

MISSION TO NORTH AMERICA

Working Together to
Transform North America

Dear Friends: When I think of PCA military chaplains (nearly one hundred strong), I think of the many Old Testament passages about battle in which God commanded warriors to keep their eyes on Him. For instance, 2 Chronicles 20:15: "Thus says the Lord, 'Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed at this great horde, for the battle is not yours but God's.'"

There's no doubt that PCA chaplains need our prayers always, but especially now as they minister during perilous times. If you'd like to pray for specific needs of chaplains, request quarterly issues of the *Guardian* via the request form on our Web site www.pcanet.org/mna, or call 678-825-1239.

The *Guardian* is one of many services of MNA Chaplain Ministries, which is led by Dave Peterson, coordinator. Dave is a 30-year veteran chaplain of the US Army who completed two tours in Vietnam and was assigned to the US Central Command, serving as Senior Military Chaplain during Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

Dave ministers continually to our chaplains, and so do associate directors Stan Beach and Beryl Hubbard. Pray that God will give them spiritual strength and safety. You might consider inviting Dave, Stan, or Beryl to speak at your church — perhaps during missions week or in association with Memorial Day, Veterans Day or Independence Day.

We encourage congregations to sponsor PCA chaplains and aim to have three sponsoring congregations for every chaplain. There's more about sponsorship and other details of Chaplain Ministries on the MNA Web site. I urge you to investigate.



Jim Bland, MNA Coordinator

Mission Report:

PCA Chaplains: Military Missionaries Around the World

From his post in Baghdad, PCA Chaplain Collin Grossruck writes: ***"My soldiers face terrorists daily. Since we arrived in Iraq earlier this year, they've killed ten of us with car bombs, mines, machine guns, and grenades. Three friends have lost limbs and about a hundred have been wounded. While training an Iraqi battalion to protect their country, our soldiers grieved the loss of six Iraqi recruits. When a car bomber drove into our gate, taking the lives of forty-two locals, I cried with their commander."***

Collin's words provide a raw glimpse of the kind of experiences facing many chaplains ministering in Iraq today. Among the nearly one hundred PCA chaplains now serving in the armed forces, thirty-five have been sent to Iraq and Afghanistan since the war on terrorism was declared in September 2001. Chaplains fill an essential purpose at all times. But never are they more appreciated — never more vital than when called to uphold troops placed in harm's way. Collin goes on to say, "Wherever my soldiers go, I go and I do all I can to help them know Christ and trust God more."

PCA chaplains are trained and ordained like PCA pastors, but unlike pastors, they live and work side by side daily with their "flock." On maneuvers, aboard ships, overseas — in all kinds of conditions — these military missionaries are on hand to counsel and comfort, offer spiritual nourishment, disciple believers, and lead people to Jesus Christ.

Army Chaplain Tom Faichney describes his work this way, ***"The chaplaincy is an awesome thing. God's grace restrains evil, and through biblical counsel and declaration of the Word, justice is maintained and the oppressed are freed."***

A longtime pastor, Tom did not become a chaplain until 2001 when health issues prevented him and his wife, Tina, from serving as overseas missionaries with Mission to the World (MTW). "To serve in a Muslim land had been my passion," he says, "and while we could no longer work with MTW, I was given the opportunity anyway when I was deployed to Pakistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom soon after I became a chaplain."

Korean born Tim, Seewoo, Park was eager to become an Army chaplain "to pay back the USA for my salvation and that of my whole family." He had become a Christian as a young boy in Korea and is deeply grateful to the many missionaries who had come to his country over the years.

So, after graduating from
(Continued next page)

In Baghdad, PCA Chaplain Collin Grossruck is surrounded by happy children whom he often met while on combat patrols near the center of the city. As a chaplain with the 1st Armor Division of the US Army, Collin encouraged soldiers and interacted with Muslim religious leaders in order to advise his commander regarding Islamic practices in the area.



Chaplain Thomas J.
Faichney, US Army



Brendon O'Dowd has been a chaplain for three years, but served in the Air Force for a total of eight. When he graduated from the Air Force Academy, he had already heard God's call to ministry, but was committed to serve five years in the military before resigning his active duty assignment and starting seminary.

