CHAPTER 1

THE NAVY CHAPLAIN CORPS: HISTORY, ISSUES, AND ITS FUTURE

"Devoted to God and country, we unite to deliver innovative,
life transforming service throughout and beyond the Sea Services."

A U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps Motto

The genesis for this project lay in the current state of the U.S. Navy and its Chaplain Corps. During the past six years, I have served as a Navy chaplain and have encountered first-hand the issues that are described in the following pages. As a result of that experience, I am in a unique position to describe the challenges faced by individual chaplains and by the institution in which we serve. Following extensive research into the history of the Chaplain Corps and the issues that it faces, I set out to learn, through my Doctor of Ministry project, about the current state of the community we chaplains are serving. Through reflections written by this community, which were then reviewed by Navy chaplains, I was able to determine that while the current state of the Chaplains Corps involves it having to face serious challenges, it is also able to celebrate positive aspects. I will show through the chapter on pluralism and diversity that the challenges they present are not insurmountable issues that they have occasionally been portrayed. As a Navy chaplain and as a Christian, I conclude the paper with my own understanding of how a United Methodist pastor from rural Nebraska can and does provide ministry in this context.

In this chapter, I will lay out the current state of the government's sponsorship of ministry in the military, specifically in the U.S Navy and its Chaplain Corps: its history, contemporary issues, and its future. The Navy Chief of Chaplains[1] White Paper[2] explored the challenges facing chaplains in a challenging ministry setting, i.e., the dual role of clergy and military officer. A

[1] Rear Admiral Louis Iasiello, the U.S. Navy Chief of Chaplains, initiated the use of White Papers as a part of a concerted effort, which started in October 2003, to bring about a dialogue within the Navy Chaplain Corps concerning the issues that impacted the Corps.
[2] Chief of Chaplains White Paper #2, "*Nature and Call of Military Ministry*," 26 November 2003, page 2.

tension exists within the chaplaincy between the demands placed upon chaplains by their faith groups and the constitutional demands places upon them by the institution whose uniform they wear.

Retired Chief of Chaplains, Rear Admiral Richard Hutcheson, Jr., sums up this duality:

> The essence of institutional duality is the fact that chaplains are as fully clergy of their own denominations as they are officers of their military service, and they can only function in full and current status with both institutions. The fostering of full understanding of institutional duality will largely be the responsibility of the chaplains themselves. It may be temptation for chaplains to take advantage of their physical absence from church structures, their relative freedom from church restrictions, and the financial independence of a government paycheck and give little attention to their ecclesiastical authorities. This, however, is a serious mistake. The long-range health of military ministry, and the chaplain's best safeguard against the subordination of religious to military goals, depends on a healthy duality. The chaplaincy will be most effective when both the religious bodies and the military services recognize clearly hat chaplains are fully members of both institutions – a unique kind of officer and a unique kind of clergy – with clear responsibilities in both directions.[3]

The Constitution of the United States prohibits the national, state, and local governments from the establishment of official religious organizations. Two clauses found in Article One of the Constitution were intended by the founders of the new country to prevent the recurrence of the religious wars that plagued the European continent for so many years. The so-called "establishment clause" reflects a desire to achieve neutrality by the state in the affair of the church. On the heels of this clause is the "free exercise" clause that mirrors the "establishment clause" in its scope and intent. Where the "establishment clause" kept the state from creating an entity that all must join, the "free exercise" clause prevented the state from dictating the beliefs of individuals. No longer would citizens be compelled to adhere to a doctrine that changed with the leadership of the land. Likewise, no longer could the church expect the state to support it. These clauses compelled the church to stand on its own merit in the public arena and compete for the loyalty and support of the citizens in the marketplace of ideas.

Since the Sea Services will ask the chaplain to serve in locations and settings far removed from the familiar confines of traditional American religion, how does the chaplain know how to continue with the secular and spiritual requirements? The document known as the National Security Strategy (NSS) states: "People everywhere want to be able to speak freely, choose who

[3] Richard G. Hutcheson, Jr., *The Churches and the Chaplaincy*, rev. ed., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1998, page 29f.

will govern them, worship as they please, educate their children, own property, and enjoy the benefits of their labor. These values of freedom are the right and truth for every person, in every society."[4] Chaplains are expected to assist the commander in meeting the religious needs and rights of the members of the command, as a means of demonstrating o the world around them that the American military lives up to the standards we proclaim to the world.

If there is to be no state church or religion and the government cannot compel its citizens to confess to hold to any particular set of beliefs, under what circumstances then may a chaplain exist with the military forces of the United States? A look at the evolution of the office of chaplain[5] may prove instructive. In ancient times, guardians of the spiritual practices of a particular community would often accompany the warriors on the military campaigns as symbols of divine favor or blessing. According to French legend, it was during the Middle Ages in Europe that Saint Martin of Tours[6] split his cloak with a beggar on a frigid winter day outside the gates of Amiens. The saint's cloak was considered holy, the legend surrounding the cloak included the belief that Jesus had worn it. Generations of French kings assigned trusted officers to be custodians of this religious relic and to safeguard it during battle and other state functions. The place where this particular relic, in Old French called a "chappelle," was kept came to be known as a chapel, and the person charged with its care was the chaplain or cloak-bearer. As the church rose in prominence in Europe, priests became the bearers of the cloak. Over time, those persons associated with the task of safeguarding religious objects or conducting religious functions in settings aside from the church buildings became known as chaplains.

