

2025 COMISS NETWORK FORUM

January 13, 2025

“Celebrating 100 years of Excellence in Clinical Pastoral Education and Training: Past, Present and the Future ”

(Please note that times listed below are in the Eastern Time Zone)

Forum Host: Ivan Omaña, D.Min, BCC, BCPC, Director of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. We are grateful to the World Headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Silver Spring, MD, for graciously hosting our COMISS conference and generously supporting the conference in a slew of tangible and intangible ways.

Host Center: Seventh-day Adventist Church-Headquarters, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD, 20904

Monday, January 13, 2025

8:00-8:30 Registration, Check-In, Continental Breakfast

8:30-8:40 Welcome: Dr. Ivan Omaña, D.Min, BCC, BCPC, Director of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries, **The Rev. Steven Voytovich, D.Min., LPC, COMISS Chair, COMISS Network.**

8:45-8:50 Opening Meditation: Rabbi Dr. Joseph S. Ozarowski, BCC.

8:50-9:00 Overview of Agenda, Meeting Format Details, Introduction of Speakers: The Rev. Denise Parker Lawrence, D.Min., CPSP Diplomate, COMISS Chair-Elect, COMISS Network.

9:00-9:40 Plenary 1: Presenter- The Rev. Steven Voytovich, D.Min., LPC; Toward a White Paper on Clinical Chaplaincy Formation. We are, this year, celebrating 100 years of clinical training, recounting Dr. Richard Cabot’s invitation to theological students: “*A Plea for a Clinical Year in Theological Education*” and Anton Boisen’s invitation for others to experience caring for those facing psychiatric illness. Since then, the history of the clinical training movement has been complicated on multiple fronts, and today, it remains something of an incomplete quilt, with portions of fabric sewn together, and other portions remaining as patches yet to be incorporated or not. In the meantime, the chaplain's role remains an open question in caregiving environments, complicated by a branding dimension. Perhaps a fitting way to celebrate this 100th anniversary involves a plea for open dialogue among all stakeholders, occurring in the context of a national round table. A live example of this will be shared!

9:45-10:20 Plenary 2: Presenter- Clyde Angel, D.Min., BCC, LPC; *Spiritual Care Week: Honoring and Educating.* Engage in a historical review of Spiritual Care Week and its impact

upon chaplaincy and spiritual care in specialized settings while examining the early beginning of Pastoral Care Week and its evolution to Spiritual Care Week.

10:20-10:30 ... Break

10:30-11:10 Plenary 3: Presenter- Russell H. Davis, PhD. will present the exciting history and evolution of CCAPS from its origins in the last century to its latest developments. The current CCAPS Standards connect to a compelling story of visionary predecessors who were pioneers in establishing benchmarks for the assessment of chaplains and their organizational structures.

11:15-11:50 Plenary 4: Presenter -Dr. Francine Hernandez- Exploring the Human Condition: Helen Flanders Dunbar's Contribution to the Psycho-Dynamic Approach to Training. Reflection on the psycho-dynamic approach in the context of training. How can this approach be used to understand and improve human performance and well-being? We will further consider critical techniques and methods used in psychodynamic training.

12:00-1:20....Chat and Chew

This is your opportunity to network, dialogue, and exchange contact information as we plan for future encounters. It's the time to communicate, network, and advocate.

1:30-1:55 Morning Reflections and Insights

2:00-3:50 Business Meeting...**The Rev. Steven Voytovich**

Minutes of Forum 2024

Report of Chair

Report of Budget & Finance -Treasurer

Report of CCAPS

Report of Spiritual Care Week

New Business

Election of Leadership

Election of Nominating Committee

New Business

Revision of Guidelines

4:00... Dinner

4:30... Presenter... Dr. Robert C. Powell, *Crisis as a Means toward Meaningful Growth –Perhaps through Provoking Inspiration & Insight*

5:30... Questions and Answers

5:45... Closing Remarks and Adjourn... The Rev. Denise Parker Lawrence

Conference Theme: Celebrating 100 Years of Excellence in Clinical Pastoral Education and Training: Past, Present and the Future

The description of the program:

Please join us as the COMISS Network has its first annual in-person forum since the pandemic. This dynamic and informative conference will occur at the Seventh Day Adventist Center in

Silver Spring, MD (DMC area) on Monday, January 13, 2025. We will celebrate the 100th anniversary of Clinical Pastoral Education and Training (CPE/T). Also, our plenaries will highlight some of the signature programs of COMISS, including Spiritual Care Week and CCAPS (COMISS Commission for the Accreditation of Chaplaincy Services). Most importantly, we will have the chance to network with like-minded people in chaplaincy and pastoral endorsement.

The objectives are:

- **Celebrate** the 100th Anniversary of Clinical Pastoral Education and Training (CPE/T)
- **Educate & Envision:** explore the history and development of Clinical Pastoral Education and Training and the impact of some of its founders; examine the history and development of Clinical Chaplaincy Formation, Spiritual Care Week, and CCAPS (COMISS Commission for the Accreditation of Chaplaincy Services); envision and discuss possible future developments.
- **Plan & Grow:** conduct the business of the national chaplaincy network, COMISS, also known as the Network on Ministry in Specialized Settings.
- **Network:** develop and strengthen relationships among individuals and organizations engaged in chaplaincy education, endorsing, accreditation, credentialing, employment, and support.

Our Host:



Dr. Ivan Omaña serves as the Director/Endorser of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries and President of Adventist Chaplaincy Institute at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. He assumed his duties on November 1, 2021. Born in Venezuela, Omaña's family history is tied closely to the growth of Adventism in that country. During a family trip to Florida, Omaña learned more about chaplaincy in a conversation with a chaplain at Florida Hospital. Before he returned to Venezuela, a chaplaincy position opened, and Omaña applied and was hired. Omaña began his chaplaincy at the Adventist Care Centers in the Greater Orlando area. In 2002, Ivan transitioned to Florida Hospital Kissimmee as the full-time chaplain. In 2015, Omaña assumed the duties of Assistant Director of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries for the North American Division.

Omaña holds a Master of Divinity degree from Florida Center for Theological Studies and a Doctor of Ministry degree from Denver Theological Seminary and is an ordained Seventh-day Adventist pastor. He is a Board Certified Pastoral Counselor by the American Association of Christian Counselors, a Board Certified Chaplain by the Association of Professional Chaplains as well as the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy, and an Associate Clinical Pastoral Education Supervisor with the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy. He is also certified in Acute Stress, Grief, and Trauma Intervention by the American Association of Christian Counselors. He chairs the Adventist Chaplaincy Institute Board of Certification and is endorsed as a chaplain by Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries—North American Division.

Our Presenters:



Meditation speaker: Rabbi Dr. Joseph S. Ozarowski is a Rabbinic Counselor and Chaplain for JCFS Chicago. He is also an adjunct professor at Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership and the Academy for Jewish Religion in Los Angeles. Rabbi Ozarowski was cited by Chicago Jewish News as a “Top Jewish Chicagoan of 2013” and received the “Rabbi Mordechai Simon Award” from the Chicago Board of Rabbis in 2014. He served as president of the Board of Rabbis from 2015 to 2017 and now serves as Immediate Past President of Neshama: Association of Jewish Chaplains (NAJC). An engaging, nationally known teacher and speaker, Ozarowski has served congregations in Pennsylvania, California, Minnesota, and the New York area. Rabbi Dr. Ozarowski is a Board-Certified Chaplain. He received his undergraduate degree from Loyola University of Chicago, his rabbinic ordination from Skokie’s Hebrew Theological College, and his doctorate from Lancaster (PA) Theological Seminary. He has served on the Jewish Federation of Chicago (JUF) Board and on the North Shore University HealthCare System Institutional Ethics Committee.

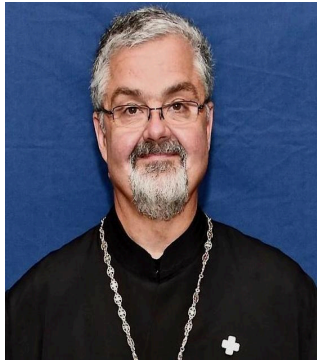
A prolific author, Rabbi Ozarowski co-authored *Common Ground* (1998, Jason Aronson) and has written numerous articles. His first book, *To Walk in God’s Ways - Jewish Pastoral Perspectives on Illness and Bereavement* (hardcover 1995, Jason Aronson, paperback 2004, Rowman and Littlefield) is considered a standard in the field of Judaism and Pastoral Care. Rabbi Ozarowski is married to Ashira (née Rapoport) and has four children and nineteen grandchildren.