PCA Chaplains *(Continued from page 1)*

seminary in Korea, he moved to the US, became a citizen, and then a chaplain. Fervently patriotic, Tim is dedicated to preserving the Christian foundation on which this nation was established.

Air Force Chaplain Brendon O'Dowd is thankful that his position offers the distinct advantage of counseling men and women who might never see a pastor. What's more, as he visits daily with service members at their work sites, he has the opportunity to build relationships. While attending the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado, Brendon became closely associated with The Navigators, whose members disciplined him. By graduation day, he knew God was calling him to ministry, although he was first required to fulfill a five-year assignment with the military. With that behind him, Brendon pursued a seminary degree and then returned to active duty in the Air Force — this time as a chaplain.

According to Navy Chaplain Chris Bennett, his chief objective is "to be an ambassador for Christ, bearing the message of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:11-21), while I fulfill my duty to the Chaplain Corps." PCA chaplains are particularly committed to faithfully communicating the Gospel, providing a message of hope, and speaking to ethical and moral issues.



Navy chaplains cover all the sea services — Navy, Marine, Merchant Marine, and Coast Guard.

Therefore, PCA Chaplain Chris Bennett has ministered in a wide variety of settings during his quarter-century career — on the sea, in the field, even in the center of government while serving as chaplain for the White House Communications Agency and also the White House

Military Office. He has led worship services under all kinds of conditions — in the desert amid blazing temperatures of 130 degrees and on snow-packed mountain terrain at 30 below.

PCA Chaplain Mike Higgins, an Army reservist, was called back to active duty in 2003 and stationed with Forces Command at Fort MacPherson in Atlanta, Georgia. Since the church he was leading, Redemption Fellowship, was only minutes away, Mike chose to continue his civilian pastoral responsibilities while giving six days a week to the Army chaplaincy. "I love pastoring and I love soldiering," says Mike. For fifteen years, he had been career military before responding to God's call in the early 90s, resigning his commission, joining the Reserves, and going to seminary.

Mike Higgins was an active-duty officer in the military for eleven years before joining the Reserves and enrolling in seminary. Currently a chaplain in the Army Reserves recalled to active duty, he is one of nearly 100 PCA chaplains now serving. Many more are needed. The demand for spiritual counsel and comfort has multiplied since the war on terror began.



At the US Military Academy in West Point, New York, where 4,000 students make up the Corps of Cadets, Jim Carter serves as senior pastor at the Cadet Chapel. He's the first PCA chaplain to hold that position, and associate pastor Keith Goode is also PCA. West Point has eleven chaplains, including one Jewish and three Roman Catholic; the remainder are Protestant. "It's a blessing and a privilege to work with these young men and women who represent the top ten percent of their generation," Jim says. "West Point strongly emphasizes spiritual fitness and moral integrity, and chaplains have a significant role in carrying out these aspects of cadet education."

He points out that Christian based programs are vibrant and well attended, including everything from large and small group Bible studies to activities sponsored by such organizations as The Navigators and Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Jim sees West Point as a tremendous mission field. "These exemplary men and women are future leaders who have the potential to become influential ambassadors for Christ across the globe." In his extensive counseling, he sees an even more serious outlook among cadets since the war began and a deeper sense of their commitment to giving a lifetime of selfless service to the nation. ●

Chaplain Jim Carter is senior pastor of the historic West Point Cadet Chapel at the US Military Academy, pictured below. "It's quite an honor," he says, "to pastor where a number of the nation's finest military leaders have worshipped and to have an opportunity to impact future leaders who will serve worldwide — some who may become ambassadors for Christ."



Chaplain Tim Park was born in Korea where he received the Lord as a child. Moving to the US after completing seminary, Tim served with churches in California and Missouri for nine years before joining the chaplaincy "to be a Gospel preacher in the Army because I became an heir of the Kingdom through the sacrifice of many missionaries from the US."

The Truth about Islam

In the May/June issue of *Equip for Ministry* magazine, published by Christian Education & Publications, an article written by Anees Zaka entitled "The Truth About Islam" recorded the following quote by Omar Ahmad, co-founder of the Council on American-Islamic Relations. "Islam isn't in America to be equal to any other faith, but to become dominant...the Koran, the Muslim book of scripture, should be the highest authority in America and Islam the only accepted religion on earth." In the same article, Anees stated, "This is both a challenging and defining moment for Christians in America...We cannot afford to miss the moment because so much is at stake."

