

National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces

P. O. Box 7572 Arlington, VA 22207-9998

Contact: Tom Mariam (917-446-3773 or tom@mariam.biz)

NCMAF Marks Holy Season by Renewing Call to Update Protestant & Catholic Chaplains Monuments at Arlington National

New York, April 2, 2021 – As Americans of three great religions gather to celebrate their faiths' common message of repentance and forgiveness, the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF) says this week is an especially appropriate time to act on memorializing the role that chaplains play in the United States military. The NCMAF once again renews its call to honor these brave spiritual leaders who gave their lives to support our armed forces in the heat of battle by updating both the existing Protestant and Catholic Chaplains Monuments at Arlington National Cemetery.

“This week as Christians commemorate the passion of Good Friday and Easter, Jews celebrate the sacred festival of Passover and Muslims mark the holy month of Ramadan, hundreds of chaplains are far from home with our soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coasties fulfilling a centuries old tradition of gallantry and giving to their country,” said Rabbi Harold L Robinson D.D.

“Since World War I most chaplains who perished in our nation’s service have been memorialized on four proud monuments on Chaplains Hill overlooking Arlington National Cemetery. Most, but not all. There are 26 fallen not yet commemorated on Chaplains Hill. They were Protestant ministers and a Roman Catholic priest. There is room to include them on the monuments, funds have been donated and dedicated to the project, and their record of eligibility certified. It is time that the families and faith communities are permitted to enter the names of these faithful to the roles of the honored dead of our nations Chaplain Corps.”

NCMAF continues to request that Arlington officials, the Department of the Army, and Congress update the existing Protestant Chaplains Monument with a new plaque that will honor the service of 25 Chaplains affiliated with Protestant denominations, who died in service during the Korean War, Vietnam War, the Cold War Period, and in post 9-11 Conflicts.

NCMAF has the funding and material to update the monument at no cost to the Government or Arlington Cemetery. It would replace the aging concrete Protestant Chaplains Monument with a new granite piece in the same shape and size as the current one. Dignity Memorial Company will donate the new granite monument and provide installation.

NCMAF is the successor to the General Commission on Chaplains and Armed Forces Personnel, the group which placed the existing Protestant monument. NCMAF member organizations represent a cross-section of religious life in America. Each one recruits and certifies chaplains for service in the Armed Forces.

NCMAF has partnered for six years with several veterans and civic organizations to update the Protestant Chaplains Monument to add the names of 25 chaplains who died in service during the Korean War, Vietnam, the Cold War, and post 9-11 Conflicts, submitting a formal proposal in July 2019. Two of the chaplains who died in Korean War remain "Missing in Action:" Major Wayne H. Burdue of Sandusky, OH and Captain James W. Connor of Greenville, SC.

The National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF) is a professional organization comprised of over 100 religious organizations that seeks to individually sponsor the very best chaplains for service in the military, VA hospitals, and prisons. Our commitment to the 1st Amendment, and the “free exercise of religion” is our hallmark and our unifying theme. We are the successors of the organization which first placed monuments on Chaplains Hill at Arlington National Cemetery and remain committed to honoring chaplains of all faiths who died in service to our Nation. We welcome your assistance and participation in this uniquely American endeavor. Please contact us through our website: www.ncmaf.net; or emailing us at information@ncmaf.com

###