The Reverend Dr. Denise Parker Lawrence is the Chair-Elect of the COMISS Network on Ministry in Specialized Settings (COMISS). As such, she is the Chair of this year's Forum, *Celebrating 100 Years of Excellence in Clinical Pastoral Education and Training: Past, Present and the Future*. Dr. Lawrence is a Board Certified Chaplain, Pastoral Counselor, Teacher, Writer, and Community Leader who strives to "live her life as the only Bible one may ever read." In addition to her chaplaincy work, she has a rich consulting practice. She is a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) Diplomate with the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy, Co-Chair of the Chapter Re-Authorization Committee, and Facilitator of Women in Leadership with CPSP. Rev. Lawrence served as the Nassau County Pastoral Care Coordinator for Metropolitan Jewish Health Services (MJHS) and was responsible for coordinating pastoral and religious support services to hospice patients across the MJHS community.

Rev. Lawrence is an Elder on the Ministerial Staff of Kingdom Fellowship African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E) with Pastor Matthew L. Watley in Calverton, Maryland. Before relocating to Maryland, she served as an Associate Minister at The Greater Allen A.M. E. Cathedral of New York under the tutelage of Pastors Reverend Dr. Floyd H. Flake and Reverend Dr. Elaine Flake. While there, Dr. Lawrence was the Director of the federally funded *One Choice, One Voice: Abstinence Until Marriage Project*.

She is a sought-after preacher, speaker, and teacher. She has been interviewed and quoted numerous times by print media and has received multiple awards and citations for pastoral care, leadership, and community service. After her seminal experiential work, [Covid 19 Reflection: A Pernicious and Silent Enemy](https://afro.com/a-covid-19-reflection-a-pernicious-and-silent-enemy/cpsp3/), Dr. Lawrence published her inaugural children's book entitled, *Walking By Faith*. A leadership member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, The Links, Incorporated, and the NAACP, Dr. Lawrence is the wife of attorney Mortimer Lawrence, and they are the proud parents of Michele, Mac, Misha, and Maya. She is especially delighted to be Grandma to Alia, Ryan, Addison, Ava, and her grandson, William Isaiah.



Archpriest Steven Voytovich, D.Min., LPC, serves as the founding Director of the Office of Institutional Chaplaincy (non-military), as endorser for the Orthodox Church in America (OCA) in 2000. Since the OCA joined COMISS in 2005, he has served in this endorsing role and on the COMISS Network Leadership Team, currently serving as its chair. He has similarly served the Association of Religious Endorsing Bodies (AREB) and the International Council for Pastoral Care and Counseling (ICPCC). Steven has published and taught on many chaplaincy and pastoral/spiritual care-related topics. In celebrating 32 years of ordained ministry this year, he has served in parish ministry as chaplain (APC certified), directed spiritual care departments, trained chaplains as supervisor/educator, and conducted accreditation reviews (under both ACPE and CPSP), is a Licensed Professional Counselor in CT, and served as Dean of St. Tikhon's Seminary, carrying the academic title of Associate Professor, and Department Chair of Pastoral Arts and Praxis.



Dr. Clyde Angel is currently employed part-time by Iron Bow Technologies as a TeleHealth Clinical Review Specialist in support of the Veterans Health Administration Office of Connected Care. Dr. Angel continues to provide couples communication training, leading Veteran groups through the “Search for Meaning” protocol and public speaking events related to spirituality and trauma. Dr. Angel serves as a first responder (Engineer) and voluntary chaplain for his local voluntary fire department and voluntary chaplain for the local police department.

Dr. Angel retired in 2019 as Chief Chaplain Services at the Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center in Indianapolis, Indiana. He worked extensively with Veterans in relation to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and provided couples counseling, individual counseling, and substance abuse counseling in addition to his administrative responsibilities as director of the Chaplain Service Department at the Indianapolis VA Medical Center. Dr. Angel is the author of a 10-week group process that addresses spiritual/moral injury and has collaborated with other professionals to develop participant and leaders’ manuals for the protocol. Two research projects related to Search for Meaning have resulted in several research publications.

During his tenure as director of spiritual care, Dr. Angel established a Family Support Center (FSC) that focused on couples and family therapy. The FSC employed a LMFT Supervisor who provided direction for a MFT residence program to include three paid MFT student residents. Dr. Angel, in collaboration with clinical staff chaplains and psychologists developed a 6-week group process to address grief. He also developed a 12-week protocol to address the spiritual intervention for Veterans who participate in the Substance Use and Drug Rehabilitation Programs (SUDRP) 12-week intensive outpatient program.

Dr. Angel began his career as a VA mental health chaplain in Atlanta, Georgia in 2006. Prior to this appointment, Dr. Angel worked as a pastoral counselor in Louisville, Kentucky and established a satellite center in Madison, Indiana doing individual and family counseling from 2000 to 2006. Chaplain Angel served as a senior pastor in two churches in Kentucky and Indiana from 1987 to 2000.

Dr. Angel received his bachelor's degree from Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, Tennessee, in 1981 with a major in psychology, religion and education. He graduated Magna Cum Laude and was a member of the Alpha Chi honor society. He completed a Master of Divinity in 1987 and a Doctor of Ministry degree from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky in 1993. Dr. Angel completed post-doctoral work in counseling and mental health and is currently a Licensed Professional Counselor in the State of Georgia, a Board-Certified Chaplain with the National Association of VA Chaplains. He was a certified Alternative Dispute Resolutions mediator for the VA and a certified Coach/Mentor trainer.

Dr. Angel is a veteran of the US Army serving in the Army Security Agency and holding a Top-Secret Crypto clearance for the performance of his duties. He was honorably discharged in 1977. Dr. Angel is married and has 6 children and eleven grandchildren. He enjoys fly fishing, golf, and travel.



The Rev. Russell H. Davis, PhD. is the current chair of CCAPS, The COMISS Commission for the Accreditation of Pastoral Services, and a former Chair of COMISS. Russ spent his career in specialized ministry. He is a retired ACPE Certified Educator and also a former ACPE Executive Director. He has taught full-time at Union Theological Seminary (New York), the University of Virginia, and Virginia Commonwealth University. He served The Riverside Church in the City of New York as an Associate for Pastoral Care. He is the author of one book (*Freud's Concept of Passivity*, International Universities Press, 1993) and a number of articles and reviews. He has worked as a chaplain educator in various settings, including a prison, a state psychiatric hospital, the Veterans Administration, and several university-affiliated academic medical centers.



Dr. Francine L. Hernandez is an ordained Baptist Minister. She is a graduate of Columbus University in Columbus, Georgia, B.S. (Sociology) in 1974 and an honors graduate from Morehouse School of Religion at the I.T.C. in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1996 with a Master of Divinity Degree in Psychology of Religion and Pastoral Care. In 1995, she was listed on the National Dean's List and in Who's Who Among Students in American Colleges and Universities. While studying at ITC, she received the Isaac Clark Preaching Award given to select students by the Homiletic Department. In 1996, she was inducted into the Theta Phi International Honor Society. She served as a Pastoral Counselor for HIV/AIDS Clients in Miami, Florida (1997) and later that year organized New Harvest Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tennessee. She received her Doctorate of Ministry Degree from New York Theological Seminary. Her Dissertation Thesis: "BREAKING THE STIGMA: EMBRACING MENTAL HEALTH AND EMPOWERING THE CONGREGATION BY CREATING AN AWARENESS OF THE NEED FOR A COMPASSIONATE MINISTRY." (2012) Reverend Dr. Hernandez is a Board Certified chaplain and Board Certified Pastoral Counselor and certified Clinical Pastoral Education Supervisor. She is the former Director of the National Clinical Training Seminar for the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy. These seminars take place twice a year, May and November at the Loyola Retreat Center in Morristown, New Jersey, and are designed for chaplains, pastoral counselors, pastoral psychotherapists, and ministers.

Dr. Hernandez served as Interim Director for the Department of Pastoral Care at New York Presbyterian Hospital in 2006, where she was already Program Administrator of Clinical Pastoral Education. She worked at NPHH from 2003-2007. She was the 8th President of the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy. Presently, she supervises in the Residency Program at Episcopal Health Services. Reverend Dr. Hernandez is a Golden Soror in Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. She is the organizer of the "I'm Just Saying" Women's Retreat, which has now transformed into the Daughters of Sarah: An Intergenerational Movement. This movement is designed to help women reframe and re-author their stories of pain, shame, and disappointment to bring a cross-pollination of learning and growth between the younger and older generations. Dr. Hernandez is a published author. Her debut book: "The SafetyPin: Holding Your Life Together When it's Bursting at the Seams.