Pastor and founder of Church Without Walls (CWW), based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Anees Zaka is meeting the challenge by bringing together Muslims and Christians to discuss their faith, with the ultimate goal of winning Muslims to Jesus Christ. These gatherings, held at PCA churches and mosques, are called "Meetings for Better Understanding." Since he initiated CWW in 1982, Anees has found Muslims consistently receptive to dialoguing about Christianity.

The total number of Muslims now in the US is estimated at more than six million. Those immigrating here in recent times are well educated, fluent in English, and westernized. Their goals: to expand Islam in the US, gain access to the media, become vitally involved in politics, and evangelize the population. To put it simply, says Anees, "they seek to accomplish the Islamization of the nation."

For information about CWW and related literature, contact Anees Zaka: 215-784-9194 or cww.biis@juno.com.

A reprint of the complete article, "The Truth About Islam," is available to those who contact John Clark at MNA: 678-825-1239 or jclark@pcanet.org. ●

(Photo masked at the request of those pictured.)

Honoring Stellar Service

In 1951, at the time of the Korean War, Dick Still was a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps and a recent graduate of the US Naval Academy. He was sent to Korea, leaving behind his wife and baby daughter. Two months later, his aircraft was shot down. "As the cockpit began to fill with burning oil, I was calmed by what seemed a voice saying, 'Fear not, for I am with you always,'" he recalls.

Parachuting from the plane and landing in enemy territory, Dick was captured and imprisoned in North Korea for more than twenty months. He endured intensive interrogations and deplorable conditions, including a month in solitary confinement. Kept in a hole so small that he could not lie down, Dick describes this period as the lowest point of his captivity and he contemplated suicide.

One day an elderly Korean man slipped him a package containing soap, tobacco, and candy, saying, "Me Christian." "Had this man been seen," Dick explains, "he would have been killed on the spot. For him to risk his life for a stranger was truly God's miracle. It gave me the lift I needed, snapping me out of my depression, which never reoccurred."



After his release in 1953, Dick went on to earn his law degree at Georgetown Law School and remained in the active reserves. In recognition for his exceptional service, MNA Chaplain Ministries has honored him with the first annual Veteran of the Year Award. "I am overwhelmed by the honor," says Dick, "and consider myself only a representative of the great number who served, including many who lost their lives." ●



Upon being freed, Lt. Dick Still was welcomed by Major General Randolph McCall Pate. During the release, the military arranged for chaplains of each religious faith to be available for the POWs. Dick says it was an opportunity, "to give thanks to our individual God." Dick was honored with the Purple Heart, Five Battle Stars and the WWII Victory Medal.

STAYING CONNECTED

Mark your calendar for the 16th annual **Christian Community Development Association (CCDA) Conference** in Atlanta, GA, October 27–31. This year's theme: "Living the Kingdom Now — Restoring Communities in the Name of Christ" with speakers Andrea Barthwell, Sam Chand, and Andrew Young. For details: www.cdda.org. To register: visit the MNA Web site* or contact Genny Collins at gcollins@pcanet.org or 678-825-1200 . . . Two different **Embers to a Flame** conferences with the theme, "On Nurturing Church Vitality," are upcoming: September 30–October 3, 2004, in Jacksonville, FL, with main speakers Harry Reeder, Archie Parrish, and Tom Lutz, and January 20–23, 2005, in Birmingham, AL, when Wilson Benton will also speak. For details, see www.emberstoafire.org, or contact Carolyn Phillips at 205-776-5399 or cphillips@briarwood.org . . . The **2004 MNA Hispanic American Ministries Convocation**, "Unity In Action," will be in Houston, TX, October 12–15, led by successful leaders in Hispanic ministry sharing effective ways to reach Hispanic Americans. Log on to the Web* for further details . . . The **Second Generation Korean Pastors Conference** is scheduled for January 24–26, 2005, in Philadelphia, PA. See the Web* for more information . . . Every year, PCA Women in the Church (WIC) raise funds to support a specific ministry through the **WIC Love Gift** campaign, with funds this year slated for strengthening English as a Second Language (ESL) programs in PCA churches, as well as to help support the MNA Hispanic American movement leader and a staff member to coordinate ESL programs at PCA churches. For materials, contact Christian Education and Publications at 678-825-1100 or cep@pcanet.org . . . You can help prepare indigenous leaders for the PCA by participating in the annual **Thanksgiving Offering**. Look for the brochure at your church around Thanksgiving or order brochures through Genny Collins at 678-825-1200 or gcollins@pcanet.org . . . **Intercessor** prayer requests for church plants and church planters are now on the Web* and your prayers are essential to furthering God's Kingdom through these new works. Prefer to receive **Intercessor** in print? Call 678-825-1239, email jlark@pcanet.org, or mail John Clark, MNA, 1700 N. Brown Rd., Ste. 101, Lawrenceville, GA 30043 . . . Sharing God's grace, mercy, and love with all the nations is part of the **Great Commission** MNA seeks to carry out. Through your prayers and gifts to MNA, you can help spread the Gospel and change lives. You may give online on the Web* or use the enclosed envelope . . . **MNA Multicultural Ministries** has produced new brochures for each of these church planting movements: African American, Brazilian, Haitian, Hispanic American, and Korean. You may view the brochures on the Web* and also request copies.

