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

**Weekly Newsgram - October 11th, 2017**

***Less than twoweeks to the National Institute***

**Registration Still Open!**

## **Chaplaincy and the American Way**

On October 10, 1942 the Senate elected its 56th chaplain, the Rev. Frederick Brown Harris. He followed in the footsteps of the Rev. Z.T. Phillips who had served since 1927 and passed away in May of 1942.



**Chaplain Harris escorts Jean McCarthy for funeral services for her husband, Sen. Joe McCarthy 1957 (AP Photo)**

Throughout the 19th century, Senate chaplains held office for only a few years. Prominent clergymen who were well connected contended for the appointment to the Senate to enhance their status in the larger cultural context. Typically, as the party controlling the Senate changed, so did the chaplain. Chaplain Phillips survived the change of party control in 1933 and served until his death.

Chaplain Harris was a prominent religious figure when elected having served at Washington's Foundry Methodist Church. Many thought he might survive the party change as did Harris. Such was not to be. When the Senate majority changed in 1947, and the Republicans gained control, the Rev. Peter Marshall was installed as the new chaplain. A Presbyterian from the South who had made a name serving in New York, Marshall was well regarded and had a national ministry through his non-profit and his writings. Marshall died suddenly from a heart attack at the age of 46, just over two years after beginning his service at the Senate.

Shocked by the sudden death of their Chaplain, Senate leaders reached out to Chaplain Harris and he returned to his former position. Harris continued to serve until his retirement in 1969.

During his service, Harris shaped the modern Senate chaplaincy more than any other. He conducted the funerals of Herbert Hoover, Robert Taft, and Douglas MacArthur. And he led the Senate in prayer when they heard the news of President Kennedy's assassination in 1963.

We sometimes think religion in general, and chaplaincy in particular, has been separated from politics in our grand American experiment. Yet, through our history the two have been intimately intertwined. Chaplain Harris did much to forge a professional chaplaincy which transcended the political divide and provided care for all. As professional chaplains, may we all seek to follow in his footsteps.

Lyman Smith  
Executive Director

Read Senate Elects a chaplain, Oct. 10, 1942 from POLITICO [here](#)



## In Memoriam

### *Chaplain Jane Bingham*

Captain, CHC, USN, Retired  
Joined MCA 1986  
Deceased October 2, 2017  
Walden, Colorado

## Suicide Care, Prevention & Research Initiative

Carol Stewart and Dr. Jessica LaCroix will be in attendance during our Annual Meeting in Newport News VA from October 23-26. As researchers developing a Special Operations Force Suicide Prevention Workbook for chaplaincy, they seek chaplains, chaplain assistants, or religious program specialists who have had experiences managing suicide-related events within the SOF community.

Anyone who has been part of such a chaplain care situation is invited to meet with them for a confidential 60 minute interview to better understand the needs and challenges of care providers working with SOF service members and their families in this important area.

Please send a note to [chaplains@mca-usa.org](mailto:chaplains@mca-usa.org) to sign up for this opportunity. Sign ups will also be available at the meeting

For more information see the attachment [here](#).

## Seeking Employment?

# VA Commission Established to Recommend Under Secretary for Benefits

October 10 - WASHINGTON - Today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced the establishment of a search commission to help identify candidates for the position of VA Under Secretary for Benefits. The Under Secretary for Benefits is the senior official within the [Veterans Benefits Administration](#) (VBA) that oversees a variety of benefits and services to Servicemembers, Veterans and their families.

Search commission candidates will be selected based on criteria governed by law along with appropriate skills, knowledge and attributes as leaders, managers and educators. The commission is a prerequisite to the President's appointment of an Under Secretary candidate, subject to Senate confirmation.

*By law, the appointment is made without regard to political affiliation and solely on the basis of demonstrated ability both in fiscal management and in the administration of programs of VBA or of similar content and scope.*

VBA includes a network of 56 regional offices and more than 21,800 employees. Nearly four million Veterans currently receive compensation for disabilities incurred in service or pensions for wartime Veterans who become totally disabled in civilian life. In addition, more than half a million widows, children and parents of deceased Veterans are paid survivor compensation or death pensions.

Other programs administered by the Under Secretary for Benefits include: education benefits, vocational rehabilitation and employment for Veterans, and life insurance, as well as VA guaranteed home loans for both active-duty personnel and Veterans.

The commission, once named, is expected to complete its work by December 1.

To apply for this job, go to <https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/481447500>

## Religion and Spirituality: The Impact on Chaplains

Registration Now Open  
[Sign Up Here](#)

[Complete Schedule](#)



## MCA National Institute 2017

October 23 - 26, 2017

[Newport News Marriott at City Center](#)

Newport News, Virginia

*Please Note: Our room block has expired. Rooms are still available at the hotel. If you qualify, use the military rate. This is within a few dollars of the room block rate.*

**Register for your room on line**

or call  
866-329-1758

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If you missed the October 4th edition of the Newsgram [click here](#)

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