Keynote Speaker: Robert Charles Powell, MD, PhD. Dr. Powell, in 1969 – while considering a career in psychosomatic medicine – discovered that (Helen) Flanders Dunbar (1902-1959) – an early leader in that field – had earned a Bachelor of Divinity degree before earning her three doctorates. That intrigued him. Immersing himself in the many archives, he found that – as an early research colleague of Anton Theophilus Boisen (1876-1965), the inventor of professional chaplaincy – Dunbar had run, during the 1930s, both “The American Psychosomatic Movement” and “The Clinical Pastoral Chaplaincy Movement” out of one office – as the “research division” and the “education division” –under The Joint Committee on Religion and Medicine (of The New York Academy of Medicine and the Federal Council of Churches).

Beginning his historical research in earnest in 1969 – fifty-five years ago – Dr. Powell was able to interview and correspond with Dunbar’s and Boisen’s many relatives, classmates, and colleagues who were then still alive. He published major historical manuscripts touching on clinical pastoral chaplaincy – in 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1979, 1982, 1999, 2002, 2005, and 2012 – plus many shorter essays in recent years. He acknowledges that getting to “know” closely the healing work of Dunbar and Boisen changed his life – and has continued to shape his work with patients.

Dr. Powell’s many publications include:

Healing and Wholeness: Helen Flanders Dunbar (1902-59) and an Extra-Medical Origin of the American Psychosomatic Movement, 1906-36 (1974; 2nd greatly expanded. 2022/ 2024) [this heavily foot-noted volume could have been titled: Healing and Wholeness: Helen Flanders Dunbar (1902-59) and an Extra-Theological Origin of the Clinical Pastoral Chaplaincy Movement, 1906-36].

C.P.E. [Clinical Pastoral Education]: Fifty Years of Learning, through Supervised Encounter with “Living Human Documents” (1975; 2nd greatly expanded, 2021, re-titled as *Clinical Pastoral Training, Education, & Transformation ...*) [>20,000 copies distributed across 50 years].

Anton T. Boisen (1876-1965): Breaking an Opening in the Wall between Religion and Medicine (1976; 2nd greatly expanded edition, 2021) [>2,000 copies distributed across 49 years].

“*The ‘Subliminal’ versus the ‘Subconscious’ in the American Acceptance of Psychoanalysis, 1906-1910*” (1979/ 2015) [much on “The Emmanuel Movement” founded by Elwood Worcester (1862-1940); Worcester, Boisen, & Dunbar crossed paths throughout the 1920s & 1930s].

“Psychosomatic Aspects of Affect in Psychoanalytic Theory, 1950-1970” (1979) [how the Dunbar-esque/ Boisenesque psychological/ sociological focus on the person as a whole in his or her total environment – outer and inner – quietly re-emerged].

When Death Is NOT Theoretical: The Readiness of the Music Group “Queen” for Living with Freddie Mercury’s Dying (2014; 2nd expanded, 2018) [embracing life while facing death, evil, negativity – & grief – head-on].

Pentoxifylline: A Versatile Off-Patent Medication Best Not Overlooked: Overview with Extensive Bibliography (2015) [enhances circulation & reduces inflammation throughout the body – including the brain – seeming to improve “social consideration”/ “social comfort”/ “an understanding of others” – in some but not all.]

Listening Closely to Patients: Without Jumping to Conclusions (2021) [with extensive bibliographies on ascertaining the level of ego organization plus neurologic, nutritional, & endocrinologic aspects of psychiatric problems.]#

unpublished: *“Psychiatric Admissions related to Premenstrual Syndrome &, Frequently, also related to Soft Neurologic Signs.”*



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December 27, 2024

2025 COMISS Forum Report from the Chair

Greetings to all our member organizations on behalf of your COMISS Leadership Team! We have worked diligently through the course of the year, meeting monthly, particularly on the question of whether a return to an in-person forum was possible and feasible. At last year's forum, Dr. Ivan Omana offered the use of their World-Wide Headquarters of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church here in Silver Spring Maryland! We are indeed grateful for this wonderful offer, and our Chair-Elect, The Rev. Dr. Denise Parker Lawrence, has worked diligently with her team to put plans together for us to be here today, especially as we mark the 100th anniversary of clinical training!

Earlier in our meeting today you will have heard about a number of developments that occurred through the COMISS Network this past year. With this being the case, my goal here will be to briefly summarize them.

COMISS Commission for Accreditation of Pastoral Services (CCAPS)

Two reviews were completed this year, along with conversations with new organizations interested in being part of the COMISS Network. The good work accomplished by Commission is worthy of celebration, led by The Rev. Dr. Russell Haden Davis! His report is included here.

Spiritual Care Week Committee:

Continues to impact on spiritual care departments, organizations, and credentialing bodies across the country, in recognizing the impact of spiritual care each October. The Rev. Tim Staker has recently taken on the role of chair.

Pastoral Psychotherapy Roundtable

We heard briefly from The Rev. Dr. Robert Cooke earlier on the ongoing dialogue that has been unfolding over this past year within the context of the COMISS Network national roundtable. It has been wonderful to participate in these monthly conversations that I hope will continue in a fruitful manner!

Two years as chair of this network passes by very quickly. Some initiatives that have been undertaken over these years include growing the google drive that will house the continuing records of the COMISS Network. This past year we also developed job descriptions for both our Executive Assistant, Will Kinnaird, and our Bookkeeper, Dave Hurst. It was our sense that to insert the fullness of each job description would be too much, so we have elected instead to note their presence, and keep them on file. As a budgetary concern, with our not having an in-person forum until this year, due to the pandemic, the executive assistant salary was adjusted in recognizing that the work related to hotel and forum logistics were not having to be undertaken.

Finally, in recognizing further transitions before us, we thank the nominations committee for its work. To aid them, brief descriptions of needed positions were developed to circulate among member organizations. We celebrate the very good work of our **Treasurer, Carole Collins**, over the past four years! We are in need of a new treasurer to follow-up on her good work. Russ has indicated his intention to retire in the coming year, so those who may be interested in serving on CCAPS are encouraged to reach out to him.

We are also in need of more members for our **Spiritual Care Week Committee**, and the **Nominations Committee**. As we get to elections, please indicate your interest if you haven't already! Candidates already forwarded will be taken up during the elections.

I also want to take the opportunity to share a bit about our website development, with Robert, our webmaster. In preparation for this forum, new approaches were developed through our website. Steps were also taken to strengthen the authentication processes for communication occurring through our google suite. We are grateful for his dedication, behind the scenes. While celebrating this work, we also want to again thank the Association of Professional Chaplains for offering their IT resource, Jerry, who has facilitated our zoom forum gatherings over the past few years. This year the SDA staff have overseen all these developments that we are grateful for.

As indicated in my presentation earlier, in our Orthodox Church in America becoming part of COMISS in 2005, it has been my honor to serve as the chair of this national roundtable for the past two years. We celebrate 100 years of clinical training this year, an opportunity to actively look **forward**, as well as reflecting back. May our member organizations continue to collaborate in charting this pathway forward, as well as hopefully opening the door to new partners with the new "Friends of COMISS" membership category proposed.

Just one example of forward-looking steps has occurred with recent conversations with potential new spiritual care enterprises. There have been several that reflect spiritual care occurring in community contexts, beyond the traditionally dominant hospital-related contexts. This is an exciting development representing new perspectives!

It is hoped that the anticipated presentation by **Dr. Robert Powell** will give us all much to think about. He has been a fellow sojourner on this journey with us for many years, meticulously and artfully recording and communicating the steps undertaken. Thank you for being with us today.

There is certainly much more that could be shared. Allow me to close here by saying how meaningful it has been to serve as the chair in working with this leadership team! They have worked diligently together, and I will miss our regular conversations. Denise will certainly carry forward in the coming years as your new chair!

