



**CHAPLAIN  
PROGRAM ACTION PLAN 2017-2018**

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY  
DEPARTMENT OF KANSAS**

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Dear Chaplains of the Kansas American Legion Auxiliary:

Congratulations on your election to the office of Chaplain! Serving as a Chaplain is one of the most rewarding experiences for a member of the American Legion Auxiliary. As the preamble of the American Legion Auxiliary begins, "For God and Country...", Senior and Junior Chaplains serve an important role in the Units, District, Department, and National levels.

I have prepared this manual for you to help you in completing your responsibilities as Chaplain whether that is for your Unit or District. I have also included the reporting forms as well as the rules for a Prayer Book along with the judging sheet. Most of the Prayers and Ceremonies were compiled by the 2005-06 National Chaplain Rosey Newman for our use. I hope you find them helpful.

As a Chaplain for the American Legion Auxiliary, you must remember not to offend anyone as we do not promote any one religion. Chaplains reach out, not only to the American Legion Family, but also to all those with needs in their communities, states, and nation. Chaplains at the unit, department, and national levels serve alongside their fellow members and are called upon to pray at gatherings and to lead services such as memorials for our fallen soldiers and deceased members. They energize the hearts of Auxiliary members and foster selflessness as they serve veterans, the military and their families.

Your objectives as a Chaplain should be: (1) to pray for our members and leaders that they will do the job being asked of them this coming year; (2) to guide members through prayers that are appropriate for the situation; and (3) to act as the spiritual ambassador of the organization.

Through various means of communication, the Chaplain should:

-  Provide and promote the emotional and spiritual support needed for the Legion Family through e-mails, cards, and prayers.
-  Educate members on the diversity of all faiths and cultures.
-  Reconnect with the master of might and promote our founding fathers' desire to create one nation under God.
-  Be responsible for all invocations, benedictions and memorial services for deceased members at official meetings.
-  Recommend educational materials that promote a spirit of unity and love.
-  Provide fellowship and spiritual events to help the Unit/District/Department grow spiritually.

Enjoy your Service as Chaplain,

Paula Sellens, Department Chaplain 2017-18  
American Legion Auxiliary

# HISTORY OF CHAPLAIN

By John Kulp, MACA Chief of Chaplains

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The title of Chaplain (latin cappelani) originated in the fourth century. Chaplains are named after the "Chapels" that they had responsibility for. Chapels themselves were named after a religious relic called the cappella, a half cape worn by St. Martin. Other religious relics were added to the collection and stored in the chapel as well. The ministers and priests that cared for the chapel were appointed by the king to guard the relics.

Charlemagne started the practice of keeping the relics and the Chaplains in his palace. Since few people were educated at that time, priests and ministers composed the majority of the educated class. Charlemagne not only used them as keepers of the relics but to preside over religious services, helped with bookkeeping and the writing of histories and personal documents of the emperor. They were also advisors to the king on both religious and non-religious issues.

Kings all over Christian Europe adopted the practice of appointing Chaplains as religious advisors. They were also appointed to bishoprics and many of the high offices of the church. The appointments of Chaplains by kings and nobility led to their appointment in the military as well as other institutions, such as hospitals, prisons, schools, colleges, universities, embassies, legations and corporations.

During the reformation, this practice was adopted by the Protestants as well. Oliver Cromwell, who was a parliamentary leader of the armies that overthrew the English monarchy became *Lord Protector* of England, Scotland, and Ireland from 1653 to 1658. Cromwell appointed John Owen as his Chaplain and later as Dean of Oxford. John Owen was a prolific puritan writer of practical theology.

Most Americans are familiar with the idea of the military Chaplain. Their primary duties have included the providing of religious services, advising their commanders on religious, moral and morale issues; providing religious education, counseling, and emotional support to the people and families of their military units.

<http://www.christianblackbeltassoc.org/chhistory.htm>

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY  
DEPARTMENT OF KANSAS  
CHAPLAIN PROGRAM ACTION PLAN 2017-18**

As the preamble of the American Legion Auxiliary begins, “For God and Country...”, Senior and Junior Chaplains serve an important role in the Units, District, Department, and National levels.

Responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Open and close all meetings with prayer and/or inspirational thoughts. Always be prepared to offer prayer at any Unit, Post, or Community function.  
All prayers must be non-denominational. Resources include: Chaplain’s Prayer Book, American Legion Auxiliary National News, prayers given to you by others (please acknowledge source if not original), and your own created or favorite.
2. Send Get Well, Thinking of You, Sympathy, Congratulations, and other cards when appropriate.
3. Visit members and Veterans as appropriate when sick, hospitalized, or at nursing homes. Attend funerals when possible. Offer to say a prayer with the person/family before you leave.
4. Acknowledge the death of a member by holding or assisting a Memorial Service for the deceased member. As Chaplain, you may decide to conduct one service at the end of the year for the deceased member(s).
5. Unit Chaplains should send Deceased Members name(s) to the District Chaplain, so the District Chaplain can forward the list to the Department Chaplain. Do not wait until the end of the year to send the names along with the Unit and, if known, the years of membership.
6. Promote and participate in the Four Chaplains Service, Flag disposal, Initiation Ceremony for new members, and other patriotic ceremonies. Include juniors in ceremonies when possible.
7. Compile a Prayer Book for your Unit, District, or Junior President. Submit it at Convention. Remember to keep all prayers non-denominational. Please follow all the rules for your Prayer Book.
8. Give a Prayer Feather to a unit member who has demonstrated having achieved an auxiliary goal.
9. Year-End Reports:  
Complete Unit Chaplain’s Year End Report to the District Chaplain, so District Chaplain can submit Year End Report to the Department Chaplain.  
Prayer Book Deadline: Opening of Convention

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY  
DISTRICT CHAPLAIN – YEAR-END REPORT 2017-2018**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ District # \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

How many Units Reported? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many Units opened & closed meetings with a Prayer? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many Chaplains were called upon to deliver a prayer other than at Unit meetings?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Describe. \_\_\_\_\_

