

A PLEA for PRAYER – August 7, 2010 - No. 91

We would appreciate updates on the location of our military because of continued unit movements.

Note: This list and plea will be updated and expanded as God gives information and grace. While this prayer plea is posted on the Internet, every effort is made to keep information appropriately private and with minimum information on mission, units and location. All requests, news and update information should be sent to the editor at: Coie.1@opc.org

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends (John 15:13). Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:16). And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever (Isaiah 32:17).

The request continues. Please pray for our OPC men and women, sons and daughters who are in harm's way, about to be in harm's way, and who support those in harm's way. *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much (James 5:16b). Pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17).*

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. (Psalm 91:1-4)

Prayer focus: A Warrior's Comfort - PCA warrior killed in action. A member of our fraternal church the PCA, Lance Corporal Thomas E. Rivers, Jr., USMC, of Birmingham Alabama, was killed in an IED attack on 28 April 2010 in Helmand Providence. He served in the 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force out of Camp Lejeune NC (1/2). He would be the second Marine and fifth warrior from the PCA killed in action.

Our Executive Director Chaplain Doug Lee (BG, USA, Ret.) called on the family and makes these requests for prayer for the family: Please pray for his family who are still stunned by their loss and trying to adjust to the absence of Thomas. They are already encouraging others, are strengthened by their faith and are encouraged by their daughter's desire to encourage Marines via a special ministry to them. They would appreciate knowing others are praying for them. Pray for healing...

Your writer spent a difficult but rewarding evening reading and viewing moving tributes to this young man. They are difficult to adequately summarize. While in junior high school he determined to overcome both dyslexia and physical limitations, and become a United States Marine. In his father's words he became an "iron man", was "never a conformist" and was a "ripped warrior" with "unbreakable vigor." Together with Marine friends he led Bible studies ("with weapons in their laps and Bibles open") in a combat zone. His final mission was his second of the day and one he volunteered for to replace another Marine who was in the hurt locker. He was known to be among the very best "team leaders" (fire team leaders, the basic Marine unit of four) in his battalion, often on the point. One of the last pictures of him with his family is in prayer holding his mother's hand with his father's hands on his only son's now massive shoulders.

Thomas, who carried his Bible with him in combat unless needing only essential gear, had Psalm 91 verse one *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty* on the back of his broad shoulders, “knowing God had his back”. He survived many combat missions comforted by what my Bible notes for Psalm 91 as the “happy estate of the godly.” But on 28 April 2010, his Heavenly Father who did keep and protect him many times, determined in his all wise providence to take LCpl. Thomas Rivers, Jr., USMC, to his heavenly reward and home – he was transferred to another unit – The Church Triumphant! He died surrounded by Marine friends reading him scripture including Psalm 91. He indeed now abides directly *under the shadow of the Almighty... in the secret place of the most High!* Honor, Courage and Commitment – these are the warriors who serve us so that we can rest quietly and safely in our beds. Pray for the Rivers family and all who guard our gates. We will never forget!

Continue to pray that we will recognize the true nature of the enemy. Be not weary in hoping, praying and waiting to see the salvation of our great God whose new mercies come every morning! Pray that the Gospel may continue to have free course. Pray that the culture of death will be defeated and that our nation will stand united and will endure in the defense of freedom. Please continue to pray for the spouses, children, parents and siblings of our warriors. Pray for the families of the fallen, pray for the wounded and the one captured that they may all endure and come to rest and trust in Christ. May they defend our nation's liberties as guaranteed by our Constitution with stalwart hearts and minds.

May we be **“animated to pray by the certain hope of obtaining our requests.”** Calvin

We have lives precious to us in harm's way: Aaron (2x), Andrew (two), Brett, Caleb, Chris, Doug, Douglas, Gareth, Isaac, James, Jeremy (two), Jim, John, Michael, Nicolas, Noah, Paul, Rachel, Robert, Stephen (two). New deployments shown in bold.

- [07/03/10] – Pastor Tom provides this update for Curtis C., USA. His rank is SPC (E-4).
- [07/03/10] – From Pastor David - A young man in our congregation just graduated from the United States Air Force Academy and was commissioned a 2nd Lt. in the US Air Force - Neal T. Neal will start his flight training in January.
- [07/09/10] – From Pastor Howard – He reports that his son Nathaniel began USMC Officer Candidate School this date. Pray for him as he endures the rigors of training.
- [07/30/10] From Chaplain's wife Melanie - Family and Friends, Michael Phillip Hollstein arrived Friday, July 23 at 3:23 a.m.; weighing 6 lbs. 12 oz. and measuring 20 3/4 inches long. He has a full head of hair, blonde around the crown and brown on top. The nurse was calling him Mohawk Michael. Michael was born natural birth. Praise God, Michael is here and we are both healthy!
- After over 25 years of faithful service to our Committee and the Presbyterian and Reformed Joint Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel (PRJCCMP), OPC pastor and retired Navy Chaplain Robert B. Needham (CDR) was not elected at the recent General Assembly. He has served for a number of years as the Chairman of the OPC Committee on Chaplains and Military Personnel (CCMP). Bob has had a hand in almost every written piece of guidance in our Commission's history. Our dear brother has repeatedly demonstrated that he has had a firm grasp of how the chaplaincy works which transferred into wise advice and furthered the effective

