



# CONNECTIONS

Newsletter of the Chaplains Association of Ohio

Vol I, No. 1

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## CAO Officers -2007

|                     |                  |              |                                   |
|---------------------|------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| President           | Michelle Lemiesz | 614-234-6355 | mlemiesz@mchs.com                 |
| President Elect     | Rob Shores       | 330-821-5188 | RShores@MedinaHospital.org        |
| Secretary           | Robin Walton     | 614-544-1067 | RWALTON@OhioHealth.com            |
| Treasurer           | Valerie Johnson  | 513-584-5329 | Valerie.Johnson@healthall.com     |
| Regional Chair NE   | Eileen Schonfeld | 330-867-6289 | moosefeld@aol.com                 |
| Regional Chair NW   | Paul Bierlein    | 419-661-4001 | bierleinchap@hotmail.com          |
| Regional Chair SE   | Vernon Small     | 740-454-5943 | vsmall@genesishcs.org             |
| Regional Chair SW   | John Steiner     | 513-584-2804 | SteineJ@healthall.com             |
| Membership Chair    | Kay Snyder       | 614-234-6027 | msnyder@mchs.com                  |
| Communication Chair | Mark English     | 419-693-0751 | MEnglish@LutheranHomesSociety.org |

### **Meet Our President Michelle Lemiesz, M.Div., BCC**



On behalf of the Chaplain's Association of Ohio, I welcome you to the inaugural edition of *CAO Connections*! Years and months of planning have made this moment a reality, and I am so pleased to be part of this historic venture.

I am a native of Buffalo, NY and moved to Columbus, Ohio in 1997 to work as an RN at the Arthur C James Research Hospital at the Ohio State University. In 1998, I was blessed to be hired as a staff chaplain at Mount Carmel East Hospital. I assumed responsibility for the department as Lead Chaplain in 1999 and am now Director of the Chaplaincy Services department. This year I also assumed responsibility for coordinating chaplaincy services at our New Albany hospital.

I am Board Certified with the National Association of Catholic Chaplains (NACC). I serve as a member of the Editorial Board for the

NACC publication *Vision* and am a frequent contributor to it. I graduated in 1994 from the University Of Notre Dame with a Master of Divinity degree and did my CPE residency at St. Joseph Medical Center in South Bend, IN the following year.

I live in the East side of Columbus and share my home with a 16 month old Golden Retriever whom I named Grace. I love to cook, bake and can. I compete annually at the Ohio State Fair and have won close to 100 ribbons in culinary, baking, canning and arts and crafts. I also enjoy gardening and home-decorating, reading and doing crafts. Between home and work, my life is full (often hectic) and truly blessed.

I look forward to getting to know each one of you as we begin to gather and meet. I do hope that you will be able to come to our annual meeting/retreat this spring in Columbus (more info to follow on that!) and I invite you to take an active part in our organization. I encourage you to share your comments, suggestions, needs or concerns with me so we can truly make this YOUR organization.

In these Sacred days of December, may you and your loved ones find peace and solace in the rituals and traditions which are part of your life and faith journey. I pray that in the coming year, peace will be a reality—in our hearts, our lives, our communities and our world. May you be richly blessed!

**Meet our President-Elect,  
Rob Shores, D.Min, BCC**



I serve as Director of Spiritual Care at Medina General Hospital. I've been in chaplaincy 26 years and am Board Certified with APC. As President-Elect, I serve as Program Chair for the planning of our Spring Retreats and Fall Educational Conferences.

I would like for our organization to be a place where all chaplains in Ohio can network, share their gifts of spiritual care, and (especially) increase the places spiritual care is offered in Ohio.

If you have ideas for program topics and/or speakers, please give me a call (330)721-5188 or e-mail me [rshores@medinahospital.org](mailto:rshores@medinahospital.org)

**Meet our Treasurer,  
Valerie Johnson, BCC**



I serve as a staff chaplain at University Hospital in Cincinnati. My units of assignment include the Surgical Intensive Care and trauma units, along with Labor & Delivery. I work the 2nd shift, though, and thus end up in all the other areas at various times when called for crisis intervention. I have been in ministry 16 years with well over half in chaplaincy. I am married to Larry, a United Methodist pastor, who serves two churches in Galia/Jackson counties. We have one beautiful grown daughter living in Kalida, Ohio.

I look forward to serving as your treasurer. Please let me know if you have questions regarding things. We are in the process of updating our government status so that we can be declared Non-profit. This will take time but will be a great benefit for us.

