

# LOS ANGELES COUNTY PROBATION DEPT ANNOUNCES NEW CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM

## WELCOME THE NEW L.A. COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT VOLUNTEER CHAPLAIN TEAM

*"I am pleased to announce the launch of the Los Angeles County Probation Department Chaplaincy Program. Having skilled professionals available to counsel, assist, and support our staff and officers will help to strengthen our department. These men and women are specially trained to handle crisis situations as well as provide follow-up counseling, group debriefings and individual intervention. Our Chaplains are qualified to minister to people of all faiths. I welcome them to our department."*

– Dr. Adolfo Gonzales, Chief Probation Officer, Los Angeles County Probation Department

In January 2022, the Los Angeles County Probation department began providing volunteer chaplains to assist officers and staff. Chaplaincy programs are designed to provide spiritual guidance to staff members across various religious belief systems. Our chaplains are trained men and women who are available to give support to staff in times of need. Most law enforcement agencies around the country maintain a chaplaincy program to work with staff in the high-stress positions of law enforcement, fire and rescue, probation, and other jobs where the stakes and pressures are high.

The Los Angeles County Probation Department Volunteer Chaplaincy Program got its start at the request of former department Chiefs Terri McDonald and Ray Leyva. "Chief Leyva asked me to start putting together a plan for a volunteer chaplaincy program," said Steve Gores, Coordinator of the Reserve Deputy Probation Officer Program. "Chief McDonald had also asked staff to start a similar program." The Executive Chaplaincy Committee, headed by Senior Probation Director Randal Pineda, included SDPO Georgina Clink, PTSI John Dolorfino, SDPO Arthur Mayfield II, Head of Marketing and Communications Karla Tovar, and HR Director Deanna Carlisle.

Under Chief Deputy Adam Bettino's leadership, the chaplaincy unit teams were merged. After a rigorous clearance process, including interviews, panel reviews, and background checks, five chaplains were accepted into the program and are now ready to support the Los Angeles County Probation Department.

We are pleased to add the Chaplaincy Program to our many staff wellness programs including Peer Support, Probation Support Services, the County EAP, and other programs that help promote well-being.

If you are in crisis or just need someone to talk to, and wish to speak to a chaplain, please fill out the confidential request form at the link [HERE](#). All requests are anonymous.



Father David Bedros, Lead Chaplain

**David Bedros** was born in Kameshli, Syria and received his elementary and secondary education in Hasaki City, Syria. David attended law school at Aleppo University and completed 3 years of law degree studies in 1989. He earned his bachelor's degree (equivalent) in 1999 from Saint Paul's Institute of Philosophy and Theology. He received a master's degree in Intercultural Studies in 2019 from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, CA.

Currently a chaplain for the Burbank Police Department as well as Pastor at Our Lady of Martyrs Armenian Catholic church, Father Bedros was ordained a priest on September 18, 1999. He has served for twenty-six years.

In 2002, Fr. Bedros held a very successful and important role with the Armenian Catholic church and its communities between Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and Washington DC as the lead clergy position in St. Mark's Armenian Catholic Church in Philadelphia. David had been appointed by the Bishop Manuel Batakian, Exarch of the Armenian Catholic Church in the USA and Canada. In July of 2010, he was appointed as assistant pastor in St. Gregory Armenian Catholic Church, Glendale, California. In September 2012, he was appointed to his current assignment as pastor of the first Armenian Catholic Parish in California, Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Armenian Catholic Church in Los Angeles. Fr. Bedros also currently leads the Armenian Catholic Missions in San Diego, San Jose and San Francisco.

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Rabbi Dovber Chaiton

**Rabbi Dovber Chaiton** was born in Johannesburg, South Africa where he attended Torah Academy Schools. Following 12th grade, he studied in Yeshivot in Israel and America, completing his Rabbinic Ordination at the Rabbinical College of America in Morristown, New Jersey with ordination from former Chief Rabbi of Israel Rabbi Israel Meir Lau.