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Dr. Steven Voytovich, D.Min., LPC, Chair
COMISS Network Leadership Team

40
YEARS
of Spiritual Support



Spiritual Care Week

October 20-26, 1985

October 19-25, 1986

October 25-31, 1987 - Excellence in Pastoral Care

October 24-30, 1988 - Pastoral Care: Persons for Persons

October 23-29, 1989 - Pastoral Care: Ministry of Healing

October 22-28, 1990 - Pastoral Care: Partners in Healing

October 22-27, 1991 - Pastoral Care: Wholeness of Healing

October 25-31, 1992 - Pastoral Care: Stories of Healing

October 25-31, 1993 - Pastoral Care: Stories of Partnership

October 24-30, 1994 - Pastoral Care: Celebration of Spirituality

October 23-29, 1995 - Pastoral Care: Celebration of

Relationships

October 21-27, 1996 - Pastoral Care: Celebration of Love

October 20-26, 1997 - Pastoral Care: Diversity of Gifts

October 18-25, 1998 - Pastoral Care: Diversity of Cultures

October 24-31, 1999 - Pastoral Care: Diversity of Spirituality

October 22-29, 2000 - Pastoral Care: Valuing Each Person

Wholly

October 21-28, 2001 - Pastoral Care: Valuing Life's Passages

October 20-26, 2002 - Pastoral Care: Valuing a Growing Spirit

October 19-25, 2003 - Pastoral Care: Imagining Community

October 24-30, 2004 - Pastoral Care: Imagining Peace

October 23-29, 2005 - Pastoral Care: Healing Wisdom

October 22-28, 2006 - Pastoral Care: Healing Humor
October 21-27, 2007 - Pastoral Care: Healing Faith
October 20-26, 2008 - Pastoral Care: Listening Presence
October 25-31, 2009 - Pastoral Care: Supportive Presence
October 24-30, 2010 - Pastoral Care: Healing Presence
October 23-29, 2011 - Pastoral Care: Shared Voice
October 21-27, 2012 - Pastoral Care: Giving Voice
October 20-26, 2013 - Pastoral Care: Prophetic Voice
October 19-25, 2014 - Pastoral Care: Spiritual Well-Being
October 25-31, 2015 - Pastoral Care: Spiritual Care Together

October 25-31, 2015 - Pastoral Care: Spiritual Care Together

October 16-22, 2016 - Pastoral Care: Spiritual Resilience

October 22-28, 2017 - Hospitality: Cultivating Inclusion

October 21-27, 2018 - Hospitality: Cultivating Time

October 20-26, 2019 - Hospitality: Cultivating Space

October 25-31, 2020 - Collaborative Healthcare: Chaplains Complete the Picture

October 24-30, 2021 - Spiritual Care Research

October 23-29, 2022 - Relevant and Responsive in Times of Crisis

October 22-28, 2023 - Chaplaincy and Mental Health: It's Healthy to Get Help

October 20-26, 2024 - Chaplains Beyond Religious Roles

October 19-25, 2025 - Spiritual Care Week: 40 Years of Spiritual Support

**CCAPS Accredited Organizations 2024
Report to COMISS Network Assembly, January 2025**

Name	Last Action Completed	Next Action Due	Note
VA Northeast Health System (Louis Stokes VAMC) Cleveland, OH	2023. Five-Year Paper review completed	2028. Ten-Year Site Review due.	Amanda A. Nagy, MS, MDIV, BCC Chief Chaplain, Cleveland
Detroit VAMC Detroit, MI	2023. Five Year Paper Review completed	2028. Ten Year Site Review due	David Matt Brown Acting Chief. Detroit
South Texas VAMC San Antonio, TX	2022. Ten Year Site Review Completed (via zoom).	2027. Five-Year Paper Review Due	David Zavala, MDIV, BCC Chief Chaplain, South Texas VAMC
James A. Haley VAMC Tampa, FL	2024 Ten Year Site Review Completed	2029. Five-Year Paper Review Due	Roosevelt Hanna Chief Chaplain, James A. Haley VAMC, Tampa
Baptist Community Ministries, New Orleans, LA	2024. Initial Accreditation complete.	2029. Five-Year Paper Review Due	Larry Johnson VP & Director, Chaplaincy Services

**CCAPS Accredited Organizations 2024
Report to COMISS Network Assembly, January 2025**

Name	Last Action Completed	Next Action Due	Note
Ann Arbor VAMC [Not currently in accredited]	2016	2021: 10-Year site review. Extended through 2022. Application for renewal never received	Christopher D. Biggins Chief, Chaplain Service

**CCAPS Accredited Organizations 2024
Report to COMISS Network Assembly, January 2025**

Centers Expressing Interesting in CCAPS	Contact
Episcopal Health System St. John’s Episcopal Hospital 407 Beach 20 th Street, Far Rockaway, NY 11691	Pastor Asnel Valcin, PsyD-RRT, BCCC Director of Pastoral Care & Education avalcin@ehs.org Phone: 718-869-7411
North Shore University Hospital & Northwell Health 300 Community Drive Manhasset, NY 11030	Rabbi Dr. Hillel Fox, BCDS, BCCC, BCPC Director, Spiritual Services Tel: (516) 562-4014 Cell: (516) 388-8635 Email: hfox2@northwell.edu

Names of CCAPS Commissioners:

Mario Ceballos, David Plummer, Russell Davis, Chair

Additional Documents sent separately

- Standards Chaplain and Pastoral Counselor Employing Organization CCAPS 2024
- Standards Chaplaincy Departments Healthcare CCAPS 2024

Respectfully submitted,
Russell H. Davis, PhD
russell.haden.davis@gmail.com



CCAPS: THE COMISS COMMISSION FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF PASTORAL SERVICES

Standards: Chaplain and Pastoral Counselor Employing Organization or Agency

100.00	The Organization Seeking CCAPS Accreditation
100.01	The organization will hold membership in COMISS. [Note: The preferred category of membership is “Chaplain and Pastoral Counselor Employing Organization or Agency.”]
100.02	The organization is in good standing with COMISS, is current with its payment of dues, and, if accredited, has filed all required reports including annual reports.
100.03	The organization demonstrates, via its mission/vision/values statement(s), that it operates in accordance with the objectives of the COMISS Network, namely that it embodies professionalism in the provision of interfaith-based care and counseling.
100.04	The organization, whether for profit or not-for-profit, provides access to its articles of incorporation.
100.05	The organization demonstrates via its mission/vision/values statement(s) that chaplaincy and/or pastoral counseling services are an integral part of the organization. [Hereafter referred to as chaplaincy/pastoral counseling or C/PC.]
100.06	The organization’s website identifies chaplaincy and/or pastoral counseling services (C/PC) as the focus of or a significant component of the services it offers.
100.07	If C/PC is not the sole purpose of the organization, then the Table of Organization clearly identifies the C/PC component (department, division, or the like).
100.08	The organizational chart identifies the individual who serves as the manager of chaplaincy/pastoral counseling services
100.09	The organization, if accredited by other agencies, is in good standing. [Note: Each accrediting body has its own definition of good standing, but the term



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	usually means that the accredited organization has paid all required accreditation dues and fees, is sufficiently compliant with Standards (not under disciplinary action) and has filed all required reports.]
100.10	Senior management demonstrate commitment to the success of C/PC.
100.11	If the organization is Not-For-Profit, the Board of Directors is knowledgeable of and committed to the success of the Chaplaincy/Pastoral Counseling division/department/service.

200.00	The C/PC Organization (or Department within the Organization)
200.01	The C/PC Organization/Department has a published mission statement, and if a sub-division of a larger organization, that mission statement is congruent with the mission of the larger organization.
200.02	The C/PC Organization/Department has written goals, policies, and procedures that are reviewed annually, revised as needed, and approved by administration.
200.03	The C/PC Organization/Department has personnel sufficient to meet and implement its goals and objectives.
200.04	The C/PC Organization/Department has sufficient support personnel to meet and implement its goals and objectives.
200.05	If C/PC are placed in other organizations, a written affiliation or placement agreement exists that specifies the conditions of placement. The agreement lists expectations of the organization, the expectations of the placement agency, and financial obligations.
200.06	The Chaplains/Pastoral Counselors hired by the organization, whether part time or full time, are certified by a certifying body holding membership in COMISS.



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200.00	The C/PC Organization (or Department within the Organization)
200.07	The C/PC Organization/Department utilizes one or more codes of conduct/ethics for all C/PC in its employ.
200.08	The C/PC Organization/Department seeks written assessment from each placement agency's satisfaction with the C/PC Services (separate and apart from their satisfaction with the personnel placed with the agency). These assessments are done at the time of the initial accreditation review, and at the time of the five-year and ten-year periodic reviews.
200.09	The C/PC Organization/Department has a system of accountability which measures both the quantitative and qualitative aspect of its service.
200.10	The C/PC Organization/Department has a current strategic plan.
200.11	The C/PC Organization/Department maintains an ongoing record of indicators that document services and activities provided.