During the era of the expansion of the Europeans empires, the colonial powers saw fit to provide chaplains on their voyages of exploration and conquest. These chaplains fulfilled crucial tasks aside from their purely religious functions. They filled a secretarial role, as they tended to be among the few persons aboard a ship that could read and write. They also served as observers of new lands and people, reporting about the wonders of these far-flung empires to monarch who had sent them.

[4] Chief of Chaplains White Paper #1, "*The Constitutional Foundation of Military Ministry*," 30 October 2003, page 4.
[5] New Advent, "*Chaplain*," https:www.newadvent.org/cathen/03579b.htm (25 March 2005).
[6] New Advent, "*Saint Martin of Tours*," http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03527b.htm (25 March 2005).

By the time the Europeans reached the western hemisphere in force, following the routes discovered by Columbus, chaplains were an established part of any mission, regardless of its imperial, economic, or exploratory nature. As was the case in much of Europe during this period, the religion of the monarch tended to be the religion of the country. The chaplain's appointment came from various sources. Sometimes it came from the colonial governor or legislature, the established church of the particular colony, or even the captain of the ship that brought the chaplain to the nascent colony. They would have associated anyone not part of their faith group as beyond the pale of the care and concern other than for the purpose of conversion. Spanish, Portuguese, and French chaplains would have been Catholic; the Dutch would have been Reformed Protestant. Initially, it would have appeared that most chaplains from England were priests from the Church of England (Anglican). Although, in places such as the Plymouth Colony, non-conformist chaplains would have been found.

During the time leading up to the American Revolution, many people, including Colonel George Washington, realized that the troops in the field still needed spiritual guidance and training in morals and education of a practical nature. Colonel Washington's exchange of letters during the 1750s with the colonial governor and legislature of Virginia indicated that there was not only a divine necessity for the troops to be able to worship in the field, but there was also a practical benefit to the public when its warriors were able to temper the violence inherent in the profession of arms with the hopeful return to the community when the time for war is past. While all the colonies had established state churches, there was a reluctance to expend money from the public purse to supply chaplains to those in the field; and there are those who continue to question this practice to this day. During the Revolution, General Washington acted upon his belief in the value of chaplains to the troops in the field by pressing the Continental Congress on the issue. It was through his insistence that military members do not leave behind their rights as citizens when they donned the uniform that chaplains began to be formally appointed to the military.

The chaplains serving in the American military were first authorized to receive payment from the Treasury on 29 July 1775.[7] On 28 November 1775, the Continental Congress brought the

[7] Chief of Chaplains White Paper #1, "*The Constitutional Foundation of Military Ministry*," 30 October 2003, page 2.

Navy Chaplain Corps into being with the adoption of the second article of Navy Regulations with these words: “The command of the ships of the thirteen United Colonies are to take care that divine service be performed twice a day on board, and sermon preached on Sundays, unless bad weather or other extraordinary accidents prevent.” There is debate as to the identity of the first chaplain of the infant Navy. There is those who hold that it was the Rev. Edward Brooks, a Congregational minister who served aboard the USS Hancock. Others contend that it was the Rev. William Austin of the USS Constitution should hold the honor, although it is not known whether he was an ordained minister. There are other examples of non-ordained men serving as chaplains in the military. The practice of limiting who may serve as a chaplain was not introduced until years later. It was the commissioning of the Rev. William Balch, a Congregationalist, on 30 October 1779, as chaplain of the USS Boston that marks the first formal appointment of an ordained minister as a chaplain aboard a U.S. naval vessel.

In spite of the endorsement of chaplains by such luminaries as President Washington and the long and storied service of chaplains in the U.S. military and in the other lands, there has always been an element of society that recoiled at the notion of federally endorsed and supported chaplains. Luminaries such as James Madison offered critiques to the notion that chaplains should be appointed in the military, putting forward the notion that there were those in the services that possessed superior insights into matters of personal faith and practice. However, early chaplains were expected to be more than simply theologians. Indeed, in 1811, the Secretary of the Navy reported to Congress that chaplains were expected to not only preach to the crew on Sunday but were there to provide instruction to the junior officers and youth in all academic subjects, to include navigation and astronomy. Chaplains such as the Rev. David Folsom, the first Unitarian chaplain, who taught the future Admiral Farragut, and Father Adam Marshall, a Catholic priest, who is listed on the role as being a school master, are among the chaplains who served their country by being both teachers and preachers.

The role of chaplain as academic tutor continued with the formal establishment of the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, in 1845, where Chaplains Robert Thompson and George Jones were among the founding members of the faculty. Chaplains were found in other areas aside from the realm of the schoolmaster. The first two articles in the young Navy’s Rules and Regulations obligated all commanders of naval vessels “…to be very vigilant…to

discountenance and suppress all dissolute, immoral, and disorderly practices…to take care, that divine service be performed twice a day on board, and a sermon preached on Sundays."[8] Among the notables whose voices were heard in morals and ethics was Chaplain Edward McLaughlin who, in 1830, put in writing his opposition to flogging aboard Naval vessels. Chaplain George Jones, one the founders of Naval Academy, was the chaplain who introduced coffee and sugar as a replacement drink for grog.