Rabbi Chaiton is a Torah Studies teacher at Emek Hebrew Academy Teichman Family Torah Center. As a trained Responsive Classroom teacher, Rabbi Chaiton has entered the Jewish New Teacher Project under the New Teacher Center to become a trained new teacher mentor. In addition, Rabbi Chaiton assists his wife, Srula and father-in-law Rabbi Mendel Duchman in overseeing Los Angeles' first junior congregation, Kol Yaakov Yehuda, a synagogue run mainly by children and teenagers.

Rabbi Chaiton lives in Los Angeles with his wife and 3 children. As a Lubavitch Chassid and the son of an emissary of the Lubavitch Rebbe of blessed memory, he strives to live up to the values of the Lubavitch Rebbe, illuminating the world with goodness and kindness.



Father John Kouki

**Father John George Kouki** was born in Hassakeh, Syria on May 6th, 1973. As a youth he moved to Aleppo, Syria and soon after graduating high school served with Archbishop Youhanna Ibrahim. He studied at the St. Aghem Seminary Theology College in Damascus for 4 years. 2001 was a memorable year as Father Kouki was married, and ordained as Archdeacon, and as a Priest.

He moved with his wife Carol to the US in 2002 and received his AA from St. Petersburg College. He served at parishes in Orlando, Miami, and for nineteen years in Tampa, Florida, and was Secretary for the Clergy council of Eastern Archdiocese.

Father Kouki moved with his wife and three children to California in 2020, to serve at St. James Church in Sunland. He is currently Pastor of the St. James Syriac Orthodox Church.



Rabbi Sholom D. Langsam

Born in Brooklyn, New York, **Rabbi Sholom D. Langsam** has been a chaplain of the LAPD since 2013 and Director of Personnel & Training as well a Volunteer EMT with Hatzolah of Los Angeles. In 2020, Rabbi Langsam was honored with the *Twice A Citizen* award as one of the LAPD Reserve Officers of the Year.

Rabbi Langsam is an Ordained Rabbi from The West Coast Talmudical Seminary. He is Certified Mohel by the Chief Rabbinate in Israel. Married with four children, he served in the United States Coast Guard as LT, ACS Chaplain on the USCGC Halibut.

A Lubavitcher Chassid who was raised in Crown Heights, Rabbi Langsam is well versed in communal affairs and needs through his experiences with law enforcement. He is a member of the local Chevra Kadisha burial society, a member of the International Conference of Police Chaplains (ICPC), and an interpreter for the Department of Defense, International Affairs Directorate Interpreter Corps. A first responder at the World Trade Center, Rabbi Langsam says, "I just want to help where I can make a difference."



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Randy McConnell

**Randy McConnell** was born and raised in California and received his B.A. in Sociology from Cal State University, Long Beach. He moved to Colorado where he earned his Master of Divinity degree from Denver Seminary and pastored a church until 1986.

McConnell then moved back to California and worked in low-income senior housing for about twenty years. He joined the Clergy Council at Lakewood Sheriff's Department in 2012 ministering to Deputies as well as civilians and then signed up with the California State Guard in 2014 as a Chaplain. As Chaplain in the Guard, he counsels with service members and performs casualty notifications, memorials, and weddings. He is currently working at U.S. Veteran Initiative as a Housing Specialist for previously homeless Veterans as well as being the unofficial Chaplain on Campus.

McConnell also is the Chaplain at a civilian chapel on the Los Alamitos Joint Training Base. He has been living in Bellflower since 1973 and is married with three children and seven grandchildren.



Major Brenda Threatt

Director of Veteran Services at El Camino College, **Major Brenda Threatt** oversees the programs and services that assist veteran students in achieving academic success, graduation, and ultimately, successful careers.

Brenda Threatt was born and raised in Los Angeles and attended St. Mary's Academy, CSULA, and San Francisco Theological Seminary. She holds a master's degree in Theology, and is currently a doctoral student in Public Administration at California Baptist Administration. Major Threatt holds numerous military certifications, citations, and awards for her work in the community with veterans and vulnerable populations. Major Threatt is also a military officer for the 224th Sustainment Battalion, Long Beach California State Guard (Army Division).

Her credo is from Anne Frank - June 12, 1942, Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp, Germany: "How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."

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Visit the Chaplain Web Page on Probnets [HERE](#).