work of our chaplains. He accomplished CCMP or PRJCCMP commitments with accurate Biblical thinking and clear written guidance. Bob is a most gracious, encouraging and kind person of sterling integrity, who on countless occasions has provided wise, biblical advice, words of comfort and well selected words of humor to a countless number of friends, colleagues and military personnel. Bob serves as pastor of New Hope OPC in Hanford, California where he continues his community service as a Chaplain (badge no. 1) to the local county sheriff's department. He has served as moderator of half dozen or so sessions in his presbytery. We do not doubt that his advice will be sought in the future. Thank you friend for all of your service, your love, wise advice and encouragement! We are the better for it, and the poorer without your active service with us. [Chaplain Lee collaborated on this section.]

- The CCMP welcomes Chaplain Chris Wisdom (COL, USA) to the committee. Chris has just been extended for one year as Assistant Commandant at the United States Army Chaplain Center and School. Chris adds this request: Please pray for me as this duty has been laborious, complex and difficult for the last three years with no signs of letting up. I need strength that only Christ can give (Philippians 4:13).
- Please continue to pray for one of our warriors who is in much need of prayer for strength to continue in the fight and for true peace of God in his heart. Finally, please continue to pray for a number of our Marines and soldiers probably engaged in current offensives in one of our theaters of operation that God would keep and preserve them!

Chaplains' Reports:

With all of our military might, the greatest weapon we have in the long war against Islamic terrorists is the Sword of the Spirit utilized in the proclamation of the Gospel and empowered by the sovereign Lord of evangelism. The church wields this weapon best when the expectant prayers of His people accompany it. Pray the Lord of the harvest for the success of the Gospel and for more laborers for the harvest, specifically for more chaplains. Plead for a corps of reformed chaplains sufficient to fill every available opening and sufficient to minister to all of our own deployed warriors. Great petitions to Him bring!

CH (MAJ) Earl W. Vanderhoff, USA, Fort Greely, AK (Presbytery of the Northwest) My wife has joined me here in Alaska and enjoys the wilderness setting. We now have two pregnant daughters: we anticipate the addition of grandchildren #'s 15 & 16. We have Soldier and marriage retreats scheduled, and Dave Roever will challenge our people in September. Pray for targeted revival in many hearts. I am holding many counseling sessions for marriages that need to see Jesus as Savior. We are planning active outreach programs that will present the Gospel, and our VBS this summer will bring families to see the Gospel of Jesus and His grace.

PRAYER REQUEST: LTC board results will be published by June. I anticipate a reassignment should the Lord bless me with promotion. Pray for our little congregation that swelled to over 80 on Easter. I am preaching through the Gospel of John; many are encouraged as they are seeing the Eschatological Lamb in new ways. Pray that these will be spiritually fruitful. As I begin an adult Sunday School class on the book of Joshua, pray that hunger for the Word and understanding of the continuity of God's Grace will point us to our Savior. Prayer for revival!

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LCDR (Sel) John A. Carter, CHC, USN, Deployed on the USS Lake Erie (Presbytery of Southern California) We are wrapping up a very satisfying tour aboard the Guided Missile Cruiser at Pearl Harbor. Our next stop is Naval Station Everett in Washington State where I will

report as Command Chaplain in August. We're eagerly anticipating the new assignment in the Pacific Northwest. It is shore duty, so I don't expect to deploy for the next few years. I will be pastoring the Navy Chapel there in Everett. Our new son, Jonathan Andrew, was baptized in the ship's bell aboard USS Lake Erie in April. It was a blessed occasion and was even featured in an article on page 2 of the Hawaii Navy News. We were excited about having the ceremony done in historic fashion according to the old Naval custom. **PRAYER REQUEST:** Please pray for our upcoming transition from Hawaii to Washington. There are a lot of moving parts when it comes to uprooting and moving the whole family. Also pray for our new assignment and new relationships when we get to Everett. Pray for a successful transition and effective ministry.
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Pray that President Barack H. Obama, will guide us as a nation in righteousness that is according to God's Word, and that he will *be just, ruling in the fear of God* (II Sam 23:3b). Pray for those who lead our warriors, from those in the cabinet to the NCO in the field, particularly for all those who name the Name of Christ.

Pray for those who serve us, that their courage, strength and wisdom will not waver or fail, that their actions will be swift, victorious and *bold as a lion* (Proverbs 28:1), that God will grant them safety and bring them home to their families. Pray for their wives and families, that as they are without their loved ones, they may endure and support them. Pray that we will minister to the families in the stead of those who serve. Pray for their testimony to the lost. Please pray both publicly and privately.

Pray that our **chaplains will be bold** in the ministry of the Word – that precious Word that not only tells how we can have life eternal, but also instructs how we are to live! Pray for all our members who serve, that the light of the gospel will burn brightly in their lives.

In His hands,

Robert M. Coie, for the OPC Committee on Chaplains and Military Personnel