300.00	Policies, Procedures and Guidelines
300.01	The C/PC Organization/Department has written policies and procedures relevant to the organization, which include the following.
300.02	Confidentiality Policy
300.03	Non-Discriminatory Hiring & Personnel Policy consistent with the mission of the organization.
300.04	Disciplinary Action Policy
300.05	Conflict of interest statement
300.06	Safety Guidelines and expectations including OSHA if relevant



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300.00	Policies, Procedures and Guidelines
300.07	Financial Policy including compensation guidelines
300.08	Performance Evaluation Policy & Procedures
300.09	Promotion/Advancement Policy & Procedures
300.10	Position descriptions for all personnel
300.11	Records Policy including retention and disposal
300.12	Client Records Policy & Procedures

400.00	Personnel Records
400.01	The organization keeps written personnel records (electronic and/or physical) of its C/PC that include
400.02	A written annual performance evaluation for each C/PC team member, signed by both manager and team member.
400.03	An evaluation of all new C/PC within 6 months of hire, signed by both manager and team member
400.04	A written annual continuing education report, submitted by the employee, and evidence that the CP/C's peer-review requirement is current. The report may be a copy of that submitted to the C/PC's certifying credentialing agency.
400.05	Letter(s) of Good Standing with the Certifying Agency. The Chaplain/Pastoral Counselor will seek an annual letter of good standing with the certifying organization and an initial letter of good standing upon hire. The letter should indicate that the C/PC is current with any reports and/or fees required by the



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	certifying agency and is otherwise in good standing as regards compliance with certification standards.
400.06	Letter(s) of Good Standing with the Endorsing Agency. The Chaplain/Pastoral Counselor will seek an annual letter of good standing with the C/PC's faith group endorser and an initial letter of good standing upon hire. The letter should indicate that the C/PC is current with any reports or fees required by the endorsing agency and are otherwise in good standing as regards disciplinary action/ethical compliance.
400.07	A list of 3 annual competencies appropriate to the C/PC's line of work as part of the annual continuing education expectations. At least one of the competencies must be verifiable by peer review, preferably interdisciplinary. The placement agency may participate in setting and evaluating these competencies. The competencies are set by the manager in collaboration with the P/CP.
400.08	A periodic written satisfaction survey for each C/PC from the agency or agencies in which the C/PC is placed. The data may be incorporated into the annual performance evaluation. Annual satisfaction surveys are preferred.

401.00	Chaplains/Pastoral Counseling Personnel (C/PC)
401.01	All chaplains and/or pastoral counselors who are employed by the organization are certified by one of the Certifying Organizations of the COMISS Network.
401.02	C/PC provide ministry to people of all faiths or of no faith.
401.03	C/PC personnel have specialized training and/or experience relevant to their clinical ministry assignment.
401.04	C/PC personnel have available to them resources to address the linguistic, cultural, and diverse spiritual needs of those served (patients/residents/families and staff).



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401.05	C/PC personnel can identify resources in the community and make appropriate referrals for mental health counseling, addiction counseling, suicidal ideation, threats of homicide or violence, pastoral counseling, or spiritual direction.
401.06	C/PC personnel are familiar with all Federal/State/Local laws, ordinances, and regulations that govern their practice.
401.07	C/PC personnel demonstrate the ability to minister to persons of diverse cultural and religious backgrounds through appropriate continuing education and through institutional assessment and evaluation instruments or procedures.
401.08	C/PC personnel adhere to a professional code(s) of ethics that is specified in departmental and/or organizational policies. These may include the code of ethics of the individual’s board certifying agency, the code of ethics of the C/PC Services organization/department, the code of conduct of the placement institution, and other such codes as are relevant.
401.09	C/PC personnel are research literate and demonstrate awareness of evidence-based practices appropriate to their clinical placement
401.10	C/PC personnel who serve in a health-care facility demonstrate awareness and integrated practice of at least one of the standards of practice/scope of practice documents issued by national organizations that are members of COMISS.
401.11	C/PC function collegially and professionally in relationship to other disciplines.
401.12	C/PC Service providers and support staff, including the manager, are evaluated annually or more frequently as required by the organization.



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402.00	The Manager For C/PC Services
402.01	The manager for C/PC Services is either the CEO or reports to upper management (e.g., the CEO, COO, or an appropriate Vice President).
402.02	The manager for the C/PC Service has an identified office space or conference room that allows for confidential conversations.
402.03	The manager has formal training in management and team leadership and/or significant experience therein.
402.04	The manager provides for the planning and coordinating of staffing.
402.05	The manager provides for the evaluation of C/PC personnel and has authority, in collaboration with Human Resources (if any), to take appropriate action. The range of appropriate action may include commendation, promotion, as well as various forms of correction up to and including termination of employment.
402.06	The manager effectively utilizes human and economic resources.
402.07	The manager demonstrates awareness of national and local trends in areas relevant to the organizations served such as law enforcement, healthcare, and funding.
402.08	The manager provides for a program of continuing education for the C/PC Service that takes into account research studies and evidence-based practices in the field.
402.09	The manager for C/PC Services has access to adequate and well-functioning equipment and software appropriate to their scope of practice such as telephones, mobile communication devices (pagers/cell phones), computers, printers, scanners, and photocopiers.



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403.00	Support Staff
403.01	Support staff exhibit an understanding of and appreciation for the role and function of the department.
403.02	Support staff have the skills necessary to perform their duties, tasks, and role in the department.
403.03	Support staff are included in and bound by the Confidentiality policy established by the Organization.

404.00	Team Meetings
404.01	C/PC Service team meetings are held at least once per month with all personnel.
404.02	Minutes of C/PC Services team meetings are kept and made available to administration and staff.
404.03	C/PC Service providers and support staff, including the manager, are evaluated annually or more frequently as required by the organization.
404.04	C/PC Services has specific plans, goals and objectives that are reviewed and revised annually and that are congruent with the mission, goals, and needs of the organization.

500.00	Budget
500.01	The organization's budget includes funds for C/PC personnel, facility, and operational needs.



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500.02	The budget provides adequate funds for operational expenses and office equipment and supplies.
500.03	Within the contexts of the organization and the profession, the salaries of the C/PC personnel are consistent with their education, training, and responsibilities. The salaries are based on market analysis of comparable institutions and fall in the middle range or higher and take into consideration salary surveys by professional chaplaincy organizations.
500.04	The budget, to the extent possible, provides funds for continuing professional education and development of all full-time C/PC employees, if permitted by law or other binding regulations.
500.05	The budget, to the extent possible, provides funds for the payment of professional dues to the chaplain’s certifying organization, if permitted by law or other binding regulations.

600.00	Accreditation by CCAPS
600.01	During its period of accreditation, C/PC Services, on behalf of the organization, will submit an annual report to CCAPS and will undergo a mid-cycle review.



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100. THE ORGANIZATION SEEKING ACCREDITATION	
100.1	Care for the spiritual dimension of the client, family, and organizational community is evidenced in the mission and operation of the organization.
100.2	The organization publicly documents its commitment to the spiritual care of the needs of all persons, as integral to a comprehensive approach to care.
100.3	Recognition of the spiritual needs and rights of the person is reflected in policies, procedures and administration's ability to articulate these needs and rights.
100.4	The budget includes sufficient funds to meet the operational, programmatic, and capital needs of the Chaplaincy Services program. ¹
100.5	The organization is in good standing with its accrediting body(ies).
100.6	The accredited organization agrees to notify CCAPS of any change in leadership of Chaplaincy Services.

200. CHAPLAINCY SERVICES	
200.1	Chaplaincy Services is the formal and identifiable means to demonstrate the organization's commitment to provide for the spiritual needs of the client, family and organizational community.
200.2	Chaplaincy Services is clearly identified on the organizational chart.

¹ The name for the Spiritual Care department varies from institution to institution. Typically, the department is called pastoral care, chaplaincy services, or spiritual care.

200. CHAPLAINCY SERVICES	
200.3	Chaplaincy Services has a mission statement congruent with that of the institution as well as written goals, policies, and procedures that are reviewed annually, revised as needed, and approved by administration.
200.4	The Department provides a comprehensive program of spiritual care services.
200.5	Chaplaincy Services has personnel sufficient to meet and implement the goals and objectives of the department and the organization.
200.6	Chaplaincy Services has sufficient support personnel to meet and implement the goals and objectives of the department and the organization.
200.7	Chaplaincy Services are made available to patients/residents/clients and their families as well as to team members within the organization.
200.8	Department personnel demonstrate sensitivity to the sacramental and ritual needs of patients/residents and families and provide for them through both internal and/or external resources.
200.9	Chaplaincy Services personnel are utilized by the organization for crisis intervention.
200.10	Chaplaincy Services personnel have specialized training and experience in the area of their clinical ministry assignment.
200.11	Chaplaincy Services personnel have available to them resources to address the linguistic, cultural and diverse spiritual needs of patients/residents/families and staff.
200.12	Chaplaincy Services has identified resources for referral for pastoral counseling and spiritual direction.
200.13	Chaplaincy Services offers religious services and spiritual resources appropriate to the setting.
200.14	When operational needs require the use of chaplaincy personnel from outside of the facility, a formal agreement is made and documented.