Not seen as officer nor enlisted, chaplains were typically required to dine in their cabins aboard ship unless invited to eat the captain's table. It was not until 1838, that chaplains were authorized to wear military uniforms. Despite the tradition of chaplains in military settings, challenges to the legitimacy of military chaplains in the U.S. military continued. In 1853, the House of Representatives' Judiciary Committee chose to place into The Congressional Record that there is more at stake here than just religion or who pays for it. This committee moved beyond the question of whether or not there should be military chaplains stating:

We presume that all will grant that it is proper to appoint physicians and surgeons in the Army and Navy. The power to appoint chaplains in just the same, because neither are expressly named, but are appointed under the general authority to organize the Army and Navy, and we deem the one as truly a matter of necessity as the other…the Navy has still stronger claims than the Army for the supply of chaplains…If you do not afford them the means of religious services while at sea, the Sabbath is, to all intents and purposes, annihilated, and we do not all the exercise the free exercise of religion.[9]

Throughout the remaining years of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, chaplains continued to grow in statue in the eyes of the institution. Among the notable achievements of chaplains during this century are John Lenhart (Methodist), who was the first chaplain killed in combat. The denominations represented in the Chaplain Corps continued to expand from those few groups in the early years of the Corps. Father Charles Parks became the first Roman Catholic chaplain formally appointed as such in 1888; 1915 saw Herbert Dumstrey appointed as the first Reformed Church chaplain; 1916 saw its first Lutheran in Paul Seidler. The

[8] Library of Congress, "*Religion and the Founding the American Republic, Section IV: Religion and the Congress of the Confederation*," page 4, https://www.loc.gov/religion/exhibits (24 August 2004).
[9] U.S. Congress, House, 1853-1854, Congressional Record, page 124.

shock to the Chaplain Corps community during the First World War was tremendous when Rabbi David Goldberg came aboard in 1917. Richard Davis, the first Christian Science chaplain, joined him the next year.

That the Navy recognized the growing diversity in the fleet was dramatically evidenced when in 1941, John Bond joined the Corps as the first Later-day Saint (Mormon) chaplain. Racial diversity was finally acknowledged in 1944, when James Brown became the first African American chaplain. The gender barrier was finally breached finally in 1973, when Florence Pohlman, a Presbyterian, became the first female chaplain. When Vivian McFadden, a United Methodist, joined her in 1974 as the first African American female chaplain, the last barriers appeared to have been removed. However, there was more to come, for in 1996, the Jewish-Christian monopoly in the Chaplain Corps was shattered when Malak Noel became the first Muslim chaplain, and in 2004, Gracie Shin became the first Buddhist chaplain. The Chaplain Corps has evolved from its humble beginnings when in the 1770s and early 1800s to be a chaplain one was assumed to be a European-American, male, and Protestant Christian. The Navy Chaplain Corps now has male and female chaplains from more than eighty faith groups and from numerous ethnic communities, and chaplains continue to reflect the ever-changing nature of religious diversity found in the Fleet.[10]

The need to accommodate the constitutional clauses previously mentioned in this chapter is the ongoing debate in and out of the Navy. The right to hold a religious belief is among one of the most cherished rights held by USAmericans[11], but while the right to hold religious belief must be considered an absolute, the right to act upon that belief is not. In 1974, in the landmark case of Parker v. Levy, the court held that "members of the military community and of the military mission requires a different application of these protections.[12] Subsequent military guidelines were developed to assist commanders in balancing the needs of the mission with the needs of the individual. These guidelines[13] may summarized as follows:

[10] The Fleet is a colloquial term that refers to the institutional Navy.
[11] USAmerica is a term coined by Leonard Sweet to refer to the culture specific to the United States of America. USAmerican is a person with a connection to and with USAmerica.
[12] N. Dorsen, An ACLU Handbook, *The Religious Rights of Religious Liberty*, 2nd Edition, Carbondale, IL: SIU Press, 1995.
[13] Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute. (1987*). Religious Accommodation in the Military: Its Historical Precedence and Equal Opportunity Implication.*

1) What are the military requirements?
2) How important is the request of the individual?
3) What is cumulative effect of repeated, similar accommodations?
4) Do alternatives exist to meet the request?
5) What are the past practices for similar requests, whether of a religious nature or not?[14]

At this point, it would be helpful to define what is meant by the term, "Navy chaplain" and then to explain the process for becoming a Navy chaplain. Having accepted a call to ministry, there is a process by which that person is placed in a ministry setting, and those seeking a place in the Chaplain Corps have additional steps to complete that a person entering a civilian ministry setting does not have to complete. A chaplain is a clergy or faith group representative endorsed by a particular faith group to serve in ministry in an institutional or non-congregational setting. The vast majority of chaplains have parish experience, which may be both a blessing and a bane for all concerned. It is a blessing because it provides chaplains with valuable pastoral skills in leading worship, counseling, and organizational leadership. It takes on the nature of a bane because chaplains are used to "running" their own programs. Chaplains function in a specialty ministry, but they also function as Navy staff officers. This is not always easy for chaplains to do or remember. These representatives of particular faith groups must be able to treat others with civility, humor, and grace. Chaplains are people who care about the needs of others and are willing to get involved to help make other people's worlds a little bit brighter, safer, and hope filled. Another way of looking at what chaplains do is to say that a chaplain is a person who will listen, even when others will not.

Currently, the Navy accepts clergy from hundreds of distinct faith groups. To qualify as a Navy chaplain, there are standards that must be met. Among the most basic is that one must be a U.S. citizen and at least twenty-one years of age. The upper limit for officers is typically thirty-nine although there are age-waivers that may be granted under certain circumstances. The prospective chaplains must be able to meet the same medical and physical conditions to which all U.S. military members are held. Prospective chaplains must hold a B.A. or B.S. degree of at least 120 semester hours from an accredited educational institution and hold a post-baccalaureate graduate degree, of which seventy-two hours must be in theological or related studies at the graduate level. Of the minimum seventy-two hours of post-graduate work, half or a minimum of

[14] Chief of Chaplains White Paper #1. (30 October 2003). "*The Constitutional Foundation of Military Ministry*"

thirty-six hours must be in the fields of general religion, theology, religious philosophy, ethics, and/or foundational writings from one's religious tradition.

