

## A PLEA for PRAYER – August 2, 2014 - No. 139

**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).

*A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.* (Proverbs 1:5; 9:10) Please also read 2 Timothy 1-14.

### **Prayer focus: Words of Christ to Ponder in the Context of Our Sinful Society**

*Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.* (Matthew 12:38-41)

During his public ministry here on earth, our Lord Jesus spoke many compelling and wise words for those with "ears to hear." Not the least of these are his solemn words of warning that the "men of Nineveh shall stand up with this generation at the judgment and shall condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here" (v.41).

In condemning the attitudes and thinking of "this generation" Christ was calling them (indeed all of us), to consider praying for, and exercising, the redeeming grace of genuine repentance. What makes the record of the men of Nineveh so compelling an example is the nature of their repentance, given the way Jonah proclaimed God's incipient judgment against them with not a word of hope.

Ponder this. Jonah had no compassion or heart of mercy for the Ninevites, no gospel instruction, no offer of instruction to that pagan city of the meaning of biblical repentance, no love for the lost, no desire to see them pardoned, no variation in his minimal message of doom. Yet they repented, from the king down to the lowest beggar, even to putting sackcloth on the

animals (Jonah 3:5-9).

To put it another way, the men of Nineveh, with no knowledge of the mighty works of God, no knowledge of the history of God's saving the Israelites out of Egypt, no knowledge of great prophetic gospel passages of Scripture (such as Isaiah 53) nevertheless grasped the essence of true repentance better than most of the Jews, who had the prophets, the books of Moses, the Psalms, the histories of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah, and most of all, the Messiah Himself! Truly they (and we) have One immeasurably greater than Jonah calling all men everywhere to repent. Today we live in a culture which has essentially lost an understanding of the nature and importance of God-given repentance unto life.

Clearly our Savior's message was, and is, a call to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, seeking a heart of godly sorrow for our own sins, and the sins of our society in which we live, which parallel the sinful state of Nineveh and of Israel during Christ's ministry there. What a privilege to know that "having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent" (Acts 17:30). What a privilege to know that Jesus, unlike the harshness with which Jonah spoke to the people of Nineveh, graciously calls us to come unto Him, all who are weary and heavily laden, and He will give us rest (Matthew 11:28).

A final thought for all who are called to the Christian ministry. We have the example of the ultimate prophet who comes in the abundant love and grace and truth of His heavenly Father. Hopefully this will, stir us up to fervently preach the gospel of God's redeeming grace of faith in Jesus, and godly sorrow for our sins which brings His rich forgiveness and the peace of God which passes all understanding. Let us earnestly pray for a true revival, which if God grants it, will undoubtedly begin with times of repentance and refreshment in those churches which are faithful to Jesus Christ.

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

We have lives precious to us in harm’s way: Andrew (two), Brett, Bryan, Chris, Christopher, Daniel, David (two), Doug, Douglas, Gabriel, Isaac, Jack, Jim, John, Nicolas, Noah, Paul (two), Rachel, Ray, Robert (two), Scott, Sebastian, Stephen (two), and Timothy. New deployments are shown in bold.

- [07/06/14] From Pastor Doug: Thanks again for your diligence and perseverance with the prayer list. We welcome LtCol (Sel) Toby C., who has just been stationed here in Hawaii and has begun attending Redeemer OPC. His family will join him on July 15.
- [07/09/14] From CH (CPT) David DeRienzo: Just wanted to let you know I am back in the great state of Maine with Afghanistan now in the rear view mirror. Feels good!
- 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:

**CDR Tim Power, CHC, USN, 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment, Camp Pendleton, CA (Presbytery of Southern California)** I’ve prepared two more ministry units (Chaplain and Religious Program Specialist) to accompany their battalions on routine overseas expeditionary deployments. That’s a total of three since I arrived last year. Since Camp San Mateo where my regiment is located has a chapel, I also lead worship the majority of the time while I am aided by the battalion Chaplains when available. The worship occurs on Sunday evenings with a meal beforehand. The family has been welcomed back to San Diego with warmth and acceptance. Our church associations at New Life La Mesa are strong. **PRAYER REQUESTS:** Please pray for our ministries. Pray for safety and good use of my time including listening to books on CDs, during my long commute each day of around 120 miles with only Saturday consistently as a day of liberty. Pray for my unit as it undergoes transitions and as it learns to train for other significant missions besides the combat ones we’ve trained for during the last decade.

