



Chaplain of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives

Beginning in 1847, Members of the PA House of Representatives began introducing resolutions inviting clergy from Harrisburg and surrounding areas to offer opening prayers on session days. It wasn't until 1865 when the Members of the House felt it necessary to specifically name a person to regularly open session days with a prayer. The first, Bryan S. Hill, was a Member of the House as well as a reverend by profession.

Act 16 of 1876 authorized the appointment of a chaplain for both the House and Senate, and provided for their compensation. Between 1877 and 1955, the House Chaplain was listed in the *Pennsylvania Manual* as an officer of the House. After 1955, chaplains were hired as contract employees, only receiving compensation for the days in which they opened session. By the mid-1990s, religious leaders from across Pennsylvania were invited as guests of the Members to open session days. In recent years, Members of the House were also invited to open session days with prayers.

Session Dates	Name	County
1865	Bryan S. Hill	Erie
1866	John A. Danks	Allegheny
1867	Jacob Kennedy	Wyoming
1868	Christian H. Forney	Dauphin
1869	John Edwards	Lawrence
1870	George F. Stelling	Dauphin
1871	George Pierce	Dauphin
1872	George Peirce	Dauphin
1873	William H.H. Snyder	Dauphin
1874	John O'Neil	Dauphin
1875	unknown	
1876-1878	James C. Clarke	Dauphin
1879, 1881	Benjamin F. Beck	Dauphin
1883	W.H. Elliott	Lebanon
1885	John W. Feight	Cumberland
1887	D.W. Proffitt	Perry
1889	Benjamin F. Beck	Dauphin
1891	J.F. Moyer	Dauphin
1893	Benjamin F. Beck	Dauphin
1895	Benjamin B. Hamlin	Dauphin
1897	Milton H. Sangree	Dauphin
1899	W.J. Grissinger	Dauphin
1901	J.A. Lyter	Dauphin

1903	William McNally	Dauphin
1905	J. Patton Moore	Dauphin
1907	William A. Houck	Cumberland
1909	L.R. Jones	Allegheny
1911	W.C. Jones	Allegheny
1913	J. Elliott Wright	Allegheny
1915	F.W. Staley	Montgomery
1917	S.G. Zerfass	Lancaster
1919, 1921	William H. Feldman	York
1923	Edward S. Ninde	Chester
1925, 1927	George P. Donehoo	Potter
1929	M.W. Schweitzer	Lancaster
1931	Omer B. Poulson	Huntingdon
1933, 1935	George F. Connor	Delaware
1937	Ephraim Z. Gallagher	Cambria
1939	Walter E. Deibler	Dauphin
1941	Donald McFall	Dauphin
1943, 1945, 1947	Lester C. Updegrave	Northumberland
1949, 1951, 1953	William Hugh Fryer	Chester
1955	Harold James Crouse	York
1957	unknown	
1959-1961	David R. Hoover	Fulton
1962-1965	unknown	
1966	David R. Hoover	Fulton
1967	Alvin J. Simmons	Lancaster
1968	unknown	
1969-1972	David R. Hoover	Fulton
1973-1974	Alvin J. Simmons	Lancaster
1975-1978	David R. Hoover	Fulton
1979-1982	unknown	
1983-1988	David R. Hoover	Fulton
1989-1993	Clyde W. Roach	Dauphin