Clergy members who feel the basic requirements have been met may seek ecclesiastical endorsement from the denomination or faith group to which they belong. Following the guidelines established by law,[15] endorsing agents certify that the prospective chaplain meets the requirements of the military in four areas:

1) The candidate is a fully qualified clergy person of a certifying faith group.
2) The candidate is willing to support directly or indirectly the free exercise of religion by all members of the military services, their dependents, and other authorized persons.
3) The candidate is educationally qualified.
4) The candidate meets the physical standards and is otherwise qualified to serve as a commissioned officer.[16]

Once the Navy accepts an individual as a chaplain, an oath is administered. This oath, taken by all members of the military, requires the individual to accept a new identity and a new role. By accepting the role of a Navy chaplain, the individual gives up certain rights and freedoms in exchange for others. A new legal status is conferred upon the individual, and for the remainder of that person's time in the military, life is no longer the same. A military officer has no termination date, as do enlisted members who sign contracts with the Navy. Officers receive commissions from the President of the United States and serve at the president's pleasure. The Secretary of the Navy, as the president's representative, is authorized to establish such criteria as needed for the formation of an appropriately staffed Navy.[17] Inherent in this new identity is the dual nature of the chaplaincy: chaplains must be able to satisfy the requirements of both their faith groups and the Navy. Maintenance of professional credentials, approval of the chaplain's faith group for continuation on active duty, and the desire for the Navy that the chaplain continue to serve are all needed for chaplains to achieve the desired result of service to God and country.

New chaplains are then sent to the Navy Chaplains School at Newport, Rhode Island, for the Chaplain Basic Course and additional courses to help acclimate them to the Navy's way of doing things. Even for chaplains who are military veterans (enlisted or officer), being a chaplain is

[15] Title 10, United States Code, Sections 532 and 591, Executive Order 9397, and Department of Defense Form 2088. May 1993.
[16] Department of Defense Directive 1304.19.
[17] Chief of Chaplains White Paper #2. (26 November 2003). *"Nature and Call of Military Ministry"*

different from whatever their experience in uniform has been up to that point. Following the basic course, chaplains are detailed, i.e., are given orders, which assign them to a billet somewhere in the Sea Services, or as it is sometimes referred to, The Fleet. All assignments are based on a variety of factors. Factors include the operational requirements of the Navy and Marine Corps, the previous experience and interests of the chaplains, and the need to ensure a "well-rounded" naval career.

The contemporary issues facing the Navy chaplain are numerous and the future of the Corps is by no means certain. A Chaplain Corps White Paper[18] in 2004 addressed one of the critical issues facing the Corps, namely, the chaplain's struggle between his/her individual call to ministry and the call to serve in the U.S. Navy. The Chaplain Corps motto, "Cooperation with compromise," does not, despite the official position, occur easily or without considerable effort.

The Code of Ethics for Military Chaplains says in part:

I understand as a chaplain in the United States Armed Forces that I will function in a pluralistic environment with chaplains of other religious bodies to provide for ministry to all military personnel and their families entrusted to my care. I will work collegially with chaplains and delegated representatives of religious bodies other than my own as we seek to provide the most complete ministry possible to our people. I will respect the beliefs and traditions of my colleagues and those to whom I minister. [19]

This code is lived out in the commitment of chaplains to work for and with chaplains of various faith groups in a collegial manner toward common goals and addressing spiritual needs common to military personnel. Chaplains are to unite, as a Chaplain Corps motto puts I, in providing innovative ministry to personnel in the Sea Services. Chaplains are not lone rangers; they cannot function effectively if they insist on "going it alone." Only by achieving the balance between being faithful to their faith traditions and supporting the faith of those around them does "cooperation without compromise" evolve from cliche` to opportunity for ministry. A chaplain should always avoid compromising his/her core faith belief system, but must be willing to cooperate with others, even those folks who believe differently from him/her. This is the heart of "cooperation without compromise."

[18] Chief of Chaplains White Paper #3. (3 January 2004). *"American Religious Pluralism and Cooperative Ministry in the United States Sea Services"*

[19] National Conference on Ministry in the Armed Forces. (10 May 2005). *Covenant and the Code of Ethics for Chaplains of the Armed Forces*. Accessed 10 March 2005. http://ncmaf.org/policies/codeofethics.htm

Over time, the understanding of who could become a chaplain has changed. Another notable change in the manner in which chaplains conduct their role. The military institution in which chaplains serve is often at odds with the role that chaplains perceive for themselves. Chaplains have a role to play that carries on beyond any one institution and to the lives of the men and women of the Sea Service community. How do these representatives of so many groups meet this challenge if service to both God and county, of individual conscience and group need?

The Navy Chaplain manual of 1949 put it this way:

Though its members belong to different faiths, the Chaplain Corps has a common purpose of religious leadership in the promotion of religion and morals. Each chaplain comes to the service with a clear and unswerving determination to play his full part as a chaplain; resolved to cultivate a prompt, cheerful, and willing obedience o all orders, written or oral; understands that there can be limitation as to kind or place of duty; and realized fully the meaning and force of his oath of acceptance of commission and of the office of chaplain…"[20]

The common purpose that was so evident in 1949 was never as clear or as strong as might believe it to have been. As with any understanding of the past, the "good old days" were seldom as golden as they are portrayed. Academic papers written by Navy chaplains in the 1970s[21] and 1980s[22] reveal compelling evidence that not all was well with the soul of the Chaplain Corps. This strain has continued and is fueled by competing understandings of what is and is not the duty and responsibility of the chaplains in 2005.