As of December 1st we are doing quite well, financially. I am still putting everything together, but as of this time, I can at least give you figures for the Fall Conference:

|                           |            |
|---------------------------|------------|
| Conference fees received: | \$2,460.00 |
| Conference Expenses:      | \$1,847.22 |
| Remaining Balance:        | \$612.78   |

We were fortunate that North Terrace Church of Christ did **not** charge anything for the use of their facility. Thank you, Vernon, for your work on this.

Remember—your dues help to fund our getting well-known and qualified speakers for our conferences. They help keep registration costs down, and let you get a reduced conference-rate as a member of CAO.

Blessing to each of you!

**Meet our NE Region  
Chair, Eileen Schonfeld**



I am a volunteer chaplain at Akron General Medical Center, where I help facilitate verbatim and IPR groups, teach “End of Life Issues” and perform “other duties as specified”. I teach community outreach courses called Introduction to Healthcare Ministry and Advance Skills Healthcare Ministry. In addition, I make rounds on patients who are Jewish or have special needs. I have been with AGMC for 13 years as a chaplain and 10 years as a nurse. Another chaplain role I have is serving on the Pediatric Palliative Care Team at Akron Children’s Hospital. I make home/phone/hospital visits to children with life-limiting illnesses.

I am a former kindergarten/1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher, RN (mental health provider, dialysis, staff development, and long term care (license still active), caterer and framer(art store). I am the mother of three, grandmother of three and a dog owner.

I am Jewish and a member of the Reform Akron Congregation of Temple Israel for 40 years. I serve as head of the Visitation of the Sick Program, Caring Community and have served on the board in multiple capacities. I am an avid “Moose-abilia” collector and find humor essential to my well-being and sanity.

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**Meet our SE Region Chair,  
Vernon Small, BCC**



I serve Genesis Healthcare System as chaplain primarily to the Cardiac, Intervention and Medical Units. I regularly conduct workshops and orientations on Cultural Diversity/Awareness.

I am Board Certified with APC and serve as Ohio’s Advocacy Chair. I was also Coordinator for this Fall’s Conference.

I come from Barbados and prefer to watch a good Cricket match.

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**Meet our SW Region  
Chair, John Steiner**



I am an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. I have been a chaplain at The University Hospital in Cincinnati, OH for four years. This summer I was promoted to Spiritual Care Supervisor.

If there are upcoming workshops, education events or job openings in this area of the state, please let me know so that they can be included in our newsletter.

**Meet our NW Region  
Chair, Paul Bierlein, BCC**



I am Marlene's husband, father of two grown sons, Jeremy & Matt, and grandfather of Sophie, Micah and Ethan. Professionally, I am a Lutheran pastor who, after some five years in parish settings, has focused the last 28 years of ministry in chaplaincy and medical ethics. Along the way, I have had the privilege of being Ohio State Rep for APC (College of Chaplains), president of the old Ohio HealthCare Chaplains Association, and most recently, president of the BioEthics Network of Ohio. Presently, I serve as Region 6 Rep for chaplaincy ministries for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

"Transitioning" might best describe my last couple years and the dust has not yet settled. A little less than two years ago, my position was eliminated in a reorganization of the hospital I had served for 26 years. Having just brought my mother, who was in failing health, to live near us, I chose to focus on her care and not seek a position elsewhere.

Following her death several months later and after resolving some legal issues, I chose to take early retirement. Since March, 2007 I have been doing some part-time chaplaincy with Hospice of NW Ohio, as well as some ethics presentations. With Marlene possibly retiring from teaching next June, we are evaluating future directions and possibilities.

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**Communications Chair  
Mark English, BCC**



As CAO's Communications Chair, those of you on email have heard a lot from me since the summer. Here's a little bit about me.

I came to NW Ohio from Eastern Pennsylvania in 2000, via Lutheran Chaplaincy Service. I serve Lutheran Homes Society as chaplain to Lutheran Home at Toledo and Monday chaplain to Lutheran Memorial Home, Sandusky. An ordained ELCA pastor (Mt. Airy '78) and APC Board Certified Chaplain ('93), I've served parishes 14 years in PA and hospitals and long term care communities for 15. My wife, Jeanne, also an ELCA pastor, is in a parish. We're still married because we've always worked separately! We have 3 kids—married off our son last Feb., have 1 daughter at Valparaiso U and 1 daughter in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. And an idiot beagle who gives me a reason to walk.

