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**The Voice for Chaplaincy - Chartered by Congress - Serving Since 1925**

## **Weekly Newsgram - November 28th 2018**

### **Happy 243rd Birthday Navy Chaplain Corps**

The Continental Navy, predecessor of the United States Navy, was approved by the Second Continental Congress on 13 October 1775. It was administered by a Marine Committee of three members later expanded to seven members. The Navy Regulations adopted by the Marine Committee on 28 November 1775 mirrored those of the Royal Navy.



Chaplain of the Marine Corps Greg Todd at Marine Corps Worship Service November 18 2018

The second article of the Navy regulations of 1775 read: "The Commanders of the ships of the thirteen United Colonies, are to take care that divine service be performed twice a day on board, and a sermon preached on Sundays, unless bad weather or other extraordinary accidents prevent."

Although the chaplain is not mentioned in this article, the reference to a sermon implies that Congress intended that an ordained clergyman be on board. The first mention of a chaplain in the Journals of the Continental Congress refers to his share in the distribution of prize money.

On 6 January 1776 Congress passed a resolution detailing the prize share percentages and includes distribution of a portion to the chaplain. On 15 November 1776, Congress fixed the base pay of the chaplain at \$20 a month.

The first chaplain known to have served in the Continental Navy was the Reverend Benjamin Balch, a Congregational minister, whose father had served in a similar capacity in the Royal Navy. Benjamin Balch's son, William Balch, is the first chaplain known to have received a commission in the US Navy after the department was established in 1798. [full article](#)

[Chief of Navy Chaplains Brent Scott \(MCA Life Member\) Birthday Greetings Message](#)

## Executive Director Notes

Having now done a pretty fair number of push-aways from the table the past few days- always with reluctance- I certainly trust that each of you enjoyed your opportunity at the Thanksgiving cornucopia. And while so many of us feasted and then went to our favorite chair or couch, we always need to remember our colleagues who are deployed and did not have any of the comforts so many of us enjoyed last week.



One of the many memorable moments from the week of our National Institute-US Army Chaplain Corps Regimental Association Meeting was the presentation given at the Friday dinner of the USACCRA gathering by MSG Bill Kaemmer, US Army (Retired), the newly appointed Executive Director of the Four Chaplains Memorial Foundation.

Bill provided an excellent overview of what is happening at the Foundation, to include their "home," a magnificent chapel with an expansive green space, located on the grounds of the former Philadelphia Navy Yard. Included in Bill's presentation was a clear layout of the major programs the Foundations supports, The Legion of Honor Gold and Bronze Medallions, the Junior Legion of Honor Award, the Legion of Honor Humanitarian Award, the Charles W. David Lifesaving Medallion and the Posthumous Chapel Honors Award.

While I have often head of the program, I did not realize where it was located, nor the breadth of its honors program. If, like me, this is a foundation that you have had only a passing awareness of, I heartily recommend that you checkout what they do at [www.fourchaplains.org](http://www.fourchaplains.org). With any luck I will get up to the Foundation for one of their events sooner than later, and personally experience what many of you have already seen first hand.

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## Retired Military Chaplain Leads U.S. House in Prayer



Rabbi Arnold Resnicoff (CAPT, CHC, USN, retired) (MCA Life Member) led the House of Representatives in their opening prayer on November 20, 2018. This opportunity occurred on the 73rd anniversary of the beginning of the Nuremberg Trials.

Sadly, not only did the Rabbi pray in hope for such senseless acts as the Holocaust to never be repeated, he also remembered the senseless and hateful actions of the

murder of 11 men and women at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh in October.

A video of the prayer may be found [here](#).

For more on the Nuremberg Trials [here](#)

Information of Father Richard O'connor, chaplain at Nuremberg [here](#)

A book on Chaplain Henry Gerecke, chaplain at Nuremberg [here](#)

## **Army's new policies on religious accommodations**

[from Army Times](#)

In two memos signed on Nov. 8, Army Secretary Mark Esper laid out new processes for allowing religious soldiers to wear distinguishing symbols, as well as refined guidelines for completing mandatory Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention, Equal Opportunity, suicide prevention, substance abuse prevention and resilience training.



Since April, Esper has released 16 memos to reduce administrative burdens on leaders. In that same vein, these new policies are designed to flatten processes.

Soldiers seeking to wear a hijab in uniform or grow a beard for religious reasons have, in the past, submitted a request for an exception to uniform policy to their brigade commanders, who then consulted with Army headquarters on whether to grant it.

Now, that approval authority has been bumped to the general court-martial convening authority level, otherwise known as the lowest-ranking general officer responsible for the soldier's command.

At that level, that particular officer will have in-house access to experienced chaplains and Army attorneys to consult on the decision.

"When evaluating the sincerity of a soldier's articulated belief, the GCMCA will consider the credibility of the application and the circumstances of the request," Esper wrote.

"A religious practice may be an action, behavior, or course of conduct constituting an individual expression of religious beliefs, regardless of whether the practice is compelled by, or central to, the religion concerned."

[Army Directive 2018-19 \(Approval, Disapproval, and Elevation of Requests for Religious Accommodation\)](#)

Related Article - [A soldier just got authorization to wear a beard because of his Norse pagan faith](#)

## **Inside the Fiery Furnace: A Chaplain's Harrowing Story of Survival in Paradise**

by [Katy Steinmetz](#)



From the Article -

In the book of Daniel, there is a story about three men who refuse to worship a golden idol and the furious king who casts them into a fiery furnace as punishment. To the royal's astonishment, the men are trapped in an "exceeding hot" fire, as he decreed, yet they do not burn. Because the men had faith, a higher power protects them, and they walk out of the furnace unscathed.

This is the tale that Brad Brown, a chaplain at Feather River Hospital in Paradise, Calif., told the sick, scared people huddling inside his Honda Odyssey as flames burned on both sides of them and embers flicked onto the hood. "This is what we need to do here," Brown recalls saying as they, like thousands of others, tried to escape the deadly Camp Fire that continues to torch Northern California.

"We just need God's hand to cover us, cover the vehicle. And the fires can be all around us, but they won't touch us," the Seventh Day Adventist told his passengers. They were brave words from a man who had already phoned his children to tell them he loves them, thinking that survival was unlikely. It was an especially hard call to make because his 13-year-old daughter and 16-year-old son, fleeing the fire elsewhere, had lost their mother to cancer five months before. Shortly after he made the call, cell service went out.

full article [here](#)



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If you missed the November 21st edition of the Newsgram [click here](#)

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