

A Plea for Prayer – December, 2015 – No. 155

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: dickinson.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 (I Thessalonians 5:17).*

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Prayer Focus: He leads us in the paths of righteousness Psalms 23:3

The 23rd Psalm is perhaps the most well-known part of scripture in the Bible. As a Chaplain I have given out devotional books to military personnel on the 23rd Psalm. I want to focus on verse 3 which says, "He leads us in the paths of righteousness." Notice this verse does not say that God leads us down the pathway of ease and prosperity, free of disappointments or troubles. Instead David says God leads us down the pathway of righteousness. The pathway of righteousness is the path of being conformed to the image of Christ. It is the path of sanctification and holiness. First Thessalonians 4:3 says, "This is the will of God even our sanctification." We can learn three things about this verse.

This is a path where God is leading us. He has ordered and designed the path which we are to travel. The good and bad that happens to us is not by luck or chance, but it is ordered by the sovereign God. We often have regrets about past decisions, and would love to redo things that did not go well over again, but we must remember all that takes place in our lives is ordered by the sovereign will of God. The path of righteousness is a path of joy mingled with sorrow, good and bad times, successes and disappointments, and prosperity mixed with adversity. Paul says in Romans 8:28, says "we know all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." As military personnel in the OPC we see the leading of God's sovereign hand in our assignment, deployments, promotions and career field. We grumble because we did not get the assignment we wanted, or we don't like our jobs, or we did not get promoted. However it is easy for us to forget that God is in control of our careers and uses the military to lead us down the path of righteousness.

The second thing we see about this verse is that God is with us. The God who leads us is the God who is also with us every step of the way. Some people lead from a distance, but Jesus leads his people through his Spirit that dwells within us. In Psalm 46:5 David said this about the church, "God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved." As military personnel we are constantly moving to different parts of the country and around the world. We often make close friends at a particular assignment, but when we leave to go to another assignment, despite our best efforts, we often lose touch with our friends from previous assignments. However God is with us at every assignment, deployment, and job we hold. It is very difficult to deploy and leave family and friends behind, but we have a Savior who through his Spirit is there to comfort, encourage, and to shed abroad the love of God in our hearts.

Thirdly God leads us for his name's sake. The Good Shepherd purchased and bought his sheep, when he died on the cross for our sins. Christ has promises to never cast off his people. Paul says in Philippians 1:6, "He which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." God has put his name and integrity on the line that he will lead his people. He gets glory as he leads us down the pathway of righteousness. As we are conformed to the image of Christ, he is glorified by the almighty power that he uses to change us. His leading is not ultimately for us, but it is for his own glory and his own name in the world. All honor and praise to the great triune God.

As military personnel let us focus less on our boss, promotion process, and more on the great God who is working a great work of sanctification in us.

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Please pray for our valiant men of war to call out to God continually for strength to enable victory over the enemy and that they will continue to be well equipped for battle. And please pray that our nation will be led by humble leaders who call on the name of the Lord and rule righteously that we might have peace. Please pray that God will *show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him*. Pray that they will fear only God and not man and be of a good courage. Pray that they will be bold as a lion and that the wicked will flee. (Prov. 28:1)

Pray as we battle forces both foreign and domestic in our long war; plead with our God to make a way of escape from defeat, from losing heart in the battle and that in doing so, God will restore us as a nation to His righteousness. Pray for the gracious and needed gift from God of genuine national repentance; especially from the iniquities of abortion, supporting homosexuality, the widespread disregard of the fourth commandment and rejection of the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

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 expression. 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 and for the wounded 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

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Special Note: We are continuing to work through the complete lists of personnel, so if you spot any listed as serving that have retired, transferred to reserve status, been discharged, or that you no longer have any contact with or should be noted as deployed, please let us know of these status. Many thanks for all of you who have graciously responded.

Please see the updated list attached to the separate email "Please Pray for Those Who Server and Their Families".

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We have lives precious to us in harm's way: Cody, Neal and Samuel. New deployments are shown in **bold**.

Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary (of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America) is planning to present their “Faithful Servant Award” this month to Chaplain Bryan J. Weaver (CAPT, USN) for his 30 years of service as a chaplain. Bryan is among the first ten to receive this award. It was previously presented to another OPC minister, missionary Young J. Son. It is presented to alumni “for a lifetime of faithful and fruitful service”. Please continue to pray for the Weavers – for Bryan, his wife Shelly, and sons Grant, Kurt and Trent, for God’s continued healing and sustaining hand on Bryan and strength for primary care giver Shelly.

Please give thanks that LT Cornelius Johnson, CHC, USN has graduated from the Navy Chaplain School. Pray for him and his family as they move to his new duty station at Marine Corps Base Twentynine Palms, CA where he takes up duties as a base chaplain.

Give thanks that CH (CAPT) David M. DeRienzo USA has transitioned to an active duty Army chaplain. He reports to a base in Texas this month. David is a “mustang” who has deployed service as both an enlisted warrior and later chaplain with the Maine Army National Guard.

From Pastor Doug – Please add CDR Warren H. to those serving.

The revision of DADT presents difficulties for many Christians, both those serving in line positions and those serving as chaplains.

Therefore we urge you to pray:

1. For all who serve in our military who name the name of Christ,

2. For all Christian chaplains who serve not only the military but also their churches under creedal statements of faith and belief,
3. That the implementation of this legislation will be just and righteous,
4. That the heretofore moral standards of our military will not be severely denigrated by those of good moral character leaving this godly calling,
5. That the Committee and Commission will have wisdom in order to protect those who serve. Praise God that the Commission has adopted additional protections for our chaplains. Please pray that God will grant a powerful and sustained protection for our chaplains from this revision.
6. That our military, which has taken an oath defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies foreign and domestic, will not be diminished or perish,
7. That this trial will not also in time descend on the pulpits of our land.

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Chaplains' Reports:

CH (CPT) Steve Roberts, Chaplain, 323rd MI BN, Fort Meade, MD. The Lord graciously provided me with a month of annual training orders as Lindsey and I pondered His providence concerning the future. Over the past month, I have filled in for the command Chaplain of the Military Intelligence Readiness Command. In that role, I have engaged in constant counseling, hospital visitations—and lots of prayer along the way! I have been called as an Evangelist to Falls OPC in Wisconsin, where I will begin work in October. I will transfer to a new Army unit out there as well.

Prayer Requests: Praise the Lord for providing me with ample ministry opportunities during this uncertain time! Pray that He would bless both the pastoral and Army transitions to the Midwest for me and my family. Pray that He would continue to grow me and use me to glorify Him and the Gospel of His beloved Son!

Email: Stephen.L.Roberts30.mil@mail.mil

CH (1LT) Mike Myers, SC Army National Guard, Rock Hill, SC. Ministry is going well in my new battalion as my command has been very supportive of my ministry with their Soldiers and flexible in working with me as I balance responsibilities as a pastor. What a blessing to have such liberty to minister to the Word of God to Soldiers and civilians alike!

Prayer Requests: Please pray for continued work and effectiveness with my BN in GA. Pray that my promotion will finally come through and that baby number four will arrive safely in early November.

Email: Michael.l.myers154.mil@mail.mil

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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, Richard M. Dickinson, for the OPC Committee on Chaplains and Military Personnel with the Prayer Focus by LT Cornelius Johnson, CHC, USN