One of the significant issues facing the future of the Corps is the ongoing struggle over religious diversity and pluralism. This was not always the case. In 1920, the Rev. Phil Ryan wrote about experiences as an Army chaplain returning from France in 1918, aboard a Navy ship, "Sundays were full days at sea. All available chaplains, both Protestant and Catholic, held services at the strategic points of the ship…"[23] The mission of chaplains was to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, and they did so without hesitation or reservation. Writing in the shadow of the First World War, Chaplain Haines Lippincott offered the belief that "The chaplains, with a twofold commission, that of the Church of Christ and the National Government, stand as the

[20] Bureau of Naval Personnel Publication 10804. (January 1949). *The Navy Chaplain,* page 176.
[21] Leonard L. Ahrnsbrak. (1971). *Role Conflicts Among Navy Chaplains in Light of American Civil Religion*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton Theological School.
[22] Frank S. Klapach. (1987). *The Emerging Pluralism and Protestant Worship in the Navy,* Newport, RI: U.S. Navy Chaplains Advance Course.
[23] Phil H. Ryan. (April 1920). "My Sea Parish." *Methodist Quarterly Review,* Vol. 69, No. 2, page 261.

spiritual and living embodiment of Christian leadership in the Navy."[24] Both of these chaplains wrote with the understanding that a chaplain was by virtue of his[25] office, a Christian; the only distinction made were between Protestant and Catholics.[26] It was widely understood that chaplains were representatives of Christ and that the crew aboard any ship of the line would be comprised of Christians. It mattered little if the chaplains were Episcopalian of Catholic, Baptist or Methodist, they were Christians, and the crew knew what to expect. "In a ship's company of 1,500 men there is always someone expressing a new, and whether the padre be Protestant or Catholic the men have come to know this office of service as one beneath which and in which there are the warmth of feeling and heart of life."[27]

The growing presence in the Fleet of Evangelicals, Pentecostals, and other chaplains from "free church" traditions, compounded by the increasing diversity in beliefs and attitudes towards religion in society, led to an inevitable clash of beliefs and interests in 1999. The history of the country in terms of religious belief and practice was mirrored in the chaplains who came into and remained, shaping the Corps. The so-called "liturgical" Protestants were the primary shapers of worship, and the "general Protestant" worship service anywhere in the Fleet would have detected a highly developed service with an Episcopalian, Methodist, Lutheran, and Presbyterian imprint. It would not have mattered what Protestant tradition the chaplain came from, so long as the Protestant service was properly executed. The Catholics, of course, had their own worship practices, as did the Jewish personnel. If one came from a tradition other than those mentioned, this it was only by chance that a worship service meaningful in the individual's tradition would be encountered.

An example of this understanding of worship comes from the hymnal that is still in use in military chapels to the present time. The preface to the 1988 edition of the Armed Forces Book of Worship offers a lofty vision of worshipping in a military faith community, "It is a repository of selected worship resources reflecting both traditional contemporary communities from among the respective faith groups…it is a unique interfaith publication. Hymns and resources have been

[24] Haines H. Lippincott. (July 1924). *"*The Navy as a Parish*," Methodist Quarterly Review*, Vol. 107, page 570.
[25] Until 1973, all Navy chaplains were male.
[26] The first non-Christian chaplain, Rabbi David Goldberg, came into the Navy in 1917. By 1924, there were still only a small handful of Jewish chaplains in the Fleet.
[27] Haines H. Lippincott. (July 1924). *"*The Navy as a Parish*," Methodist Quarterly Review*, Vol. 107, page 570.

carefully selected to provide for the spiritual needs of many diverse groups of worshippers with the military community. It was especially designed in language and style to appeal to young adults."[28] This massive tome weighs in at 815 pages and reflects resources for "mainstream" Protestants and Catholics, with a nod toward Jewish and Orthodox Christian personnel The inclusion of a guitar-fingering diagram appeared to be the sole recognition that worship styles were already undergoing vast changes in the culture from which service people were emerging. A list of the contributors to the project shows that the hegemony of the established order was still in place in 1988. This list includes resources and contributors from Jewish, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, United Methodist, Greek Orthodox, and the Reformed Church. No Baptist, no Pentecostal, and no sources that could be identified as serving a youth-orientated community were included. In the 1980s, a growing number of Evangelicals and Pentecostals began to come into the Fleet and demanded that they be able to worship in a style meaningful to them. In response, chaplains from those traditions began to enter the Chaplain Corps, and these new chaplains ran headfirst into the established "high church" chaplains.