300. BUDGET	
300.1	Within the contexts of the organization and the profession, the salaries of the Chaplaincy Services personnel are consistent with their education, training and responsibilities. The salaries are based on market analysis of comparable institutions and fall in the middle range or higher and take into consideration salary surveys by professional chaplaincy organizations.
300.2	The budget provides for the availability of Chaplaincy Services 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days per year.
300.3	The budget provides adequate funds for operational expenses and office equipment and supplies.
300.4	The budget provides funds for the continuing professional education and development of all full-time chaplain employees.
300.5	The budget provides funds for the payment of professional dues to the chaplain's certifying organization.
300.6	The budget provides funds for books and periodicals in the field of spiritual care.

300.1 FACILITIES & EQUIPMENT	
301.1	Space is available for private, confidential, and professional consultation.
301.2	Each full-time chaplain has an individual work area.
301.3	Space is available for departmental meetings.
301.4	Chaplaincy Services provides for confidential record keeping,
301.5	Space is available for a departmental library, which can be a section in the institution's library.

300.1 FACILITIES & EQUIPMENT	
301.6	Chaplaincy Services has identified departmental office space.
301.7	Chaplaincy Services has access to adequate and well-functioning equipment and software appropriate to their scope of practice including telephones, mobile communication devices (pagers/cell phones), computers, printers, scanners, and photocopiers.
301.8	The organization provides a dedicated space for worship, meditation and memorial services that is designed to be sensitive to a broad range of religious traditions.
301.9	All Chaplaincy Services facilities are well-identified, attractive, carefully maintained, easily accessible, and barrier free.

400. PROFESSIONALISM	
400.1	A fully developed chaplaincy program includes a variety of personnel who are qualified and trained to perform their assigned duties.
400.2	Chaplains in the department are certified by a national chaplaincy credentialing agency. Membership of that agency in COMISS is preferred.
400.3	Chaplains in the department provide annual documentation of their good standing with their credentialing agency(ies).
400.4	Chaplains in the department provide a copy of their annual continuing education report to the Director and verification that their peer review is current.
400.5	Chaplains in the department have current endorsement by a religious endorsing body (or a letter of endorsement from a faith group that has no endorsing body). The current endorsement is on file for each chaplain.
400.6	Chaplaincy staff demonstrate the ability to minister to persons of diverse cultural and religious backgrounds through appropriate continuing education

400. PROFESSIONALISM	
	and through institutional assessment and evaluation instruments or procedures.
400.7	Members of the department adhere to a professional code(s) of ethics that is specified in departmental and/or institutional policies. This may include the code of ethics of the individual's board certifying agency, the code of ethics of the Chaplaincy Services department, the code of conduct of the institution, and other such codes as are relevant.
400.8	Chaplains in the department are research literate, demonstrate awareness of evidence based practices in the literature, and are utilized as a spiritual care resource in performance improvement and research studies within the organization.
400.9	Chaplains, individually and as a department, are recognized as an integral part of the interdisciplinary team and function effectively therein.
400.10	Chaplaincy Services personnel demonstrate awareness and integrated practice of at least one of the standards of practice/scope of practice documents issued by national organizations that are members of COMISS, such as the Association of Professional Chaplains, the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy, or the HealthCare Chaplaincy Network.

401. THE DIRECTOR OF CHAPLAINCY	
401.1	The Director of Chaplaincy Services reports to upper management (e.g., the CEO or an appropriate Vice President).
401.2	The Director of Chaplaincy Services has a private office.
401.3	The Director of Chaplaincy Services meets all of the criteria expected of the departmental professional staff including board certification (311).
401.4	The Director has formal training in management and team leadership and/or significant experience therein.
401.5	The Director provides for the planning and coordinating of staffing.

401. THE DIRECTOR OF CHAPLAINCY	
401.6	The Director provides for the evaluation of departmental staff and has authority, in collaboration with Human Resources and other managers in Chaplaincy Services (if any), to take appropriate action. The range of appropriate action may include commendation, promotion, and various forms of correction up to and including termination of employment.
401.7	The Director effectively utilizes the department's human and economic resources.
401.8	The Director has responsibility for the provision of Chaplaincy Services as delineated by and provided for by administration.
401.9	The Director demonstrates awareness of national and local trends in healthcare policies, funding, and other issues that affect the organization and the role of the Department in supporting the needs of the institution.
401.10	The Director provides for a program of continuing education for the department that takes into account research studies and evidence based practices in the field.

402. OTHER SPIRITUAL CARE PROVIDERS RECOGNIZED BY THE ORGANIZATION	
402.1	All spiritual care providers utilized by the institution, whether contract, on-call, student and/or volunteer spiritual service providers are screened, trained, and follow a clear (written) path of accountability and supervision.
402.2	All spiritual care providers utilized by the institution are accountable, either directly or indirectly, to the Director of Chaplaincy Services.

403. OUTSIDE CLERGY	
403.1	Community and other clergy are not considered as spiritual care providers for the organization unless they are formally recognized by the institution as an employee, student, or volunteer.

403.2	The organization has a policy providing for the needs of visiting clergy including parking, visitation, and space.
403.3	The organization has a policy for outside clergy that clarifies what information they may or may not have access to in compliance with HIPPA regulations.

404. CHAPLAINCY SERVICES SUPPORT STAFF	
404.1	Support staff exhibit an understanding of and appreciation for the role and function of the department.
404.2	Support staff have the skills necessary to perform their duties, tasks, and role in the department.

405. OUTREACH PROGRAMS	
405.1	Chaplaincy Services are accessible to users throughout the integrated delivery network, consistent with the institution’s mission, values, and purpose.
405.2	Chaplaincy Services makes referrals to and has an up-to-date list of religious resources within the community in order to make referrals when requested by the patient/resident or the healthcare proxy.

500. INTEGRATION INTO THE ORGANIZATION	
500.1	Chaplaincy Services has a written Scope of Practice that has been approved by administration.
500.2	Chaplains serve as a resource for team member support and work cooperatively with the Employee Assistance Program or other staff support resources of the organization.

500. INTEGRATION INTO THE ORGANIZATION	
500.3	Information regarding the availability of Chaplaincy Services is included in orientation programs for new employees, professional staff and board members.
500.4	Chaplains function collegially and professionally in relationship to other disciplines.
500.5	Chaplains are members of and actively contribute to assigned committees (such as ethics committee, patient/resident care committee, employee assistance committee).
500.6	Chaplains participate as team members in intradisciplinary patient/family conferences.
500.7	Chaplains are utilized as a resource for clinical and institutional ethics.
500.8	Organizational policies and procedures mandate the use of chaplaincy services in certain instances and support the Department's Scope of Practice.

600. DOCUMENTATION, EVALUATION AND QUALITY	
600.1	Chaplaincy Services has a system of accountability which measures both the quantitative and qualitative aspect of its service.
600.2	Chaplaincy Services is involved in the continuous quality improvement efforts or performance improvement activities within the department and in the organization.
600.3	The Department has a current strategic plan that is based on survey or other data of the spiritual care needs of all sectors of the organization and that has the approval of administration.
600.4	Chaplaincy Services department meetings are held at least once per month.
600.5	Minutes of Chaplaincy Services team meetings are reported, filed, and made available to administration.

600. DOCUMENTATION, EVALUATION AND QUALITY	
600.6	Chaplaincy Services providers and support staff, including the Director, are evaluated annually or more frequently as required by their organization.
600.7	Chaplaincy Services has specific plans, goals and objectives that are reviewed and revised annually and that take into account the mission, goals, and needs of the organization.
600.8	Scheduling of staff hours is consistent with and adequate for the Department's Scope of Practice and the needs of the organization.
600.9	Chaplains document their interventions in the record of the patient/resident.
600.10	Chaplaincy Services maintain an ongoing record of indicators that document pastoral services and activities.
600.11	During its period of accreditation, Chaplaincy Services, on behalf of the organization, will submit an annual report to CCAPS and will undergo a mid-cycle review.

Questions about the CCAPS Accreditation Process can be addressed to:

Russell H. Davis, PhD, CCAPS Chair

Spiritual Care Week / Pastoral Care Week

COMISS REPORT January 13, 2025

The purpose of the observance of Pastoral Care Week / Spiritual Care Week is to provide an opportunity for chaplains, pastoral care counselors, educators and providers, to share their story and to celebrate various ministries.