In time, I hope for CAO to have a website, so you can check out education events and job openings there (I'll need your inputs!). But that is at least a few months down the road and I'm inexperienced in that area. Rob Shores says he has a friend who can help. If you want me to advertise an event or position or a question, send it my way. I'll email it [until we have a website].

We have over 120 colleagues without email. Michelle Lemiesz and Mount Carmel (God bless 'em!) handle USPS mailings. I've kept the other 430 of us informed electronically.

Please direct colleagues from all walks of chaplaincy and all denominations to us. Certification not a requirement; we even have room for volunteers! Contact info is on p.1.

**Meet our Secretary,  
Robin Walton**



I am a native of Columbus and have lived here my whole life. My first profession was education; I taught third and fourth grade. I took years off to have and raise my three kids who are now 28, 24, and 22. The oldest and youngest live in New York City pursuing careers in graphic design. Our middle child lives with us again, after sustaining injuries in a car accident a year ago.

When I was ready to go back to work in the late '80's I found that I was called not just to education, but to ministry. I worked part-time in both for some years. In 1991, I realized that the threads of my life were pointing toward hospital ministry. I was given the opportunity to work in a very adjunct capacity with a pastoral care department and, quite unexpectedly, was offered a job with them fourteen years ago. Ten years ago it turned out that I was the senior member of the department (no, I did not run them off) and was offered the manager position. I

have the wonderful opportunity to work closely with medical education and the medical staff as well as the managerial staff. My other large focus is ethics. I find myself doing this all backwards. Employed as a chaplain in 1993, I was then ordained in the Mennonite Church in 1997, have been in seminary since 2002, and will hopefully achieve certification before I retire!

In the years I have been with this department, the staff has yearned for a collegial association where we could discuss our profession and determine common areas of growth and educational direction. CAO has the opportunity to facilitate those needs. This organization exists to meet our common needs; we will rely on you to speak clearly as to how it can serve you.

**A Word from APC  
State Rep -  
Marianne Brandon, BCC**



During my CPE residency in Chicago, IL, the common joke was "Are you sure you don't you work for the Ohio travel bureau?" This was due to my enthusiasm for my home state, which continues to this day. I am delighted to be the new State Representative for the Association of Professional Chaplains here in Ohio – and looking forward to bragging about our state at Association meetings!

I have worked in the field of health care chaplaincy for just over five years. Currently, I serve as a staff chaplain in the Regional Center for Neonatal Intensive Care at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. My ordination in the United Methodist Church took place in 2005. If you have questions or concerns that you believe I could address, please contact me at [marianne.brandon@cchmc.org](mailto:marianne.brandon@cchmc.org) or 513/636-8829.

Re: APC--We are currently in need of both Advocacy and Membership chairpersons for our state. Position Descriptions for these are located at <http://www.professionalchaplains.org/index.aspx?id=818#3> . If you have an interest in serving the organization in this way, please contact me. (I will also be out there recruiting, so beware if you receive a phone call from me!) I am looking forward to getting to know my chaplain colleagues here in Ohio, and wish you all a wonderful new year!

## Association National Conferences

NAJC - January 20-23 - Chicago, IL  
*Family*

<http://www.najc.org/about/index.htm#section-5>

AAPC - March 27-29 - Norfolk, VA  
*Expanding Visions: Theological and  
Spiritual Perspectives in Practice*

<http://www.aapc.org/index08.cfm>

APC - March 6-12 - Pittsburgh, PA

*From These Hills: Mining, Forging, Transforming*

<http://www.professionalchaplains.org>

NACC - April 5-8 - Indianapolis, IN

*Bringing Gifts That Differ in Splendid Varied Ways*

<http://www.nacc.org/conference>

See also <http://www.plainviews.org/cweo.html>

**Newly Board  
Certified  
Chaplains--  
Congrats!**

David H. Murdoch  
Diane E. Walker  
Kathleen A. Valentine  
Sarah J. Reed  
Kamil Cak  
Dalziel L. Reliford-Stone  
Jena Garrison  
Dana Paul Bjorlin  
Jesse Lynn Thornton  
Linda Ann Kemp-Baird  
Kitete Dido Ntontolo  
Elaine Merkel, OSF

Columbus  
Cleveland  
Richfield  
Columbus  
Fairborn  
Fairfield  
Toledo  
Wauseon  
South Lebanon  
Cincinnati  
Proctorville  
Cincinnati

### **Like This 1<sup>st</sup> Newsletter? Make Sure To Keep It Coming!**

We plan to distribute a newsletter 4 times a year.