The proceeding description of the general Protestant worship style is highly simplified of course, by the perception was there. Chaplains from the "free church" traditions felt constrained to follow what was felt to be a restrictive style of worship, and the frustration did not end there. The debate over the ability of chaplains to pray "In Jesus' name" and to evangelize the ripe mission field had led to conflict within the Corps. The historical leadership of the Corps, i.e. mainline Protestants and Roman Catholics, were seen as providing preferential treatment for liturgical Protestants and Roman Catholics, thus denying the reality of the new demographics in the Fleet and in the Chaplain Corps. This preferential treatment was seen as preventing non-liturgical chaplains from advancing in rank and in being blocked from desirable assignments. In October 1999, a federal lawsuit[29] was filed by a chaplain, LT Patrick Sturn, alleging that he had been passed over for promotion to the next grade, the result of bias in the system against his faith group.[30] The courts ultimately rejected his claim, but the perception of bias has led to numerous

[28] The Armed Forces Chaplains Board. (1974). *Book of Worship for United States Forces*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, page 5.
[29] *Sturn vs. U.S. Navy.* This suit alleged that the Chaplain Corps was engaging in overt religious discrimination by favoring liturgical Protestants (those who baptize infants) and Roman Catholics over non-liturgical Protestants (those who do not baptize infants).
[30] Ken Walker. (May 5, 2001). "Navy Bias Charged," *Christianity Today*, Vol. 45, Issue 7.

other suits including a class-action suit, involving seventeen named plaintiffs, four of were still on active duty when the suit was filed. The exact number of chaplains involved in this class action suit, [31] both active duty and former Navy chaplains is unknown at this time.

The suits typically take a broad-brush approach to the issues at hand, in addition to the particular injustices perceived on the part of the plaintiff. A typical allegation is a belief that the Navy allocates quotas in the Chaplain Corps based on broad-based faith groups. [32] The result of this alleged discriminatory practice has been the retention of power in the hands of the old guard, the liturgical Protestants and Roman Catholics, thus preventing non-liturgical Protestants[33] from taking their rightful place in the center of influence. Another allegation that has emerged is the belief that there have been blatant attempts by liturgical Protestants and Roman Catholic chaplains to stifle the religious beliefs and practices of non-liturgical chaplains. These efforts are alleged to have included misallocation of resources, limiting non-liturgical services to less-desirable times and places, or, in extreme cases, the actual disrupting of worship services, and barring chaplains from preaching in certain styles or on particular subjects. An excellent example of this last point is the case of Lieutenant Commander David Wilder, a Southern Baptist, who led a Baptist-styled general Protestant service in Okinawa in the early 1990s. When a new command chaplain, an Episcopalian, arrived, a clash occurred. The command chaplain was accused of wanting the service order changed to a more liturgical style that Wilder refused to do, leading to his removal of the general Protestant service. The new style service plummeted in attendance, and when Chaplain Wilder attempted to start a Baptist-style of worship service, his efforts were seen as divisive.[34]

In response to a three-part series in The Stars and Stripes newspaper entitled "War in the Chaplain Corps," Rear Admiral Louis Iasiello, the Navy Chief of Chaplains, responded:

The more than 900 men and women in the Navy's Chaplain Corps and their counterparts in the reserves work hard every day, faithfully – without fanfare – to provide for the free exercise of

[31] *Adair vs. England*, Gordon England was Secretary of the Navy at the time the suit was filed.
[32] One third for liturgical Protestants, one-third for Roman Catholics, and the remaining one-third for all other types of chaplains i.e., non-liturgical Protestants, Jews, Muslims, or Buddhists, etc.
[33] The lawsuits never mention bias against chaplains who are Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist or other. Nor do they address bias against liturgical Protestant or Roman Catholic chaplains on the part of non-liturgical Protestant chaplains.
[34] I asked Chaplain Wilder to participate in this project, first as a reflection writer in Phase 1 and again later as a chaplain participant in Phase 2, but he never responded to my requests.

religion for all members of the Sea Services, their dependents, and other authorized Department of Defense personnel. Officers of the Chaplain Corps serve in units large and small, at seas and ashore alongside their shipmates and very often at the tip of spear. Let me assure your readership that the Chaplain Corps leadership remains committed to the professional, spiritual, and personal growth and development of our officers, regardless of their religious views or faith traditions. Likewise our officers remain committed to the spiritual growth and development of the brave Sailors, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen they serve. While most institutions have learned to tolerate diversity, we as a Chaplain Corps celebrate religious diversity and look upon it as a gift from God…"[35]

The ultimate outcome of these suits and the struggle for power within the Chaplain Corps is unlikely to be known for some time yet. One thing is certain though, that the days of "one size fits all worship" are over in society and in the Sea Services. How to convey this in the Corps and in the Fleet is another issue. For those chaplains who feel they are in uniform to take care of their faith group, and their faith group only, the work will continue to frustrate them. For those who are willing to bend, to cooperate without compromising their beliefs, the options are more favorable. One reality that there are chaplains who fail to remember is that not everyone who enters the Corps will retire from it. Rear Admiral Iasiello, then Captain Iasiello, while serving as Director of the Chaplain School in Newport, Rhode Island, told my class of new Navy chaplains, "None of your is guaranteed a retirement check." Like any other officer, the chaplain in today's Navy competes for promotion, and those who are not selected for the next grade twice are sent home with the thanks of a grateful country. It is not about who gets what or how many. It is about sharing the work, celebrating faith, and facilitating the free exercise of religion for everyone.