**EMAIL:** [timothy.power@usmc.mil](mailto:timothy.power@usmc.mil)

**CH (MAJ) Earl Vanderhoff, USA, March Reserve Air Base, Riverside, CA (Presbytery of the Northwest)** In January my mom went to worship Jesus face to face. My dad asked me to perform the memorial service in ASU. Hundreds in my home town heard the Gospel in honor of my mom’s faith! We will move this summer because my current position is designed to rotate among the services every 3 years. (I got to stay an extra year for the Army.) I dislocated my

right elbow in January and may be facing ulna collateral ligament (UCL) surgical repair. I continue to have issues from a TBI with sleep apnea and damage in my neck and back. We await the LTC CH board results and our new assignment. **PRAYER REQUESTS:** Please pray for J & M (real names withheld) as I fight with spiritual weapons for the glory of God and complete reconciliation of their marriage and with the children who have been damaged emotionally. Pray for God's leading into ministry of His choosing after retirement in 3 years.

**EMAIL:** [earl.vanderhoff@dma.mil](mailto:earl.vanderhoff@dma.mil)

**CH (COL) Jonathan C. Gibbs III, USA, Command Chaplain, Third Army/USARCENT, SC (Presbytery of Philadelphia)** After 25 years of active duty service, I will be retiring from the Army Chaplain Corps effective 1 September 2014. It has been an amazing time to have been in the Army with many changes over the years. It has been an honor and a privilege to have served the many soldiers, family members and DA civilians whose lives have touched my own. I have also had wonderful opportunities to work with many great chaplains in both peacetime and in war and to have seen God bless our mutual labors in ways I could never imagine. Blessings to all my fellow PRCC chaplains as you continue to serve the Lord in whatever portion of the vineyard he has placed you. **PRAYER REQUESTS:** For a smooth transition to civilian life. For wisdom in seeking God's will for future service. We will be moving from Sumter to Columbia, SC for the immediate future while we figure out a permanent retirement venue.

**EMAIL:** [jcgibbsiii@gmail.com](mailto:jcgibbsiii@gmail.com)

**Note from the Committee:** In all of our lives, be they humbly obscure, or prominent God is sovereignly pleased to bring us to significant milestones from time to time. And one such is the planned September retirement of Chaplain (COL) Jonathan Gibbs. We praise God for his abundant enabling grace given to Jonathan throughout his years on active duty, and especially when he was serving in harm's way. As Jonathan and his wife Marion contemplate not only relocation, but a significant change in lifestyle, please remember them before the Throne of Grace, that God will graciously direct their paths, lead in their decisions, and in all their transition grant them abundant peace, joy and divine favor.

**CAPT Bryan J. Weaver, CHC, USN, aka Battle Chaps, receives the John H. Craven Servant Leadership Award.**

Since a large segment of the Prayer Plea rightfully encourages earnest prayer about personal concerns and the public evils which we regularly encounter as Christians in our very sinful culture, it is a great blessing when a member of the church is appropriately recognized for Christ-honoring ministry, for which we all have reason to praise God and give him heartfelt thanks.

The particular instance of this kind of blessing that we want to note occurred on 18 July, at the Parris Island, S.C. Marine Corps Recruit Depot when Chaplain Bryan J. Weaver was presented with the John H. Craven Servant Leadership Award for exemplary servant leadership by the Chief of Navy Chaplains Mark Tidd.

Each recipient of this award (which is presented annually) is chosen by his peers (!) which adds to the lustre of its meaningful recognition of an individual's extraordinary service to both God and country. We are delighted on behalf of our brother, grateful to our LORD for granting Bryan the will and the grace to serve others selflessly, especially in combat circumstances, and pray that this will be a significant encouragement to him at this time in his life when he is facing serious physical problems. May this also be an encouragement to each of us to remember this beloved brother daily before the throne of grace. For a full article about the award, go to

<http://www.mcrdpi.marines.mil/News/NewsArticleDisplay/tabid/4286/Article/168191/battle-chaps-recognized-for-years-of-selfless-service.aspx>

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 the Prayer Theme by Robert B. Needham.