via designated offerings. Virtually no receipts are garnered in this way today. As an individual, please consider what you can give. Contributions continue to be fully tax deductible. And please also consider how you can influence your institution to include us in their benevolence plans. Chapel Offerings, Chaplain Funds, denominational offerings, bequests, and any other donations will be greatly appreciated.

The need for chaplain ministries and their coordination and facilitation is not decreasing. The new normal still needs NCMAF and ECVAC. Please consider how you can help.

Cordially,

Jack Williamson  
NCMAF/ECVAC Executive Director



***Your financial support is needed!***

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- ***Please let us know if you will ask your chapel or faith community to assist in our ministry.***
- ***Consider a designated or special offering to help support NCMAF and the military chaplaincy. Your financial and prayer support are both needed and appreciated.***

- ***Offerings may be sent to***

***NCMAF  
c/o Rebecca Waldman  
7724 Silver Sage Court  
Springfield, VA 22153***

- ***(NCMAF is a non-profit organization authorized by the IRS to receive charitable donations)***

***Please contact Jack at [Jack@ncmaf.org](mailto:Jack@ncmaf.org) or Lyman at [Lyman@ncmaf.org](mailto:Lyman@ncmaf.org) for comments, suggestions, or questions concerning the Newsletter.***

***Please send requests for removal from the mailing list to [Rebecca@ncmaf.org](mailto:Rebecca@ncmaf.org).***