Another issue that until recently was not even on the radar of the Corps was the welcoming to the table those faiths from outside the Judeo-Christian orbit. The inclusion of Muslim and Buddhist chaplains in the Corps has necessitated the removal of religious symbols from the Chaplain Corps seal, resulting in a neutral symbol. That there are other religions present in the Fleet has always been one of the issues with which the powers that be would have preferred not to deal. Yet, in 1999, a group of Wiccans met at Fort Hood, Texas, setting off a storm of protest

[35] Letter from Rear Admiral Louis Iasiello to the editor of Stars and Stripes, 18 December 2003.

from conservative politicians, chaplains, and others whose understanding of military chaplaincy had already been stretched far beyond any semblance of comfort. Representative Bob Barr (R-GA), claimed that "…it is difficult, if not impossible, to make the case that encouraging the practice of bizarre rituals makes a positive contribution to combat readiness." The Executive Director of the Christian Military Fellowship, Craig Conrad, replied, "If we oppose these practices [on base], we stand a particularly good chance of shooting ourselves in the foot and [being' given the boot ourselves. A military chapel is not a church, but a place where we facilitate the exercise of religious liberty.[36]

In the spring of 2004, I was assigned to Joint Maritime Facility – St. Mawgan (JMF St. Mawgan), Cornwall, United Kingdom,[37] where efforts to start a new-pagan group were initially met with hesitation by the command. In this case, I supported the right of the group to meet under the same conditions that other faith groups would meet. By addressing the issue as a constitutional right and including it in the commander's religious program, I was able to demonstrate that facilitating a minority faith in no way detracted from the faith of the majority. At the same time, supporting a faith group with government time and money enhanced the belief that freedom of religion was something that the U.S. Navy was going to do.

When in doubt as to whether to comply with the religious needs or requests of service members, the chaplain needs to balance two concerns: 1) Is the request valid under the constitutional requirements and subsequent military guidelines and 2) Is the chaplains able to meet that need him/herself or will other accommodations need to be found in order to facilitate the request? The answer to the first question may be found in the laws of the United States.[38] The answer to the second question lay with the standards and requirements of the chaplains' particular beliefs and his/her own faith tradition and endorsing body.

In the case of the neo-druids at JMF St. Mawgan, I first looked at my own beliefs. While not agreeing with the tenants of neo-druidism, they were entitled to worship in a manner of their own choosing. While I could not lead such a service myself, there was nothing in The United Methodist Book of Discipline that would prevent me from supporting another person's ability to

[36] Mark Keller. (12 July 1999). "Wiccans Practice on U.S. Bases," *Christianity Today*, Vol. 43, Issue 8, page 10.
[37] JMF St. Mawgan is a bi-national (USA and UK), tri-service (United States Navy, United Kingdom's Royal Navy and Royal Air Force) underseas surveillance command.
[38] Examples of such laws are the Bibliography, page 248.

freely express their religious needs or beliefs. I then looked to the regulations where I found ample evidence that the command should support the appointment of a lay leader for the neo-druids and the right of that group to receive the support offered to other religious groups.

The Department of Defense Directive 1300.17[39] lays of the guidelines for deciding whether or not to acquiesce to the request. These guidelines include asking what the effect of repeated requests for accommodation of a similar nature is; are there alternatives to meeting the requested needs; and what has been the standard by which other groups have been treated. The standard was met in each case. The requestor was an active Druid and had letters of recommendation from a recognized Druid group in the United States. As there were no other Navy chaplains available to accommodate the request, a lay leader needed to be appointed. Finally, as there was an established Roman Catholic lay-led program and accommodation had previously been made for Jewish and Orthodox Christian personnel, precedent had been set to meet the needs of personnel when the chaplain was unable to meet those needs. There were people who were uncomfortable with this situation, including persons within the lay leader's chain of command. However, the resulting group has contributed to the belief that free expression comes in many shapes and forms and that freedom of religion is alive and well, at least with this chaplain and in this command.

This situation at JMF St. Mawgan was a perfect illustration for my project that deals with the formation of a community of faith in the Sea Services. That derives from an amazing variety of traditions and beliefs. Even in the Christian community, there is more recognized diversity than ever before. And yet, it is in the presence of those who do not attend chapel, who are not affected in any direct fashion by the religious nature of the work that I do, that the real work of a chaplain must take place as well. Such people include those from minority beliefs, other people who really do not have a specific faith background, and those who may have held membership in a faith group, but for assorted reasons, no longer actively participate in any faith group. The need to protect the rights of those outside of the "mainstream," which in this day and age is closer and closer to being the new mainstream, is crucial to the effectiveness of the chaplain.

[39] Department of Defense Directive 1300.17. (3 February 1988). *.Accommodation of Religious Practices Within the Military Services,*

In addition to these emotional issues, the Chaplain Corps is also dealing with other important concerns. Following the powerful witness offered by the first three White Papers and raising and discussing of issues vital to the future of the Navy Chaplain Corps, two additional Chief of Chaplains White Papers were issued in 2004 which address issues of an increasingly complex and legal concern. The first of these dealt with the issue of privileged communication and the role chaplains and Religious Programing Specialists (RPs) have played in keeping what they hear in the course of their duties confidential.[40] Society has granted certain relationships a degree of autonomy in regard to the confidentiality that may be expected in those relationships. Examples of these protected relationships include clergy-penitent, husband-wife, attorney-client, and doctor-patient. Recently, psychotherapist-patient has been extended to those relationships that are understood as being set apart for confidential communications. In the case of the clergy-penitent relationship, the state has been reluctant to intrude upon the religious sphere, so intrinsic is confession and penitential acts to the practice of religious freedom, as it is understood in the United States.

