DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350-2000

IN REPLY REFER TO
1730
Ser N097/02158
29 May 02

Dear Colleagues,

"People from the city of Jericho worked next to them, and beyond them was Zaccur, son of Imri."

Recognize the verse? It comes from Nehemiah, one of my favorite Bible books. This verse in Chapter 3 is but one detail in the story of Nehemiah accomplishing his mission by overcoming personnel challenges. Depending on God, he wisely formed a team to work in harmony. He overcame lack of funds for recruiting, moving, training, and equipping, and rebuilt Jerusalem's defensive wall that had been in ruins for over a century. God was honored and the work moved forward.

I believe we are sometimes faced with Nehemiah-sized challenges when dealing with Chaplain Corps personnel needs. But as with Nehemiah, the Lord is blessing many of our personnel initiatives. You have heard already about the blessing God is giving our recruiting effort this year. I remain deeply thankful for what so many of you are doing to help us find the right people to serve. Keep up the good effort. Our Sea Services men and women deserve the finest servant-leaders that America can provide.

There are two other issues I bring to your attention regarding personnel,soliciting your insights and prayers.
First is the Career Progression Plan. Great strides have been made in designing and proposing an integrated Career Progression Plan for our Corps. The plan deals with commissioning-to-retirement management of chaplains and will involve training, assignments, screening, and overall professional development. We examined other officer communities and other Chaplain Corps as we shaped our thinking and designed the plan.

One of the most significant changes proposed by the plan is a redefinition of Navy Officer Billet Codes (NOBCs) for chaplains. This redefinition will reflect the current organization and the demands placed upon us as we are assigned to a wide variety of billets in three distinct uniformed services.

I also intend to introduce the use of Administrative Boards to designate chaplains who have met requirements for assignment to positions of significant trust and responsibility.

The Career Progression Plan is still in an early development stage, but it is moving forward steadily. I will keep you informed of the progress and explain the various elements as they are formally approved and implemented.

The second personnel issue is the Retention on Active Duty Law. A notable Navy-wide personnel change is a new provision of law affecting active duty USNR officers who have twice failed of select for LCDR. The new law permits all officers in this category to be automatically considered by

an administrative board for retention on active duty for a three-year period.

At the conclusion of the O-4 Chaplain Corps Active Duty Staff Board this year, the members reconvened as an administrative board. They considered twice failed-of-select CHC LTs for retention on active duty. The Precept for this Administrative Board permitted 100 percent selection opportunity for retention. LTs considered by this board will be notified by letter of action taken and will have opportunity to respond to the options offered them.

Chaplains selected for extension who are within 6 years of retirement will be offered continuation until retirement eligible. Chaplains selected who are not within 6 years of retirement eligibility will be offered continuation until 1 March 2006. This board considered all chaplains extended in previous years as well. For more information on this new law, please see NAVADMIN 045/02. Though the Chaplain Corps is not mentioned in the NAVADMIN, the procedures outlined there apply to us.

As I began this letter, I made reference to Nehemiah and the teamwork approach he took in doing the Lord's work. I conclude by emphasizing again that we are as much a team as a Corps. We want to move ahead in all issues related to personnel and are exerting maximum effort to that end. I realize, however, that we will best move ahead as we move together. Thank you again for your wonderful ministry. May we continue to work shoulder to shoulder around the globe to help build for our people the structures within which they can experience God's love at its strongest and express their love for God in its fullness.

Sincerely,

Barry C. Black

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