How many Cards were sent by the Chaplain?  
Thinking of You Cards? \_\_\_\_\_ Congratulations Cards? \_\_\_\_\_  
Sympathy Cards? \_\_\_\_\_ Get Well Cards? \_\_\_\_\_  
Birthday Cards? \_\_\_\_\_ Anniversary Cards? \_\_\_\_\_  
Other Cards? \_\_\_\_\_

How many Units visited the sick? \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Visits: \_\_\_\_\_ Hours: \_\_\_\_\_  
How many Units conducted a Memorial/Funeral Service or draped a Charter? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many Units Participated in, or conducted services for the Four Chaplains? \_\_\_\_\_  
What other activities/ceremonies did the Chaplain report participating in?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Were Junior Members included in ceremonies? \_\_\_\_\_ How many? \_\_\_\_\_  
If so, describe. \_\_\_\_\_

How many Unit members received a Prayer Feather for having achieved an auxiliary goal? \_\_\_\_\_

How many Units participated in, or conducted a service on:  
Memorial: \_\_\_\_\_ Veterans Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Independence Day \_\_\_\_\_

How many Units participated in “Wreaths Across America” \_\_\_\_\_ Flag Day \_\_\_\_\_  
Eisenhower Pilgrimage \_\_\_\_\_ POW/MIA \_\_\_\_\_ Pearl Harbor Day \_\_\_\_\_  
Others, please list: \_\_\_\_\_

How many Units used Reflections from National News? \_\_\_\_\_

How many Units prepared a Prayer Book for the Unit President? \_\_\_\_\_

How many Units submitted a Prayer Book for Competition? \_\_\_\_\_

How many Units submitted Prayers to Department Chaplain? \_\_\_\_\_

As District Chaplain, did you prepare a Prayer Book for the District President? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, did you submit it for competition at Department? \_\_\_\_\_

***Please include a list of all deceased members for your District.***

Send report to Paula Sellens, Department Chaplain at [werchaps@cox.net](mailto:werchaps@cox.net) or 513 Andrew St. Dodge City, KS by May 1, 2018. Please remember, if your reports reach the Department Chaplain after the May 1st due date, your information may not be reported. If you have any questions, please contact me.

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY  
UNIT CHAPLAIN – YEAR-END REPORT 2017-2018**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Unit # \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Did you open & close each meeting with a Prayer? YES NO How many? \_\_\_\_\_  
Did you, as Chaplain, deliver a prayer at any other event besides a Unit meeting? \_\_\_\_\_  
If yes, describe event: \_\_\_\_\_

As Chaplain, how many Cards were sent on behalf of the Unit?  
Thinking of You Cards? \_\_\_\_\_ Congratulations Cards? \_\_\_\_\_  
Sympathy Cards? \_\_\_\_\_ Get Well Cards? \_\_\_\_\_  
Birthday Cards? \_\_\_\_\_ Anniversary Cards? \_\_\_\_\_  
Other Cards? \_\_\_\_\_

As Chaplain, how many times did you visit the sick? \_\_\_\_\_ Hours? \_\_\_\_\_  
Did your Unit conduct a Memorial/Funeral Service or drape a Charter? YES NO  
Memorials donated to? Please list. \_\_\_\_\_  
Did your Unit participate in or conduct services for the Four Chaplains? YES NO  
What other activities/ceremonies did the Unit Chaplain participate?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Were Junior Members included in ceremonies? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, how many? \_\_\_\_\_  
Describe ceremony. \_\_\_\_\_

Did your Units participate in, or conduct a service on:  
Memorial Day: YES NO Veterans Day: YES NO Independence Day YES NO  
Did your Unit participate in "Wreaths Across America"? YES NO  
POW/MIA \_\_\_\_\_ Pearl Harbor Day \_\_\_\_\_ Flag Day \_\_\_\_\_  
Others, please list: \_\_\_\_\_  
Did you use Reflections from National News? YES NO  
As Chaplain, did you prepare a Prayer Book for the Unit President? YES NO  
If yes, will the Unit Prayer Book be presented to the District Chaplain for Competition at  
the District Convention? YES NO  
How many Unit members submitted Prayers to Department Chaplain? \_\_\_\_\_

***Please include a list of all deceased members for your District and designate JR/SR.***

Send report to District Chaplain Paula Sellens, \_\_\_\_\_  
by \_\_\_\_\_.

Please remember, if your reports reach the District Chaplain after that date, your  
information may not be reported.

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY  
JUNIOR CHAPLAIN – YEAR-END REPORT 2017-2018**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Unit # \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_

Did you open & close each meeting with a Prayer? YES NO How many? \_\_\_\_\_

Did you, as Chaplain, deliver a prayer at any other event besides meetings? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, describe event: \_\_\_\_\_

As Chaplain, how many Cards were sent?

Thinking of You Cards? \_\_\_\_\_ Congratulations Cards? \_\_\_\_\_

Sympathy Cards? \_\_\_\_\_ Get Well Cards? \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday Cards? \_\_\_\_\_ Anniversary Cards? \_\_\_\_\_

Other Cards? \_\_\_\_\_

As Chaplain, how many times did you visit the sick? \_\_\_\_\_ Hours? \_\_\_\_\_

Did you assist in any Memorial/Funeral Service or draped a Charter? YES NO

Memorials donated to? Please list. \_\_\_\_\_

Did you participate in a service for the Four Chaplains? YES NO

What other activities/ceremonies did Junior members or you, as Chaplain, participate?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Where Junior Members included in ceremonies? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, how many? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, describe ceremony. \_\_\_\_\_

Did you use Prayer Sticks/Inspirational messages? \_\_\_\_\_ Describe how they were used.  
\_\_\_\_\_

Did Junior Members participate in a service on:

Memorial: YES NO Veterans Day: YES NO Independence Day YES NO

Others, please list: \_\_\_\_\_

Did you use Reflections from National News? YES NO

As Chaplain, did you prepare a Prayer Book? YES NO

If yes, will the Prayer Book be presented for Competition at Convention? YES NO

***Please include a list of all deceased members..***

Send report to Chaplain Paula Sellens, 513 Andrew St, Dodge City, Ks 67801 by May 1, 2018.

Please remember, it is important that your reports be received on time.

