

A PLEA for PRAYER – November 5, 2013 - No. 130

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).*

Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images. Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them (Isaiah 42:5-9).

Prayer Focus: The New Covenant - As chaplains, at times, we get very consumed and worried about our careers, promotions, and assignments, but these things while important are not the ultimate reason that God called us to be chaplains. The reason for our calling is found in Isaiah 42:5-9 and that is to preach the gospel of peace to the world. Isaiah, in chapter 42, prophesies about the coming of Jesus. During the time of Isaiah, God's judgment was on his people because of their covenantal unfaithfulness to him. However, God has a message of good news to the future exiles that he has not fully cast off his people.

God lays out his case against those who were following dumb worthless idols. He declares that he alone is the true God. Isaiah 42:5 says, "Thus says God the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it." God reminds his people that he is the sovereign God who created all things in heaven and earth. He continues to declare in verse 5, "who gives breath to the people on it, and spirit to those who walk on it". He is indeed the giver and sustainer of all things in this universe. Paul says in Acts 17:25, "He gives to all life, breath, and all things."

This sovereign God called his Son into the world to tell people about the covenant of peace. He says in verse 6, "I will keep you and give you as a covenant to the people." What covenant did God have in view? It was the new or everlasting covenant. The meaning of the new covenant is found in Jeremiah 31:33, "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Jesus came to declare and invite sinners to receive the terms of the covenant, which is faith and repentance in him. This covenant was based on his sacrificial work on the cross. God said that his Son, proclaiming the terms of the covenant in verses 6 and 7, would do two things. First, it would provide light to the

Gentiles who were walking in spiritual darkness and ignorance as they followed dumb idols, and secondly, it would free them from Satan and sin's prison house.

However, when Christ died his work did not stop, but he commissioned his preachers to go into the world, and declare the covenant of peace. He promises that he would be with us through his spirit as we proclaim the gospel. As reformed chaplains, our primary mission is to go to military communities, hospitals, jails, and many other places, to preach the terms of the covenant to those who are blinded by sin, and those who walk in darkness. Our message is not merely to tell people how to deal with stress and problems, but to share with them the light of the gospel, and to free them from Satan's prison. We have the promise that our message will not return back void, because as sinners turn to him so that God is glorified. God says in verse 8, "I am the Lord and that is my name; and my glory I will not give to another, nor my praise to carved images."

Churches, please pray for Chaplains as they bring the message of glad tidings of the new covenant, and that God would be pleased through the message we preach to liberate sinners from the prison house of sin.

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: Andrew (two), Bowe, Brett, Bryan, Chris, Christopher, Daniel, David (two), Doug, Douglas, Gabriel, Isaac, Jack, Jim, John, Nathan, Nicolas, Noah, Paul (two), Rachel, Ray, Reservist R, Robert (two), Scott, Sebastian, Stephen (three), and Timothy. New deployments shown in bold. Please pray for the three chaplains deployed in harm's way: David DeRienzo and Stephen Roberts. Chaplain Phil Holstein has returned safely.

• From his family – After information that was private was posted online, prisoner of war Army SGT Bowe Bergdahl's family released the following statement: "Through the International

Committee of the Red Cross, we recently (1st quarter 2013) received a letter we're confident was written to us by our son Bowe. Our family is greatly relieved and encouraged by this letter, which gives us hope that Bowe is doing as well as can be expected under the circumstances. We thank the ICRC for all their assistance and support over these past four years. We want to also thank the many individuals, private groups and agencies who are working to support us and bring Bowe home. We hope Bowe's captors will again consider his parents' plea to release him, but in the meantime, we ask that you please continue to keep him in good health and allow him to keep corresponding with us." [Bowe has been a prisoner of war since June 30, 2009.]

- [10/05/13] - From his mom, Laura – Thank you for sending [the *Plea*]. An update on our son, David R. - He has been promoted to Sergeant.
- From Pastor Steve – Telling of the promotion of John F., USN to Commander.
- From now Major Tim Anderson USAF, Retired - Thank you so much for keeping this going. It has been encouraging to me throughout the years. I am writing you to tell you that I am now retired from the Air Force. I was retired at the first of this month after more than 21 years. I am thankful to have served, but it was time to move on... Thank you again for all the encouragement while I was in. I deployed to Afghanistan for a year in 2011-2012. It was a long time and the monthly encouragement in your email and knowing that God's people were praying made a huge difference especially in the hard times.

Our congratulations to all in these milestones of service!

- We have two new chaplains and a new chaplain candidate:
 - Pastor Douglas W. Snyder serving as Indiana University of PA Police Chaplain
 - Chaplain (Lt.Col.) Richard M. Dickerson, MEANG Ret, now serving as a Disaster Response Chaplain
 - Chaplain Candidate 1LT Andrew Barshinger USAR
- 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.



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 Capt C. Phillip (Phil) Hollstein III, USAF, Deployed (Presbytery of Southern California)

We are glad to report that Phil has arrived safely back at his home base. Praise God for His mercies!

Ch Capt Cornelius Johnson, USAF, MacDill AFB, Tampa, FL (Presbytery of New Jersey)

We have moved from Langley AFB, Virginia to MacDill AFB in Tampa Florida. Our time at Langley was a great blessing, and had some great ministry opportunities. We are looking forward to serving the Lord at MacDill. I will be very busy. It is a small staff but a big base.

PRAYER REQUESTS: Please pray that God's presence would be with my family in our move to Tampa. Also pray that we find a place to live and that God would use our ministry to bless the people at MacDill.

E-Mail: cornelius.johnson@us.af.mil

CH (COL) Chris Wisdom, USA, Installation Management Command, Europe Region, Germany (Presbytery of the Southwest)

I have been accepted into the PhD historical studies program at University of Chester, Cheshire, England, through one of their associated schools, Wales Evangelical School of Theology (WEST) for study during the first years of my retirement. WEST has been approved to accept GI Bill students, and I have applied to use my benefits. No rocking chairs for this retiree! **PRAYER REQUESTS:** Please pray for the long-term convalescence and recovery of my colleague at work. A catastrophic bicycle accident badly injured him and he will require a lot of time for therapy and healing. Pray for my transition to retirement in the next six months.

E-Mail: christopher.h.wisdom.mil@mail.mil

CH (CPT) Kenny Honken SDARNG, 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, Sioux Falls, SD (Presbytery of the Dakotas)

In addition to my full time function as a Federal Prison chaplain, I continue to serve as a National Guard chaplain. I am learning a lot about inmates and the correctional environment. One of the most important things I've learned about inmates is their need for the influence of people with healthy boundaries in their lives. There is always a balance between "cop" and "pastor" in a place like this. Currently, my supervisor and I are preparing for Program Review, which is an internal audit of how well we provide religious services to the inmate population. **PRAYER REQUESTS:** Please pray for our Program Review, that we would meet or exceed all the requirements for our vital functions. Additionally, please pray for my new role as a Brigade Chaplain in the National Guard. Pray that I would be a good pastor to the battalion Chaplains in our brigade.

E-Mail: kenny.honken@us.army.mil

CH (1LT) David DeRienzo, Maine National Guard, Gardiner, ME (Presbytery of New York and New England)

David, who is presently deployed, has asked for supplies and materials for his unit. If you are interested in helping, please either contact us, or Chaplain DeRienzo for a list.

E-Mail: david.m.derienzo.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, Robert M. Coie, for the OPC Committee on Chaplains and Military Personnel, with monthly Prayer Focus by Ch Capt. Cornelius Johnson, USAF.