A PLEA for PRAYER – March 2, 2013 - No. 122

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 (I Thessalonians 5:17).

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore. (Psalm 133:1-3)

Prayer focus: Dwelling in Unity – As you will see in a report below, our meetings of the OPC Committee on Chaplains and Military Personnel (CCMP) and our joint Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel (PRCCMP), just completed, went extremely well and were productive. It is always like precious ointment when there is a well founded unity in Biblical truth and a common purpose in the work of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the several years this member has served in this multi-denomination environment, this has much more often been the case than not. In circles where there is uncertainty over creedal unity, sadly such unity does not always prevail. It is a vivid reminder of the benefits and blessings of firm subscription in our standards – not just in true peace for the moment, but unanimity of purpose in the task of the work of the church. Please pray that this true peace would prevail in our churches, our whole denomination, and with a renewal of the success of the Gospel, also prevail in God’s mercy to our whole nation.

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 shew 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 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

We have lives precious to us in harm’s way: Aaron, Andrew (two), Berch, Bowe, Brett, Bryan, Chris, Christopher, Cornelius, Doug, Douglas, Gabriel, Isaac, Jack, Jim, John, Nicolas, Noah, Paul (two), Phil, Rachel, Ray, Reservist R, Robert (two), Scott, Sebastian, Stephen (two), and Timothy. New deployments shown in bold. Nathan was not deployed as noted below.

• From his family – In light of certain recent political developments, it appears the negotiations for SGT Bowe Bergdahl’s release by the Taliban are ongoing, with assurances for Bowe’s safety being made recently by the Taliban leadership. Please pray for God’s continued protection over him and for his release soon. [Bowe has been a prisoner of war since June 30, 2009. On our recent trip, we met a warrior who had just said goodbye to his wife and new infant son now deploying for a one year tour. He spotted my wrist band reminding of Bowe’s captivity and remarked that Bowe’s picture is all over his stateside base – not forgotten! May it be so until his release!]

• [2/2/13] - From his dad - I thought I would quickly respond before leaving for work this morning regarding our son CW2 Nathan B. status, for as you may recall that on my last update Nathan was slated to deploy with his unit very soon, but now the Lord has been pleased to grant that Nathan was not deployed with his outfit although he is saddened at this he is also glad to embark on his new mission to train as a flight instructor; I am very thankful of course. I pray that all is well with you and thank you for your work in the Lord Jesus Christ!

• [2/15/13] - From his stepdad Ed - I want to give you an update on Albert V. who was wounded in Afghanistan last June. He is doing very well and is back home in Idaho. He has finished his surgeries and through some physical therapy has been gaining much of the strength and use of his left arm and hand. He may always have some numbness on the top of his hand and forearm and may not get back 100% of the strength in his arm but he is doing very well. His attitude is excellent. Recently he was flown to Texas to meet his unit from the Idaho National Guard who were to return from Afghanistan on February 9. This will be our last update to the Plea for Prayer for Al. We are most grateful for your prayers and concerns and thank you very very much. We pray that this experience will draw him closer to our Lord. [Praise God for His healing mercies!]

• [2/24/13] CW04 John C. USN Ret., now a civilian contractor working in an Intensive Care Unit at an Air Force base, asks for prayer for his wife in nursing their prematurely born baby daughter, her first, as “the baby isn’t responding exactly as do normal gestational babies. She was born by C-section on the 11th. Mercy went into preeclampsia and had to have the baby
removed fast. Baby was in NICU for 10 days and now is home with mother and baby doing well." [Praise God for his care thus far and please pray for His future care!]

• Martin Dawson, civilian chaplain in New Jersey, renounced the jurisdiction of the OPC on 9 September 2012 and his name was erased from the roll by the Presbytery on 23 February 2013.

• Last month we asked for prayer for our now just completed OPC CCMP and PRCCMP meetings. We asked that they would be fruitful and that all the business before these men would be handled well in the short time we have to do the work together and in particular for the Commissioners and Staff that they will work together well and complete all of the work on our agendas. We are delighted to report that these prayers were well answered. With new Commissioners from all the other four denominations participating, we welcomed the ARPC for the first time, new brothers from the KAPC, the RPCNA and the PCA. Our own newest member (Ch Cornelius Johnson) was deployed. Thanks to the able leadership of our Chairman, we were ahead of schedule when we arrived at the debatable matters and were able to come to wonderful unanimity on action items. Please continue to pray for our committees as they work to finalize actions for ratification shortly during a telephone conference and as each denomination prepares to report to their respective General Assemblies or Synods. *How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!* One item that needs great wisdom is how we might respond to the startling increase of rape of women particularly in combat zones in our Armed Forces.

• 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 by serving in one of the last bastions of the defense of freedom, 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:
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!
LCDR John Carter, CHC, USN, Command Chaplain at Naval Station Everett, Everett, WA (Presbytery of Southern California) With an Army reserve center opening right next door to our NAVSTA Chapel, I'm in negotiations with their Chaplains on cooperative ministry and the joint use of the NAVSTA Chapel. There is some potential for some great ministry projects here. However there are a lot of superiors on both sides that need to come into agreement. We're drafting a MOU to clarify our roles and formalize our agreement. On a personal note, in the last few months our 18 yr old son finished high school, attained the rank of Eagle Scout in the BSA, completed USCG boot camp, and is now assigned to the USCGC Mackinaw in Cheboygan, MI.

PRAYER REQUESTS: Please pray for wisdom as we search for the best way forward.
E-Mail: john.a.carter1@navy.mil

CH (MAJ) Paul Berghaus, USA, Advanced Civil School (ACS) Program, Texas A&M, Texas (Presbytery of the Midwest) Our family is enjoying life in College Station, TX, and thankful to share this year together as a family back in school. It's neat to see our boys growing closer to one another as they get older; they definitely keep us on our toes also. Mary has been making some new friends at church (Westminster PCA), and I'm enjoying my ACS program at A&M. My first semester in the M.A. philosophy program has been successful, and I'm making good progress on my thesis writing. We're waiting to hear where our utilization assignment will be. PRAYER REQUESTS: Please pray for the Lord's will in leading us to our next assignment. Pray also for the Lord to work mightily in the hearts of our boys so they would love and serve Him all their days, and that this year will truly be a sabbatical for us.
E-Mail: paul.berghaus@us.army.mil

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