## **PRAYER BOOK**

The Chaplain does not make the Prayer Book alone. It is a collection of prayers, devotional thoughts and poems that mean something special to the Unit members. The Chaplain and members may write their own prayers or devotional thoughts for the book. All members should be asked to give the Chaplain something for the prayer book.

Please provide Prayers to the Unit Chaplain, District Chaplain, and Department Chaplain.

The Chaplain may want to type the material she receives, but it is not necessary. She may want to add pictures that go along with the prayer, a devotional thought, or poem. She may decide to use some decorative paper.

A great source for the Prayer Book is the church bulletins from Sunday morning. Many churches use bulletins that have a picture on the cover with a devotional thought or Bible verse. Ask members to save these for you. You can then neatly put the whole front page in your book if you desire. (Be sure to glue it to another piece of paper.)

Making a Prayer Book is a enjoyable job. Be sure to enjoy every minute of it.

Suggestions:

1. The book cover can be bought from National Emblem Sales. It needs to have the Auxiliary emblem on the cover.
2. The book cover can be a three-ring binder and decorated.
3. Prayers, devotional thoughts, and poems are to be collected from members.  
Note: If it is a not an original Prayer, devotional thought, or poem, make a notation of the member who submitted it and also give credit to the source.
4. The book can be typed, handwritten, or a mixture.
5. Pictures may be used.
6. The book must contain the Pledge of Allegiance and Preamble to the Constitution.
7. The book must contain a cover page with Chaplain's name, address, Unit number, District number and Department.
8. The book must have a dedication in the front.

# DISTRICT PRAYER BOOK COMPETITION

**DISTRICT NUMBER** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHAPLAIN** \_\_\_\_\_

|   | Points Received | Points Possible |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Format of Prayer Book  | _____           | (10)            |
| a. Cover  |                 |                 |
| a) White, 3 ring binder/notebook  |                 |                 |
| b) Auxiliary Emblem on the cover  |                 |                 |
| c) Optional: Cover illustrated/decorated  |                 |                 |
| b. Pages - 8.5" x 11" pages   |                 |                 |
| 2. Title Page (first page of book)  | _____           | (10)            |
| a. Dedication or "To the Memory of _____"   |                 |                 |
| b. Chaplain's name, address, District number, and Department.   |                 |                 |
| c. Current Year   |                 |                 |
| 3. Section I.   | _____           | (10)            |
| a. Pledge of Allegiance.  |                 |                 |
| b. Preamble to the Constitution.  |                 |                 |
| 4. Section II   | _____           | (35)            |
| a. Prayers  |                 |                 |
| b. Devotional thoughts  |                 |                 |
| c. Poems  |                 |                 |
| Note: Prayers, devotional thoughts, and poems were collected from members. Member submitting the entry is noted.    |                 |                 |
| Note: If not an original Prayer, devotional thought, or poem, the source is credited.                               |                 |                 |
| 5. Prayer Book appropriately and attractively decorated. Pictures/graphics are used appropriately to enhance entry. | _____           | (15)            |
| 6. Entries are legible whether typed, handwritten, or a mixture. The book is neat and grammar free.                 | _____           | (10)            |
| 7. Other unique qualities.  | _____           | (10)            |
| TOTAL POINTS RECEIVED: _____ OUT OF 100 POSSIBLE.   |                 |                 |

# UNIT PRAYER BOOK COMPETITION

UNIT NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

CHAPLAIN \_\_\_\_\_

|   | Points Received | Points Possible |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Format of Prayer Book  | _____           | (10)            |
| a. Cover  |                 |                 |
| d) White, 3 ring binder/notebook  |                 |                 |
| e) Auxiliary Emblem on the cover  |                 |                 |
| f) Optional: Cover illustrated/decorated  |                 |                 |
| b. Pages - 8.5" x 11" pages   |                 |                 |
| 2. Title Page (first page of book)  | _____           | (10)            |
| a. Dedication or "To the Memory of _____"   |                 |                 |
| b. Chaplain's name, address, Unit number, District number, and Department.  |                 |                 |
| c. Current Year   |                 |                 |
| 3. Section I.   | _____           | (10)            |
| a. Pledge of Allegiance.  |                 |                 |
| b. Preamble to the Constitution.  |                 |                 |
| 4. Section II   | _____           | (35)            |
| a. Prayers  |                 |                 |
| b. Devotional thoughts  |                 |                 |
| c. Poems  |                 |                 |
| Note: Prayers, devotional thoughts, and poems were collected from members. Member submitting the entry is noted.    |                 |                 |
| Note: If not an original Prayer, devotional thought, or poem, the source is credited.                               |                 |                 |
| 5. Prayer Book appropriately and attractively decorated. Pictures/graphics are used appropriately to enhance entry. | _____           | (15)            |
| 6. Entries are legible whether typed, handwritten, or a mixture. The book is neat and grammar free.                 | _____           | (10)            |
| 7. Other unique qualities.  | _____           | (10)            |

TOTAL POINTS RECEIVED: \_\_\_\_\_ OUT OF 100 POSSIBLE.

# JUNIOR PRAYER BOOK COMPETITION

DISTRICT/UNIT NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

CHAPLAIN \_\_\_\_\_

|   | Points Received | Points Possible |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Format of Prayer Book  | _____           | (10)            |
| a. Cover  |                 |                 |
| g) White, 3 ring binder/notebook  |                 |                 |
| h) Auxiliary Emblem on the cover  |                 |                 |
| i) Optional: Cover illustrated/decorated  |                 |                 |
| b. Pages - 8.5" x 11" pages   |                 |                 |
| 2. Title Page (first page of book)  | _____           | (10)            |
| a. Dedication or "To the Memory of _____"   |                 |                 |
| b. Chaplain's name, address, Unit number<br>(omit Unit if District Chaplain), District number, and Department.            |                 |                 |
| c. Current Year   |                 |                 |
| 3. Section I.   | _____           | (10)            |
| a. Pledge of Allegiance.  |                 |                 |
| b. Preamble to the Constitution.  |                 |                 |
| 4. Section II   | _____           | (35)            |
| a. Prayers  |                 |                 |
| b. Devotional thoughts  |                 |                 |
| c. Poems  |                 |                 |
| Note: Prayers, devotional thoughts, and poems<br>were collected from members. Member submitting<br>the entry is noted.    |                 |                 |
| Note: If not an original Prayer, devotional thought,<br>or poem, the source is credited.                                  |                 |                 |
| 5. Prayer Book appropriately and attractively<br>decorated. Pictures/graphics are used appropriately<br>to enhance entry. | _____           | (15)            |
| 6. Entries are legible whether typed, handwritten, or a<br>mixture. The book is neat and grammar free.                    | _____           | (10)            |
| 7. Other unique qualities.  | _____           | (10)            |

TOTAL POINTS RECEIVED: \_\_\_\_\_ OUT OF 100 POSSIBLE.