This week is highlighted to celebrate the education for and practice of spiritual care through professional chaplaincy and pastoral counseling; to interpret and promote pastoral care; to honor and celebrate all practitioners of pastoral care. It is also to express appreciation to institutions and their staff who support pastoral care ministries, and to publicize the work of pastoral care organizations affiliated with COMISS. Pastoral Care Week/Spiritual Care Week also promotes continuing education for clergy, laity, and institutional employees regarding the value of pastoral care.

Each year a new theme brings to the light a certain aspect of spiritual care as a focus. A new theme invites us to new and creative ways to tell the story of spiritual care.

This past year, 2024, the theme was “*Spiritual Care: Chaplains Beyond Religious Roles*”, and was observed October 20-26, 2024.

Chaplains and other professional spiritual caregivers are often called to do much more than offer a prayer, read from sacred texts, or lead religious services.

Chaplains wear “many hats”, and are also highly trained in numerous roles in addition to their religious care: Advance directive facilitator, Ethics consultant, Mediator, Moral injury support, Navigators of systems, Suicide prevention counselors, Utilizers of telecare, and more.

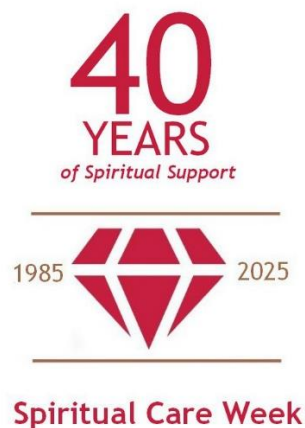


This year, 2025, the theme will be “Spiritual Care Week: 40 Years of Spiritual Support”. It will be observed October 19-25, 2025.

Celebrate four decades of profound community impact as Spiritual Care Week reaches its 40th anniversary! Originating from the visionary collaboration of the National Association of Catholic Chaplains and the College of Chaplains (now the Association of Professional Chaplains), this annual observance honors the boundless compassion of spiritual care providers who offer solace, empathy, and support to individuals and families navigating the complexities of life in its many hardships and celebrations.

Our symbol for this anniversary is the ruby. Since ancient times, the ruby has been known as a sign of protection that sustains a good and whole life. Under ultraviolet light, the ruby fluoresces, reflecting an inner light that in other situations is difficult to see. The ruby is also thought to provide clarity and healing for those who wear it. Therefore, the ruby seems an apt descriptor for the type of care that is part of everyday life for chaplains and other spiritual care givers.

As we reflect on four decades of nurturing the human spirit, let us renew our commitment to fostering healing, resilience, and holistic well-being for all. Join us in honoring this milestone, celebrating the profound impact of spiritual care, and envisioning a future where deep and genuine support remains at the core of compassionate care.



We thank you for supporting Pastoral Care Week / Spiritual Care Week. And we on the committee thank you for the opportunity to serve in the promotion of spiritual care.

The committee:

Tim Staker, chair

Anissa Glaser-Bacon

Kyle Christiansen

Will Kinnaird

Clyde T Angel

Chair-Elect: Patricia F. Appelhans JD

Chief Executive Officer

Association of Professional Chaplains

Patricia F. Appelhans JD is the CEO of the Association of Professional Chaplains (APC). Pat has been with APC since 2009. As CEO, Pat works closely with APC leadership teams, its pastoral cognate groups, as well as organizational leaders in allied health and human services organizations. Prior to serving as CEO of APC, Pat was director at SmithBucklin Corporation, an association management company serving as executive director to several non-profits. Pat has many years' experience as a non-profit professional serving in trade, professional and service organizations. Pat is also a licensed attorney and served as counsel for several non-profits. Pat has been an active volunteer in other non-profits such as Association Forum and served as their Chair of the Board. Pat was the recipient of the John C. Thiel Distinguished Service Award from Association Forum. She was also Chair of the Greater Chicago Girl Scout Alliance, Secretary of COMISS Network and Rotarian of the Year at the Elgin Rotary International Club. Pat currently serves on the National Advisory Board of CSU Institute for Palliative Care and as treasurer on the National Coalition of Hospice and Palliative Care. Pat earned her B.A. from University of Illinois Chicago and her J.D. from Northern Illinois University. She is admitted to practice in the state of Illinois.

Nominating Committee:

Edwin Arevalo has been a Board Certified Clinical Chaplain/Pastoral Counselor with the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy since 2019. Currently, he is the manager of Pastoral Services for Hackensack University Medical Center in Hackensack, NJ and serves as a Supervisor-in-Training for the network's CPE program. Chaplain Edwin also holds a Master of Science in Christian Counseling from Cairn University as well as a Master of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary. His claim to fame is marrying his college crush, Sonja. They've been married since 1999 and have 3 adult children.

SCW:

Lesley Pella-Woo is a board certified chaplain and Supervisor-In-Training serving at Riverview Medical Center in Red Bank, NJ. After graduating with a Master of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary, Chaplain Lesley completed a chaplain residency at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, New Brunswick. Currently on the ordination track with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Chaplain Lesley worked for many years in pastoral ministry as a religious/Christian educator in New York and New Jersey. A California native, Lesley pursues learning, education, spiritual practice, and the journey into self-awareness while parenting, with her husband, their beloved teenage son. Lesley enjoys staying active in mind, body, and spirit by reading widely, swimming regularly, spending time with friends and family, teaching Sunday School, baking, and doing crafty things. Lesley strives to bring to her work as a chaplain,

and in life, an approach to her work that communicates, as the theologian, Paul Tillich, observes: “The first duty of love is to listen.”

Rev. Lisa Lani Easterling, BCC, resides in Albuquerque, New Mexico, born in Honolulu, HI. Rev. Easterling is ordained by the Presbyterian USA. She is a recently retired board certified chaplain with APC, having served as chaplain for 13+ yrs at Presbyterian Rust Medical Center, Rio Rancho, NM, and as resident chaplain for 1 yr at East Jefferson General Hospital, Metairie, LA. Rev. Easterling received a Master in Divinity/Theological Studies from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary; and a Master of Social Work and BSW from the University of Southern Mississippi.

COMISS Network Guidelines

Revised for the January 2025 Annual Forum in Silver Spring, MD.

- I. Name, Purpose, Mission and Objectives
 - a. The name of this group is COMISS Network; incorporated as a 501.c3 in Atlanta, Georgia.
 - b. The purpose of the COMISS Network is to provide its membership with a unique forum for communication, networking, and advocacy.
 - c. The Mission of the COMISS Network is to serve as the pre-eminent network of professional organizations, institutions, and faith communities that promotes and supports collaboration among its member organizations which are committed to the theological and clinical education and the competent practice of interfaith spiritual care through chaplaincy and pastoral counseling and research in specialized settings.
 - d. The Vision of the COMISS Network is to facilitate advocacy for specialized ministry by developing and sharing evidenced based best practices in chaplaincy and pastoral counseling and research.
 - e. The Objectives of the COMISS Network are:
 - i. To provide a forum for dialogue among its member organizations.
 - ii. To encourage shared programs/resources toward creating greater collaboration among specialized ministries.
 - iii. To advocate professionalism in standards and in the provision of interfaith-based care and counseling.
 - iv. To educate our constituency and various publics about the value of professional interfaith-based spiritual care and counseling.
 - v. To propose and plan initiatives that further our mission, vision, and purpose.
 - vi. To promote ongoing research in order to establish evidence-based spiritual care and counseling.

- II. Membership:
 - a. Membership is available to organizations which subscribe to the purpose, mission, and objectives of COMISS. Organizations applying for membership and those renewing current membership may self-select the organization's membership category. The characteristics of each category are recommended guidelines for assisting the organizations in selecting the most appropriate category for membership:
 - i. Professional Certifying or Accrediting Organization: These organizations certify individuals for the practice of and or training for professional spiritual care. They will demonstrate how certified chaplains, pastoral counselors, or other pastoral care professionals conform to a code of ethics that prohibits proselytizing, conflicts of interest, and crossing of professional

boundaries. Or, organizations in this category accredited institutions, facilities, centers, or systems for the practice, education, and training of chaplains, pastoral counselors, and/or other spiritual care professionals.

