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

Weekly Newsgram - June 6th 2018



[U.S. and Ghanaian Chaplains Train Together](#)

[story by Meredith March, U.S. Army Africa](#)

ACCRA, Ghana - U.S. Army Africa chaplains joined forty Ghanaian chaplains, imams and religious specialists to attend a military-to-military chaplain engagement at the Ghana Naval Headquarters here April 23-26. The purpose of this event, which culminated in a day of preparatory exercise interaction, was to plan and prepare for the United Accord training series, scheduled to take place in July.

Ghanaian Navy Capt. Paul Adjei-Djan, the Ghana Armed Forces religious affairs director, hosted the event as a preliminary step toward actualizing his vision of an Economic Community of West African States training program for chaplains engaging in African Union and United Nations peacekeeping operations on the continent. The topics discussed at the military-to-military engagement included deployment cycle support and Ghana-specific mission conditions.

"The Ghana Armed Forces chaplaincy is so professional and experienced that I can also envision them leading an ECOWAS regional chaplain school on par with the NATO chaplain course," said Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Ken Lebon, the USARAF deputy command chaplain.

The four-day engagement brought together a diverse and experienced set of military chaplains, imams and two resident Ghanaian military psychologists. Ghana has provided peacekeepers to 19 U.N. missions in ten separate locations since the African independence movements began in 1957. Currently, many of the approximately 2500 deployed troops count on their chaplains and imams for guidance in scripture study, opportunities to share sacraments, worship facilitation and mission-critical key leader religious engagements, which can reduce tensions between troops and local populations.

"The Ghana Armed Forces chaplain corps is a role-model group for all chaplaincies on and off the continent," said Chaplain (Col.) David Lile, the USARAF command chaplain. "We witnessed a tremendously disciplined and respectful engagement of Protestant, Catholic and Islamic chaplains engaged with tough issues of life and death. They understand the extreme religious dynamic at play in the Sahel today and many of the conflict areas of Central Africa."

Photo By [Staff Sgt. Charles Stefan](#) | U.S. Army Africa chaplains joined forty Ghanaian chaplains, imams and religious specialists at a military-to-military chaplain engagement at the Ghana Naval Headquarters in Accra, Ghana, April 23-26, 2018. The purpose of the event, which culminated in a day of preparatory exercise interaction, was to plan and prepare for the United Accord training series, scheduled to take place in July.

Executive Director Notes



Recently I had the opportunity to be at the national conference of one of the military orders I belong to, and I was amazed that as I looked around I saw three fellow MCA members. We started talking, and in the process realized that there are probably 8 to 10 of us who are in the Western North Carolina area. While the conversation was not explicitly about creating a local chapter, that certainly makes sense and we will see where that might lead us in the next few weeks and months. On my end, I'll do a database search of members in the area, and it will be interesting what the WNC membership looks like in the area.

Looking at my calendar I see that the next copy of our Journal will be released soon, and look forward to reading it and getting to know more of you by the articles and book reviews it will include. Watch your mailboxes closely toward the end of the month for the Military Chaplain.

As always, thank you for what you do on a daily basis the MCA, the Voice of military chaplaincy!

Executive Director
Fr. Razz Waff, DMin, BCC
RazzW@aol.com
[Cell: 847-269-9066](tel:847-269-9066)

Women Military Chaplains Connect, Cultivate, Contextualize

The National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces and the Military Chaplains Association jointly sponsored the [Women Military Chaplains](#) Training this past week at Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center in Marriottsville, MD.

Planners originally estimated 30 chaplains might attend. The response to the event was so well received that 105 participated. And throughout, the chaplains present, whether retired, senior, or just having joined active service, expressed appreciation and thanksgiving for the event.

The keynote speaker was Chaplain (Major General) Lorraine Potter, USAF, Retired who provided those in attendance an open, frank, and encouraging reflection of her journey as a military chaplain during the period when women were just entering this professional service. Her anecdotes on obstacles faced and overcome along with savvy recommendations based on over thirty years experience rang true to all those gathered and serving today.

In addition to Chaplain Potter, the attendees enjoyed a panel presentation by six senior chaplains and line officers. The questions following the presentations were direct and sometimes revealing of the sorts of pressures faced by women serving the armed forces today. All in attendance expressed appreciation for the mentoring which took place during this important discussion.

As the after action comments are collected and reviewed we expect more feedback on the training and look forward to next steps in supporting all of those who serve.

Many thanks to Chaplain (COL) Kristy Moeller, USA, Retired, for her instrumentality in providing the vision and leadership to provide this opportunity.

The MCA was able to provide over \$4,000 from our Women United in Ministry funds via direct contributions and scholarships to participants to enable attendance.



Spontaneous prayer and support among attendees at the training

Senate Armed Services Committee Markup of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act of 2019



As an update on amendments to the NDAA 2019 which may directly impact armed forces chaplaincy -

[From the office of Senator Ted Cruz](#) - This week (released May 25), the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) completed the markup process for the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2019, including over 30 provisions led by U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas). Among these were the below.

- Chief of Chaplains: Sen. Cruz secured a provision to protect the Chief of Chaplains serving in each branch of the military from being diminished and to underscore their important role of caring for those in need. He also worked with Senator Inhofe (R-Okla.) to ensure that all those in uniform have access to the spiritual and mental health care that they deserve.

The Senate Armed Services Committee voted overwhelmingly, 25-2, to advance this important legislation to the Senate floor.

The Military Chaplains Magazine 2018 Themes and Submission Deadlines

Summer Issue - *Chaplains and World War 1*

Articles to be submitted by June 30

Publication July 23

Fall Issue - Religious Accommodation in 2018

Articles to be submitted by September 30

Publication September 24

Winter Issue - Chaplaincy and Religion in a Post-Truth World

Articles to be submitted by November 30

Publication December 21

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