## SPREAD YOUR WINGS

Many people find solace in having a prayer shawl or blanket to carry with them. I'm influenced by my Cherokee heritage to adapt the concept to include Prayer Feathers.

Native Americans believed prayers and messages were carried to the Creator on the wings of eagles and other fine birds. Prayer Feathers, either single or bundled, can be used by individuals to offer prayers to the Creator. The feathers can carry your words, thoughts and feelings. Each time you look at your Prayer Feather, your prayers are sent again to our Creator in Heaven.

Your selection of Unit Chaplain by members granted you wings. Now it's time to spread those wings. One way you can do this is to give a Prayer Feather to a member who has demonstrated having achieved an auxiliary



goal.

## **Wreaths Across America**

### **No One is Ever Buried Alone, All are Buried with Honor**

This year, 2016, is the Silver Anniversary of holiday wreaths donations to decorate graves at Arlington National Cemetery. The national campaign-dubbed *Wreaths Across America* will bring the same remembrance wreaths to hundreds of participating locations.

Seven ceremonial wreaths are placed to remember those who gave their lives in service for our country, representing the Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines, and POW/MIA. These wreaths will be placed by representatives from each branch of service during the ceremony.

These specially made wreaths are donated by Worcester Wreath Company in Harrington, Maine. Morrill Worcester, President of Worcester Wreath Company, explains his desire to develop the Wreaths Across America project: *“Our goal is to expand the recognition of those who serve our country, both past, present, and future, as well as their families who deserve our support. Without the sacrifices of our veterans, there would be no opportunity to enjoy the freedoms, the life we live today.”*

Wreaths are purchased through generous donations from Veteran Service Organizations, families and community; through Wreaths Across America. The Kansas Veterans’ Cemetery Program goal is to have enough wreaths to place a wreath on all of those interred at all four State Veterans Cemeteries.

Each year, the organization strives to touch 22,000 interred Veterans graves at Fort Leavenworth National Cemetery. There are two types of groups: one that sells a wreath and gets a \$5 kick back to their organization or the group that does a three for two...which is for every two wreaths sponsored, a third is sent to the location for free.

“A unit could help by getting the word out about the mission and event plus needing sponsorships. I am the POC for the location and event. I can also help you with any other questions you may have to include routing sponsorships to the correct location and group. Please let me know what other questions you may have.”

Respectfully,

Diana Pitts

e-mail: [pitts\\_diana@yahoo.com](mailto:pitts_diana@yahoo.com)

Gold Star Mother of Cpl David Unger KIA Iraq 10/06

Blue Star Mother of Sgt Jeremy Unger currently in Afghanistan

Wreaths Across America, Location Coordinator, Fort Leavenworth National Cemetery

**"SPEAK THEIR NAME!!!"**

## **PRAYERS FOR MEETINGS**

### ***Opening Prayer***

Heavenly Father,

We come to You in gratitude for the opportunity to serve our veterans, active military and their families. We recognize that it is through great sacrifice that we are eligible to belong to this organization. We ask that You would guide us through our deliberations and that the good of the American Legion Auxiliary and those we represent will be our foremost consideration.

Please bless those members who could not meet with us. Help us Lord to remember them as we go about our tasks.

Be with us as we conduct the business of our Auxiliary. We pray that the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts will be pleasing in Your sight. May we be blessed with success in our endeavors, and the glory will be Yours forever.

It is in Your Holy Name we pray,

Amen

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Lord, as we gather for this meeting, give us the use of Your gift of peace and understanding that we may approach the matters we must handle with sincere and just hearts.

May you watch over and guide our tongues that we may not hurt our friends with whom we work for the betterment of our communities and our country. Keep us always true to the principles on which The American Legion was founded.

We ask this in Your name.

Amen.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Lord,

We thank You for our meeting and for the many chairmen who report the many works our members are doing in our local communities.

We thank you for your guidance in our decision-making and we ask that we receive it again today. We thank you for the leadership we have received.

Thank You, Lord, for America and the service men and women who defend and protect our freedoms. Please be with them and keep them and their families in Your care. Please help there to be peace so they may soon return home. All this we ask in Your precious name.

Amen.

-13-

Heavenly Father,

We thank You for our veterans, our service men and women, and The American Legion Family. Thank You for those present at this meeting this evening. Be with us and guide us as we make many important decisions that will affect all the members of our organization.

Help us to remember that everyone's opinions are essential in making the correct decisions. Help us to always remember our true purpose as the American Legion Auxiliary.

Bless and guide our President, as she conducts the meeting. Be with our service men and women and keep them in Your care.

May all our decisions praise Your name.

Amen.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Lord, we thank You for those present here today and the freedom we have to gather together to serve God and Country.

Thank You for the members serving our veterans. We thank You and ask that You be with our many men and women serving in the military on foreign soil to protect our freedoms and the freedoms of others. Please be with their families and give them strength as they wait at home for their loved ones to return. Help there to be peace soon.

May all that we do glorify Your name.

Amen.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Lord,

We thank You for America, our government leaders, and our veterans who gave so much.

Thank You for the members of The American Legion Family. Help us to always remember we are here to serve God and Country. Thank You for our men and women serving in the military and please keep them in Your care.

Lord, we ask Your blessings for this meeting. Guide us in all we do and let all we do praise Your name.

In Your name we pray. Amen.