*www.pcanet.org/mna

Professionals Urgently Needed for Haitian Ministry

MNA Haitian Movement Leader Dony St. Germain has sent out an urgent request for a **full-time physician** to work in Haiti with their church planting organization, El Shaddai Ministries International. One of the most overpopulated and poorest countries in the world, Haiti faces an extreme shortage of medical professionals. "We need a physician who has a heart for missions, can embrace our vision, and will be part of our ongoing efforts," says Dony. El Shaddai Ministries has planted twelve PCA churches in Haiti.

In Miami, Florida, El Shaddai Ministries seeks an **elementary teacher** for a school which is part of El Shaddai Presbyterian Church, committed to ministering to the Haitian population in south Florida. Teaching credentials are required. If you or someone you know is interested in either position, contact Dony St. Germain: 305-899-5809 or donysha@aol.com.

MNA Disaster Response



In April 2002, La Plata, Maryland, was devastated by a powerful tornado. One of the families that lost everything was the Robinson family. La Plata Community Church, a PCA mission church pastored by Jamie MacGregor, helped the family rebuild through relief funds collected by MNA. The Robinson's new house (pictured here) is the result of many people serving selflessly. Jamie says the key to responding to a community disaster is "being prepared to serve."

MNA Disaster Response, led by Ron and Judy Haynes, recruits volunteers and assembles the necessary disaster-related equipment needed to offer support when tragedy strikes. The Haynes also establish links with appropriate resources in various regions of the country. "Our desire is to respond to disasters across North America in the spirit of God's grace and mercy," Ron explains. To find out more or to become a part of **MNA Disaster Response**, contact Ron Haynes at rhaynes@pcanet.org or visit the Web*.

PCA Foundation Offers Free Video

The **PCA Foundation** offers a new 20-minute video, *Using Your Resources for Kingdom Purposes*, which defines the Foundation and demonstrates how its charitable financial services benefit churches, ministries, individuals, and families. It includes first-hand accounts of how the Foundation has helped Christians use their "God-given" resources. To order: call 800-700-3221 or email pcf@pcanet.org. To view the video: log on to www.pcanet.org/foundation (Broadband access required).

How you can help our military missionaries:

Join the Chaplain Guardian Corps and commit to pray for PCA chaplains. The goal is to have 120 people praying regularly for each one. In addition, you will be asked to make an annual gift of \$100 to MNA Chaplain Ministries, although it is not a requirement of membership. All members receive regular updates of chaplain activities and quarterly issues of our prayer calendar.

If you're a veteran, join the Veterans Guardian Corps and agree to keep your congregation informed of the work of PCA chaplains as well as MNA Chaplain Ministries. Members stay informed about men and women in their congregations serving on active duty and make sure that all are contacted by PCA chaplains or PCA churches wherever they may be stationed.

For more information about these opportunities and about MNA Chaplain Ministries, go to the MNA Web site* and click on Chaplain Ministries.

Mission to North America (MNA) serves the churches and presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), providing leadership in church planting initiatives, as well as placement and training services for church planters in the US and Canada. In addition, MNA coordinates Chaplain Ministries, Church Vitality, Mercy Ministries, and Disaster Response for the PCA in North America.

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