- ii. Religious Endorsing Bodies: These organizations include faith groups, denominations, or religious organizations which endorse individuals of their respective group for chaplaincy, pastoral counseling, and/or other professional spiritual care ministries. A Religious Endorsing Body will be able to demonstrate a process of endorsement which includes on-going accountability between the endorser and the endorsed individual. Also, these organizations will be able to demonstrate recognition as a religious endorsing body. They will be able to demonstrate that they are recognized as a 501 (C) (3) religious organization and have primarily a lay constituency.
- iii. Professional Membership Organizations: These organizations exist as groups of chaplains and/or other pastoral care professionals whose work focuses on ministry in specific specialized settings. These organizations may be for profit or not for profit.
- iv. Chaplain and Pastoral Counselor Employing Organizations or Agencies: These organizations utilize the services of chaplains and/or pastoral counselors who are certified by one of the Certifying Organizations of the COMISS Network. These organizations may be for profit or not for profit, but they must demonstrate, via their mission statement and table of organization, that they operate in accordance with the purpose, mission; and objectives of the COMISS Network.
- v. Academic and Educational Institutions: These institutions prepare students for chaplaincy/ specialized ministry through academic degree programs and/or conduct research related to ministry in specialized settings. These institutions are accredited by an accrediting organization recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and/or the U.S. Department of Education.
- vi. Friends of COMISS: These organizations are ready to embrace the purpose and mission of COMISS Network, and are either not yet organized sufficiently to apply for membership in one of the categories listed in Membership sections i through v in these Guidelines, or those who are sufficiently organized would like to learn more about the COMISS Network. Ordinarily, organizations apply for full membership within 1-2 years. Friends can attend COMISS Network activities, will not be voting members, and will be asked to pay modest dues.

III. COMISS Network Forum

- a. Membership
 - i. Members in good standing are current in membership dues and have filed all reports required.
 - ii. Each member organization may be represented by up to three participants.
 - iii. There will be one vote per member organization in good standing.
- b. Annual Forum
 - i. The COMISS Network will gather for one or more meetings annually in Forum.
 - ii. All Forum business will be presented for agenda approval to the COMISS Network Leaders no later than 24 hours prior to the opening of the Forum.
 - iii. The conduct of business at the Annual Forum will include presentations, discussion and action on:
 - 1. Annual reports
 - 2. Financial report
 - 3. Presentation of a budget and its adoption
 - 4. Election of officers
 - 5. Election of nominating committee
 - 6. Presentation of new members
 - 7. Proposed new initiatives
 - iv. All mailings pertaining to an upcoming Forum are to be sent to the member organizations.

IV. COMISS Network Leadership (Officers and At-Large Members)

- a. Network Leadership shall be members of one of the member organizations of the COMISS Network in good standing.
- b. The COMISS Network Leadership annual elections shall take place at the Annual Forum.
- c. New COMISS Network Leaders will begin their terms of office at the conclusion of the Annual Forum.
- d. The officers of COMISS Network will be:
 - i. Chair
 - 1. Presides at all meetings of the COMISS Network Forum and the COMISS Network Leadership.
 - 2. Presents an annual report to the Forum.
 - ii. Chair-Elect
 - 1. Assumes the duties of the Chair in absence or disability of the Chair.
 - 2. Serves as chair of Forum Program Planning Task Force.

- iii. Treasurer
 - 1. Is responsible for preparing a budget for review by the COMISS Network Leadership and for approval by the Forum Membership.
 - 2. Provides financial reports to the COMISS Network Leadership and to the Annual Forum.
 - 3. Schedules an audit every three years with an outside professional auditor.
- iv. Secretary
 - 1. Attends all sessions of the COMISS Network Leadership and Annual Forum and records all votes and minutes.
- e. The officers of the COMISS Network will serve as the officers of the corporation and as such are responsible for its business and direction as approved by the COMISS Network.
- f. At-Large Members: There shall be two at-large members elected at the Annual Forum by and from the membership groups to insure diversity.
- g. Spiritual Care Week Committee Chair: The spiritual care week committee chair will be the liaison between the COMISS Network Leadership and the Spiritual Care Week Committee.
- h. CCAPS Chair: The CCAPS Chair will be a member of the COMISS Leadership Team.
- i. The COMISS Network Leadership will act on business responsibilities between meetings of the Forum. They will:
 - i. Contract services
 - ii. Hire and annually evaluate staff
 - iii. Implement decisions of the Forum
 - iv. Be responsible for the budget
 - v. Engage the membership in strategic planning
 - vi. Establish and appoint Task Forces as needed to support the mission and objectives.
 - vii. Financial Mgt
- j. Terms of Service
 - i. The Chair and Chair-Elect will each serve one two-year term. The Chair-Elect succeeds the Chair. If the chair position is vacated before the end of the two year term the chair-elect will assume the position and fill the unexpired term (and afterward, fulfilling the term to which s/he was elected.) An election will be held at the next Forum to elect a succeeding chair-elect.
 - ii. In the interest of continuity, a nominee for Chair-Elect is selected by the COMISS Network Leadership from the COMISS Network

Leadership or from former COMISS Network Leadership members who have served within the last 5 years.

- iii. The Secretary, Treasurer and two Members-at-Large of the COMISS Network Leadership will serve a two-year term and may be re-elected to one successive term.
- iv. The Chair-Elect and Treasurer will be elected in odd-numbered years; the Secretary and two At-Large members will be elected in even-numbered years.
- v. Spiritual Care Week Committee members will serve a four-year term, and may be reappointed to a second term. The Chair will serve a three-year term and may be re-elected.
- vi. CCAPS Commissioners will serve three-year terms and may be reappointed to one successive term.
- vii. Individuals who are completing an unfulfilled term are eligible to serve a two-year term and be re-elected to one successive term.
- viii. The chair can appoint an individual for Secretary or Treasurer if the position is vacated prior to the Forum.

V. COMISS Network Staff and/or Outside Services

- a. The Executive Administrator (Job Description on file)
- b. The Bookkeeper (Job Description on file)

VI. Standing Committees and Commissions

- a. A Nominating Committee of four (4) will be nominated and elected annually from the membership categories at the Annual Forum. They will be responsible for the process of nominations and conducting the election.
 - i. Solicit names from each of the membership groups.
 - ii. Secure agreement to being nominated from the nominee.
 - iii. Prepare the slate to be mailed to the membership with registration packets for the Annual Forum.
 - iv. Conduct the election at the Annual Forum.
 - v. The Committee may receive nominations from the floor.
 - vi. They are administratively accountable to the COMISS Network Leadership.
- b. The COMISS Commission for Accreditation of Pastoral Services consists of eight members.
 - i. The Network Leadership will appoint two commissioners drawn from the COMISS Network Membership, one of which will be chair. When there is a commissioner vacancy, CCAPS will receive applications and then make their recommendation to the National Leadership who will make the appointment.
 - ii. CCAPS will:

1. Propose and revise CCAPS standards
2. Conduct accreditation site visits of pastoral services
3. Represent the COMISS Network to external national accrediting bodies
4. Submit an annual report to the Network
5. Recommend nominees to the Network Leadership for the at-large commissioners from outside the Network.

iii. COMISS Network Leadership will:

1. Approve membership criteria for CCAPS
2. Appoint CCAPS commissioners. The commissioners will elect their own chair from among themselves.
3. Approve policies, procedures, and standards of CCAPS.
4. Approve CCAPS accreditation recommendations for pastoral services.

c. Spiritual Care Week Committee

- i. The purpose of the committee is to plan and implement the annual observance of Spiritual Care Week. A committee will be appointed by the COMISS Network Leadership from among the membership categories. The Spiritual Care Week observance is intended to raise awareness of the importance of pastoral/spiritual care. This includes, but is not limited to:
 1. Determination of a theme for a three-year cycle in advance.
 2. Promote and manage an opportunity for constituents to design and submit a graphic promoting a theme.
 3. Produce publicity and educational materials to support the theme.
 4. May contract with and supervise a manufacturer to supply materials
 5. May supervise sale and distribution of materials
- ii. The committee will nominate its own chair with approval by the COMISS Network Leadership.
- iii. The committee will present an annual report to the Annual Forum.

VII. Amendments and revisions to the Guidelines

- a. Will be developed as needed by the COMISS Network Leadership
- b. Will be sent to the voting member of record of each member organization 60 days prior to the Forum.
- c. Changes to the Guidelines shall be ratified by a simple majority of the voting members present at the annual Forum.

VIII. Required Quorum

- a. At the COMISS Network Leadership meetings, a simple majority (one more than half of the Network Leadership) is sufficient to take action.
- b. At the Annual Forum a simple majority of the voting members present is sufficient to take action.

ANTON THEOPHILUS BOISEN
(1876-1965)

I seek not
the ready-made formulations contained in books.
I seek to make
empirical studies – of
“living human documents” – particularly those who
are breaking or
have broken – in the midst of
moral crisis – the
inner day of judgment.

I seek
the basis of spiritual healing in understanding the
living human documents and their
actual social conditions – in
all their complexity and in
all their elusiveness – respecting the
tested insights of the wise and noble – of

the past as well as of
the present.