***Closing Prayer***

Heavenly Father,

We pray that you will be with each of us as we depart from this place. Go with us and keep us safe until we meet again.

We pray that You will bless all those whose families have been separated by military service, that they will be reunited soon with their loved ones.

We pray that You will bless those who have lost loved ones that they may be comforted in the knowledge that their sacrifices will be honored and their loved ones memorialized by a grateful nation.

Let us, as American Legion Auxiliary members, serve as beacons of light to the rest of the nation that our men and women in uniform will not be forgotten until they have all come home.

We thank you once again for your many blessings.

In Your Holy Name we pray,

Amen.

\*\*\*\*\*

Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your guidance in the American Legion Auxiliary. We thank You for the officers and members who have made important decisions for our organization. Thank You for Madame President, our officers and chairmen and our past presidents.

Thank you for our service men and women and ask that You protect them as they protect us.

Please be with those present as they go out and enjoy fellowship together and deliver them home safely. In Your name we pray.

Amen.

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Dear Lord, send us away tonight in harmony, peace and good will to spread the spirit of our love for our country.

Be with us and guide us in our labor for our fellowman.

We ask Your presence with each of us as we begin our journeys to our homes, that we may have a safe return. Be with us until we meet again.

Amen.

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Lord,

Thank You for the fine leadership we have in our unit and thank You for the fellowship and the new friends we have made.

Our business meeting is now ending and You have guided us well. May we use what we have learned here to help with our work for our veterans, our children and our nation.

Please be with our service men and women and keep them safe and return them home to their loved ones soon.

Please watch over us and keep us safe as we return to our homes and loved ones.

All this we ask in Your name.

Amen.

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As we depart one from the other, May God bless us and keep us. Into His gracious protection we commit ourselves. May He be near us to defend us, with us to refresh us, around us to preserve us, before us to guide us, behind us to justify us and above us to bless us and keep us from all evil.

Amen.

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Dear Father,

We give thanks that we have again had the opportunity to come together. We are grateful for this time of work and fellowship. We pray that what we have done has been only for the betterment of those we serve.

As we prepare to leave, each to go our separate ways, we pray once again for those who serve our country; that they may return to their loved ones safely.

Now, dear Father, keep us in your grace and be with us until we meet once again.

Amen

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Dear Lord,

Thank You for the fellowship we have received here today. We ask that You be with our guest(s) and keep His/Her/Them safe.

Be with our members and keep them in Your care.

In Your name we pray. Amen.

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## **PRAYERS FOR MEALS**

**Grace or Blessing for Meal (Please remain seated)**

Heavenly Father,

We thank You for those who have prepared the food we are about to partake of and for those who serve it. May the food and fellowship strengthen us to serve You better. In Your name we pray.

Amen.

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We are thankful, Father, for all the blessings You have given to us and for the fellowship we have shared with those here.

We ask that You heal those who could not be with us due to sickness. As always, we pray for our service persons and for their safe return to their families.

We thank You, Lord, for this meal, for those who prepared it and for those with whom we share it. We ask that we be strengthened with Thy grace as we strive to keep American “One Nation Under God”.

Amen.

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For the joy of life we are grateful to Thee, Oh God, for the fun we have as we share with one with another we thank You.

We pray for the food we are about to receive – will be used to strengthen us to better serve You, and keep us every mindful of the needs of others.

Amen

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Dear Lord,

Bless our servicemen and women who keep us safe. We pray that you bring them home to their families.

May this meal that we share be seasoned from above with Thy blessings and Thy grace – but most of all Thy love.

Amen

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Our Father, how great Thou art –

You have blessed us in so many ways and we thank You – for the opportunity to unite in this moment of prayer, this special privilege we have in America. We ask Your blessing as we strive to keep America – “One Nation Under God.”

Amen.

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## **A SOLDIER’S PRAYER**

Lord,

Bless the wives who grieve alone and comfort the mothers who mourn their own.

Give solace to the fathers who lost their sons on foreign shores and in places unknown.

Lord strengthen the resolve of we who remain to see that they did not die in vain.

Amen.

Author: Maj. Gen. James B. Middleton

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Dear Lord,

There is a young man or woman far from home,  
Called to serve their nation in a time of war;  
Sent to defend our freedom on some distant foreign shore.  
We pray You keep them safe,  
We pray You keep them strong,  
We pray You send them safely home,  
For they've been away so long.  
Bless those who await their safe return and those who mourn the lost.  
Bless those who serve this country well, no matter what the cost.  
God, bless America and her heroes ... and thank You for the privilege to serve.  
Amen.

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Heavenly Father,

Bless those who cry out for peace in times of war.  
Bless those who speak of love in times of hate.  
Bless those who move with courage in times of fear.  
Bless those who stand for justice in times of retribution.  
Bless those who keep the faith in times of uncertainty.

Bless those who seek out good in times of evil.  
Bless those who believe in life in times of death.

Amen.

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Author Unknown

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Heavenly Father,

We thank You for Your love and forgiveness. Thank You for our young people and we ask that You guide them as they are our future leaders. Please be with our service men and women and keep them in Your care. We ask that You be with those who have returned home and help them as they try to put their lives back to normal. We also thank You for our families and pray that you keep them safe.

In Your name we pray.

Amen.

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Dear Lord,

We thank you for our many blessings You have given us. Thank You for our veterans and our service men and women. Thank You for America where we may worship You as we choose. Please be with our government leaders and the American Legion Family as they try to keep those rights strong. Please protect our service men and women and their families at home. May there be peace soon.

In Your name we pray.

Amen.

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Heavenly Father,

We thank You for all You have done for us in years pass. We thank you for Your guidance and for the trials You have given us to make us strong. We ask that You give us peace around the world and strengthen our nation. Protect our service men and women and their families and guide our world leaders. Be with the American Legion Family and our leaders that we will glorify Your name in all that we do.

In Your Holy name we pray.

Amen.

## **OUR MILITARY**

Most gracious Heavenly Father, thank You for the men and women of our armed forces. Protect them as they protect us, defend them as they defend us. Encourage and strengthen their spirit, soul and body in the execution of their duties and responsibilities. May they be mentally and physically strong as they face the challenges of combat. Guide them with Your spirit and might when they are called upon to endure the hardships of battle.