In any pastoral relationship, privileged communication, or confidentiality, as it is occasionally referred to, is understood as being a crucial component in helping those who seek the advice and guidance of religious professionals. So sacrosanct is this relationship that in the military justice system, only clergy-penitent privilege stands absolute. The history surrounding this complex issue reaches back into the mists of times and has evolved into the mishmash of regulations, rules, and laws that we have today. It was not until 1951, with the formation of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, that the legal notion of clergy-penitent communication was codified. The Military Rule of Evidence (MRE) offers this understanding: it is called the "general rule of privilege." "A person has a privilege to refuse to disclose and prevent another from disclosing confidential communication by the person a clergyman or a clergyman's assistant, if such communication is made either as a formal act of religion or as a matter of conscience."[41] The reason this is such a critical feature of the chaplain's trade is that because the chaplain can be expected to keep communication in confidence, the Sailor, Marine, or Coast Guardsman has someone with whom to talk that will not seek to punish the individual. Even those chaplains

[40] Chief of Chaplains White Paper #4. *(*1 April 2004). *"Privileged Communications and the Religious Ministry Team."*
[41] 10 US Code, Chapter 47, United States Manual for Courts Martial: *Military Rules of Evidence*, Section 503 (2005).

from those faith traditions that do not have confidentiality as a part of religious tradition are expected to adhere to this strictly enforced mantra of the military justice system.

The National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces recognized this critical issue by including in its Covenant and Code of Ethics the provision that chaplains are expected to "Hold in confidence any privileged communication received by me…"[42] While not legally binding upon the chaplain, the expectation from the institution responsible for credentialing chaplains, and from the Navy itself, is that confidentiality will be maintained. The Chaplain Corps has consistently held to the belief that is nothing that can release the chaplain from the bonds of confidentiality, save the penitent person themselves. In the case of a person expressing a desire to harm themselves or others, the chaplain must take great care that every step is taken to protect the communication while striving to take whatever action is required for the preservation of life and the assurance of good order and discipline. White Paper #4 states:

While all of us would prefer to have a clear-cut answer now, to allay fears of possible wrangling, we need to also remember that in accepting our commissions as chaplains, or assuming the responsibilities as RPs (Religious Programing Specialists), we tacitly declared ourselves willing to take on the tough issues. Protecting the rights of our people is just such an issue.[43]

White Paper #4 concludes with this powerful reminder, "If we, are representatives of God and human values in the midst of a secular and increasingly business-orientated institution, cannot function as safe havens for our people, where will they go?"[44] Where indeed?

There is a tendency to attempt to understand just where the chaplain "fits in" within the institution called the Navy. Most can understand the pastoral role in the context of the worship leader. That is a given. But what happens when the chaplain steps away from that setting. What are the chaplains for the rest of the time? Of the many roles that the chaplains are called upon to exert themselves, the most crucial role they play in the institution is subject matter experts in the area of morals and ethics. This subject is of utmost importance, given the focus of this project. From the chaplain's vantage point, morals and ethics are inexorably bound up in the chaplain's

[42] National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces, *Covenant and Code of Ethics for Chaplains of the Armed Forces.*
[43] Chief of Chaplains White Paper #4. (1 April 2004). "*Privileged Communication and the Religious Ministry Team*," page 7.
[44] Ibid., page 9.

sense of spirituality. It is inconceivable that chaplains would approach an ethical quandary without first considering how their understanding of their faith impacts the situation.

By virtue of the training and guidance that come as part of the chaplain's trade, the role of advisor to the command in the realm of morals and ethics would seem to be a match made in heaven. Chaplains are accustomed to filling this role in the parish setting. This role is conducted with increasing regularity, affecting the decision makers at all levels of the chain of command, sometimes with geo-political results. "It is important to remember, chaplains are more respected as moral-ethical advisors when they are perceived as listeners who accompany commanders on their decision-making journey, and not as "ethics police" ready to offer their ethical opinions at the drop of a hat."[45]

It is essential to remember that chaplains are not present to advise the warrior, but to restrain the warrior from reaching beyond the pale of civilization. The chaplain is not a participant in the decision-making other than to assist the decision makers in the making of war in a just and human fashion. As non-combatants, chaplains must never be seen as actively participating in the waging of war. Even giving advice in this area would violate their purpose and their call. Of course, it is possible to be seen as religiously orientated that any advice the chaplain gives is automatically seen as being tainted with the "holier-than-thou" brush. That does not mean that chaplains should set aside their religious training when entering the realm of the warrior. Rather, what is called for is the understanding that chaplains are there to advise the commanders in decision making, to help in the making of ethical decisions.

If there ever was a time when ethics were the case of "A" or "B," then those days are long-gone. The role of the chaplain is to be there with the people, helping them to develop a moral construct that in turn, will enable them to make choices that reflect well upon them, the Navy, and the country. The fifth Chaplain Corps White Paper outlines three places[46] where the chaplain can "be there" with people as a guide through the ethical and moral maze common in the military environment:

1) In the act of teaching, the chaplains have the opportunity to clearly and directly state the moral point.

[45] Chief of Chaplains White Paper #5. (1 August 2004). "*The Chaplain as Moral and Ethical Advisor*," page 4.
[46] Ibid.

2) In pastoral care and counseling, the chaplains se various techniques to administer an application of moral guidance to persons who are in situations where no one else can speak with the authority or bluntness that the chaplains may.
3) Finally, in the oft-neglected field of staff work, chaplains are empowered by their direct access to the commander, and by extension to the rest of the command, to demonstrate the ways and means to achieve a moral and ethical life.

Each of these three areas comes directly from the foundation that was laid for the chaplains of today, through the efforts of so many chaplains from so many faith traditions. What we do with their legacy will determine what sort of Corps we leave for the chaplains who will follow us. In the chapters that follow, it is my belief that in the words of the community of chaplains we serve, we will discover just what this community of which we are a part is and how we may best serve its needs.