We're sending this issue to everybody—over 500 chaplains, supervisors—for whom we have an address—either email or USPS.

**BUT**—after this, we will send future issues to dues-paying members of CAO only.

So, make sure you're signed up to stay in-the-know.

Membership forms are included with this mailing.

Feel free to make copies to share with colleagues.

## **Summary of Fall Conference**

On October 29, 2007, we built on the tradition of Fall Chaplain Conferences with the 1st one planned by the CAO, in Zanesville at the wonderful multifunction building of North Terrace Church of Christ. We saw 76 attendees: 34 members, 16 nonmembers; and the rest were new members.

Some felt the day “was a very worthwhile event” and wished that “we could have Dr. Blue back again.” “It appears that Dr. Blue helped others to get in touch with their buried feelings that resulted in healing process.” Some were surprised by the topic, but considered the program “excellent” and viewed Dr. Blue’s presentation as a source of “Excellent Biblical teaching.”

Others felt Dr. Blue needed to be more comprehensive and sensitive to the many faces of religious persuasions and professions. They had hoped for a more universal, inclusive approach in his teaching. Generally, there was some measure of apprehension about Dr. Blue’s Christocentric approach, but he stated his intention from the very beginning.

Despite the above assertions, the overall ratings for Dr. Blue were relatively good in all categories - based on the evaluations. He offered good food for thought to those who wanted it and who could look beyond his Christocentric approach.

For future gatherings, it was suggested that we get speakers with a passion for what they believe. Future topic considerations include:

- forgiveness
- bi-polar disorder
- dealing with behavioral health /addiction issues as a chaplain
- related teaching on wound and false belief—[Ed Smith & Theoplasticism and spirituality and health]

**A DVD of the program is available** to those who would like to purchase a copy (\$5 for attendees and \$15 for non-attendees). Contact Vernon Small at 740-454-5943 or [vsmall@genesishcs.org](mailto:vsmall@genesishcs.org)

Although the turn-out was less than last year’s conference in Medina, we were able to cover our expenses and come out on top. I want to thank Ch. Kate Valentine, Ch. Leon Brown, Sr. Bernadette Selinsky, OSF and Ch. Pat Stetter for their help with planning and details. And a special thanks to Ann Vannoy—our department secretary—who did a wonderful job of tracking applications and your food preferences.

### **Links of Interest**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| American Correctional Chaplains Association     | <a href="http://www.correctionalchaplains.org">http://www.correctionalchaplains.org</a>   |
| Assembly of Episcopal Healthcare Chaplains      | <a href="http://www.episcopalchaplain.org">http://www.episcopalchaplain.org</a>   |
| Association for Clinical Pastoral Education     | <a href="http://www.acpe.edu/">http://www.acpe.edu/</a>   |
| Association of Professional Chaplains           | <a href="http://www.professionalchaplains.org">http://www.professionalchaplains.org</a>   |
| BioEthics Network of Ohio                       | <a href="http://www.beno-ethics.org">http://www.beno-ethics.org</a>   |
| College of Pastoral Supervision & Psychotherapy | <a href="http://www.pastoralreport.com">http://www.pastoralreport.com</a>   |
| ELCA – Chaplains                                | <a href="http://www.elca.org/chaplains">http://www.elca.org/chaplains</a>   |
| Foursquare Chaplains                            | <a href="http://www.foursquare.org/landing_pages/48,3.html">http://www.foursquare.org/landing_pages/48,3.html</a>                     |
| HealthCare Chaplaincy                           | <a href="http://www.healthcarechaplaincy.org">http://www.healthcarechaplaincy.org</a>   |
| Lutheran Chaplaincy Service                     | <a href="http://www.spiritualcare.org">http://www.spiritualcare.org</a>   |
| LCMS Chaplains                                  | <a href="http://www.lcms.org/pages/internal.asp?NavID=1893">http://www.lcms.org/pages/internal.asp?NavID=1893</a>                     |
| National Association of Catholic Chaplains      | <a href="http://www.nacc.org">http://www.nacc.org</a>   |
| National Association of Jewish Chaplains        | <a href="http://www.najc.org">http://www.najc.org</a>   |
| Nazarene Chaplains                              | <a href="http://nazarenechaplains.org/nazarenechaplains/Default.aspx">http://nazarenechaplains.org/nazarenechaplains/Default.aspx</a> |