Thank You Lord, for providing America with the best trained, equipped and lead military force in the world today. Fill them with Your saving grace, and the gospel of peace that they may be shining examples of Your love. In Your precious name we pray.

Amen.

## **THE FAMILIES OF OUR MILITARY**

Heavenly Father, we thank you for our service men and women who are protecting us here at home and preserving our freedoms. Please protect them and keep them in Your care.

Please be with the families of these service men and women and protect them as they await the return of their loved one. Give them strength physically and emotionally as they too have hardships here at home. Help them financially and keep their spirits up. Be with those who have lost their loved ones and now have but memories. Thank You, Lord for our brave service men and women, and thank You, Lord, for their families who wait at home. Bless them all and protect them so that they may once again be united as a family. In Your name we pray.

Amen.

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## **VETERANS DAY/THANKSGIVING**

Lord, thank You for Your everyday gifts to us. We have so much to be thankful for, not just on Thanksgiving Day, but each new day that You give us. We give You our thanks, Lord.

Our prayers of Thanksgiving join those of our forefathers. God, You know the words we so often speak; but more than that, You know the secrets of our beam. We thank You for this day.

Lord, we pray for peace in the world. We thank You for people who stand for truth and that which is right. Give Your blessing, Lord to our veterans who have given so much for our freedom. Remember those who have given the supreme sacrifice for we pray they will never be forgotten.

Be with us, we pray. Amen.

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Our Heavenly Father we thank Thee for this day with its opportunities for service. We thank Thee for sustenance and Thy guiding hand — for friends, companions and loved ones. Send Thy blessing upon our dear ones wherever they may be. To those in sorrow, reveal unto them the comfort and humaneness of Thy tender mercy. Help us all to be more constant in our praise and obedience to Thee. Amen.

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We acknowledge our gratitude to Thee, Our Father, for all good gifts. May we prove by our use of them that Thy trust has been well bestowed. May we be ever constant and faithful in our service of mercy, comfort and cheer to those veterans whose bodies and minds have been maimed in battle, to the needy families, the widows and orphans, and all who in anyway have suffered or are now suffering from the honors of war. May our ministrations to them and our activities in their behalf always be pleasing to Thee and be guided by Thy holy will. Amen.

## **CHRISTMAS**

Our Heavenly Father, on this holy Christmas day, our hearts are filled with solemn joy and gratitude for the gift of the Savior, Christ the Lord. For the fullness of His grace, and for His redeeming love, we humbly join in ceaseless praise and thanksgiving.

Amen

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In Thy infinite mercy, Our Father, grant to us and to all others, the spirit of kindness, goodwill and charity. Hasten the day when men shall again hear the angel chorus paying homage to Thee, the Prince of Peace, singing again the glad tidings "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of good will."

Amen.

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We beseech Thee, O Lord, that we, who rejoice in celebrating the nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, may never cease to be grateful to Thee for Thy divine gift. May our actions at all times be directed toward good works and helpful ministrations, which are pleasing to Thee.

Bless us all, we earnestly pray; gladden our hearts anew with the joyful tidings of this holy day. Let the day soon dawn when men shall permit Thy love to right every wrong, and when truth and justice and love shall overrule all the affairs of men, that here and everywhere there shall prevail the glorious message of the first Christmas morning "Peace on earth to men of good will" through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

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## **THE NEW YEAR**

Lord, as we begin a new year, let us resolve to keep a promise, seek out a forgotten friend, listen, laugh, brighten the heart of a child, encourage the young, appreciate our elders, express our gratitude, take pleasure in the beauty and wonder of life, And speak your love to others.

Dear Lord, guide us in the new year to grow closer together in our families, in our Units, in our world. Let us always strive to bring peace to the world. Let us live each day to the fullest. For all the blessings of the year, we give you thanks, O Lord.

Amen.

## **EASTER**

We thank Thee, O God, for the day in which life and immortality were brought to light through the resurrection of our blessed Lord from the dead. Evermore in heart and mind we shall sing praises of joy to Him and we shall show our love for Him by our thoughts, words and deeds, our helpful service to others, and faithful performance of all our obligations.

We earnestly ask Thee to bless and preserve all whom we love; comfort and aid all in trouble and distress. We offer our thanksgiving for all graces and favors we have received in the name of Him Who rose triumphant from the dead.

Amen.

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On this glorious day, O Lord, our hearts are raised to Thee in joy and gladness as we celebrate the resurrection of Thy Son from the dead. May His loving kindness and His blessings rest on us and on our dear ones.

Grant us, O Lord, that our devotion to Thee may reflect our happiness at this glorious season, and may we all enjoy sweet fulfillment of the promise of this day. We pray that love of Christ, the Risen King, may abide in our hearts forevermore and fill us with the joyousness and peace of Eastertide. Amen.

## **MEMORIAL DAY**

Dear God, as we approach Memorial Day, may we honor and remember those who died that we might live in freedom. We remember our departed loved ones gone on before. Those that we honor will be a part of our lives forever.

O God, we are mindful of your great love for us. We are thankful for that love. We praise you for the blessings of love and friendship, for our families and our homes.

Amen

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Lord, be with us and be our guide in time of need. We ask your support in all we do. Help us to reach out to one another, to communicate and show real care for others. Help us to be open to new experiences of personal growth and challenge. May we be alert to the opportunities before us each day.

Accept our thanks, Lord, for the leaders of our Auxiliary, for their work this year, and for their leadership. As they have worked for God and Country we give them our grateful thanks.

Amen.

## **MEMORIAL SERVICE**

Almighty God, grant to us the grace to remember with love and reverence our dear departed members. Grant peace and eternal rest to those who have gone before us. We ask for consolation for those who sorrow, and that you bestow upon us your everlasting blessing.

We are thankful for the lives whom we have remembered here today. May their memory serve as an inspiration to us.

Be with us and bless us, we pray.

Amen.

## **FOURTH OF JULY**

God, we remember the courage and determination of our founding fathers. We remember the brave patriotic men and women who gave so much for us. We thank them that we are a free nation and a free people. It is through them that we carry forward the ideals of Justice, Freedom and Democracy.

Lord, we pray for our elected officials; for sound government and just laws. Lord, make us ever proud to be Americans.

We ask that you would rekindle the flame of compassion within us so that we might show real care for our fellowman. Teach us to be sensitive to the needs of others. Grant that as Americans and as Legion. Family, we may continue to help our veterans and those in need.

Be with us and guide us, we pray. Amen.

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Lord, as we work in our great organization, help us look beyond the outward appearances to the person underneath. Teach us to love and accept them. Forgive our critical thoughts and harsh words; replace our impatience with your love and forgiveness.

Open our eyes to the needs of the world and fill our hearts with love. Make us sensitive to the issues of poverty; racial, sexual and age discrimination; war and peace; pollution

and environment. O God, help us to recognize and grasp the opportunities for service that each one of us might make a difference.

Let us reach out and touch someone with a helping hand. Help us to never lose sight of your continual guidance in our lives as we work for our fellowman.

Amen.

## **INSTALLATION**

God, this is the beginning of a new year of work in our beloved American Legion Auxiliary. Let us speak words of encouragement to our newly elected officers. Be with them, God as they work to lead us in working on all the good programs we hold so important.

Remember each one of our members, for they are needed in their own Units for the work in their communities. Let us all work for God and Country together in harmony and love.

Dear God, teach us to think in wisdom and act in love and caring for others.

Amen.

## **GIFT SHOP OPENING**

O God, we come with grateful thanks today for all those Unit members who are represented here in these lovely gifts for others. Our members have given their time and effort to provide this beautiful Gift Shop for our hospitalized veterans and their families. Love and care are exemplified by these members who serve so willingly to provide a happier Christmas for the veterans and their loved ones. We thank You, Father, for the joy they bring.

Let us remember the lonesome and often forgotten individuals and give them the joy of packages, visitors and carols. O God, we wish that we could all keep the same joy of this day overflowing all year. Keep our hearts joyful, Lord, we pray.

Amen.

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

Our Heavenly Father, we ask that Thy blessing may rest upon us as we gather here for this meeting. May our deliberations have Thy divine guidance, and may we now and in the days to come rededicate our organization and ourselves to the advancement of our sacred ideals, ever remembering that the American Legion Auxiliary's principal service is for God and country. Direct us so that we may perform our duties faithfully and efficiently; and abundantly bless us all, forevermore.

Amen

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We thank thee, O God, that we are privileged to come together for this Executive Committee meeting. Direct our thoughts and our deliberations so that we may exhibit fair judgment and understanding of the matters submitted and trials of a world at war, endow us with fortitude, courage and faith. Bless those gone away from our homes into the service of our country. Be their companion in danger, their solace in pain, and at death, grant them eternal rest in Thy heavenly Kingdom. Continue to surround us all with Thy loving care.

Amen.

### **OLD IRISH VERSE**

May the road rise up to meet you – May the wind be always at your back, May the sun shine warm upon your face, And the rains fall soft upon the fields, And until we meet again, May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

Amen.

### **GOLD STAR MOTHERS OR MEMBERS (TEAS OR SOCIAL GATHERINGS)**

Dear Heavenly Father, we are gathered here this day to honor the Gold Star Mothers (or members) of this community – women who have given a loved one in our country's defense. Their sacrifice has been great. Keep them always under Thy loving care and tender mercy. May their courageous spirit and unselfish patriotism inspire us, O Lord, to greater service for our beloved country and for Thee.

May the beauty and luster of the Gold Star which they so proudly wear ever remain a challenging symbol to us, and, as their loved ones gave their "last full measure of devotion" to preserve the ideals of free America, may we, in grateful remembrance, ever remain steadfast in our devotion to Thee, O Lord, and may the time be not far distant when, throughout the world, there may be righteousness and peace.

Amen.

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Our Father Who art in Heaven, we thank Thee for the opportunity of meeting here this day, and especially that we may pay reverent tribute to these Gold Star mothers (or members) whose loved ones died for us in war's heavy toll. Let us always honor the memory of these brave men and all of our heroic dead, for their supreme service and their incomparable sacrifice.

Our Father, may we work side by side, serving constructively for the security and progress of America, with these valiant women over whose hearts the Gold Star gleams as an evidence of their own faith, their courage and their high spirit of patriotic devotion. Very earnestly do we pray for the hastening of the day when, among all peoples of the

earth, Thy Kingdom will come, Thy will be done, and all the earth shall seek refuge in Thee.

Amen.

## **JUNIOR GRADUATION**

Our Heavenly Father, we ask Thy blessing on these Junior members who are now being received into our Senior group. May the high and lofty principles and ideals for which our organization stands inspire them and strengthen them to fulfill all their obligations and duties as loyal patriotic American citizens, obedient to Thy will at all times.

May they be true leaders among their friends and associates and thus reflect the training and dignity which membership in our organization affords them. Receive them under Thy loving care and protection now and forevermore.

Amen.

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Almighty God, as these Junior girls assume the duties of Senior membership, may they have more firmly implanted in their minds and hearts the unselfish and courageous service and sacrifice of a loved one in our country's defense which has earned for them this coveted privilege of membership in our organization. May they always remain loyal to God and country, and responsive to whatever obligations or duties may devolve upon them, at all times revealing by their thoughts, words and actions a constant devotion to Thy teachings as expressed in the Golden Rule. Amen.

## **LEGION BIRTHDAY (FOR JOINT OBSERVANCE OF UNIT AND POST)**

Heavenly Father, bless us as we are gathered here tonight to celebrate the anniversary of the birthday of The American Legion, that great organization which has continued to serve America for the past \_\_\_ y e a r s . We thank Thee for the opportunity which has been given to the American Legion Auxiliary to have a part in everything which The American Legion has done and in sharing its endeavors.

Grant that the patriotic enthusiasm which inspired these legionnaires to serve our country in time of war may continue to guide their activities at all times, and that the

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principles of Justice, Freedom, Loyalty and Democracy may be preserved for a happy and secure America. Bless all of our effort for God and country, and may we continue to be mutually helpful to each other. Amen.

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Almighty God, we thank Thee for permitting us to gather here for the purpose of celebrating the anniversary of the founding of The American Legion. We thank Thee for granting to the mothers, wives, sisters, daughters, granddaughters, great-granddaughters

and grandmothers of these men the opportunity to share their unselfish program of service consecrated to God and country.

Deepen our earnestness and devotion to the high ideals for which our two organizations stand. May our numbers be increased and may we, as members of these two great patriotic organizations, with Thy help, rededicate ourselves anew to our work. Lead us fearlessly, courageously and nobly, increasing our usefulness and tempering our work with constant prayer for peace in our hearts. Amen.

## **DEDICATION OF HONOR ROLL**

**(IF UNIT IS ASKED TO HAVE A PART IN THE CEREMONY)**

O God, bless those whose names appear upon this Honor Roll and all who have gone from our homes and hearts into the service of our Country. Grant to them patience in the long wait, hope in the dark hours, steadiness in victory and loyalty in defeat. We thank Thee for the unselfish devotion of those who have sacrificed their lives that we might enjoy the liberties for which our forefathers fought.

Especially, Dear Lord, let Thy blessing abide this day upon those of us whose lot it is to be at home in time of war. Teach all the ancient wisdom that "They also serve who only stand and wait".

Amen.

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Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, we ask that Thy blessing may be bestowed upon those whose names appear on this Honor Roll, who have relinquished home and happiness and all that they hold dear, and accepted the call to service so that Justice, Freedom and Democracy might survive, and so that the name and fame of this land we love may be kept unblemished.

O God, keep them in Thy gracious care wherever they go and wherever duty calls them

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and, if it be Thy will, bring them safely home. May Thy merciful blessing rest upon those departed heroes who have answered the last summons.

Amen.

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Strengthen our devotion to Thy teachings and make us worthy of the citizenship, which these young people are fighting to maintain. Bless those in authority in our city, state and nation with wisdom to know and strength to do their duties honestly and well.

Hear our prayer, Our Father, help us and bless us.

Amen.

## **THE WAR BEREAVED**

Almighty God, sustain with Thy healing power all those whose loved ones have given their lives in the service of our country. Redeem, we pray Thee, the pain of their bereavement, that knowing their loss to be the price of our freedom, they may remember the gratitude of the nation for which they gave so costly a sacrifice. And grant, O Lord, that we may highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, and that out of the agony of the present hour there may arise a new and better world in which Thy will shall rule.

Amen.

## **IN WARTIME**

O God, our refuge and our strength, we beseech Thee to guide and protect our nation in the fiery trial of war. Grant us true repentance, and take away the offenses of our people, that with clean hands and pure hearts we may go forward in Thy name. Save us from hatred, cruelty and malice. Imbue our leaders with courage and wisdom.

Strengthen and protect our defenders by land, by sea, and by air, and suffer no dishonor to stain our arms. Safeguard and multiply the ministries of mercy; heal the wounded, receive the dying, comfort the bereaved. Bless those who labor in field and factory, in office and home, for our country's welfare. Make a speedy end of tyrannies in the earth, and deliver the desolate and oppressed of all nations. Hasten the advent of a righteous peace, and with great might establish Thy Kingdom.

Amen.

**PEACE** Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy.

O, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Amen.

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## **CEREMONIES**

### **Funeral Service**

**Music.**

**Prayer.**

**Unit President:** "Death has entered our ranks and members of (name of Unit) of the American Legion Auxiliary are here to pay tribute to one who has been called to the High Command."

**Chaplain:** "Let us pray. God of infinite Love and Mercy, draw near to us in this hour of grief. Open our hearts to Thy comforting presence and our eyes to the realities of Eternal

Life. May the darkness of death give place to the dawn of eternity, and the present pangs of separation to the joys of future reunion.

"Grant us, O Father, that our present sorrow may bring us closer to Thee, and that our hearts may be cleansed and purified by Thy grace. We thank Thee for the understanding that death does not really separate us from the departed. Help us to look beyond the grave and see the glories of that new Life. Help us to know that our loved ones who have passed on are not dead, but are living and enjoying Thy Grace and love more than when here upon earth.

"O Father, we earnestly pray for our departed member, that she may enter into all the joys of the life beyond. We pray that by cherishing her memory and by cultivating Thy presence, we, too, may grow up into that more perfect Life in which death has no power and sin no part."

Amen.

***Or This:***

"Let us pray: "Lord of all life, who ever lives, again Thou has taught us the measure of our days. We are strangers with Thee, and sojourners as our fathers were. Our days are as a shadow and there is none abiding. But Thou abides. Thy years fail not. Thou changes never. A thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. The grass withers, the flower fade, but Thy word endures forever. And therein is our help and hope.

"Thou heals the broken in heart and binds up their wounds. Comfort Thou Thy people. In their sorrow may there be no bitterness, no doubt of Thine eternal goodness. Have them to know that Thou hast not mocked us with this stubborn hope of life eternal; that having created and cared for us Thou wilt not desert us to the dust; that Thou holds us with a love unailing; that our dead are in Thy keeping; and that Thou are able to do for them above all that we ask or think.

"Until for us also the day break and the shadows flee away, grant us to so live that our lives may honor the members who have gone before us. Thus together may we come to that City which Thou has prepared for them that love Thee and keep Thy commandments. For Thine own name's sake we pray." Amen. -29-

**Music.**

**Funeral Service Continued**

**Unit President:** "Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord."

**Unit Chaplain:** "And let perpetual light shine upon her."

**Unit President:** "May she rest in peace."

**Unit Chaplain:** "Amen."

**Unit President:** "May her soul and the souls of all faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace."

**Unit Chaplain:** "Amen."

## **Prayer.**

**Chaplain:** "Let us pray. O God, our heavenly Father, who ushered Thy children into life and recalls the soul to Thyself in Thine own good time, we thank Thee for the sweet memory of those dear to us who have been gathered to their fathers. We praise Thee for all the hallowed influences of our lives and for the rest and peace, which they have found with Thee. May they still be a joy and an inspiration to us; may they quicken us to a more useful life, to higher hopes and greater contentment of spirit, so that in our departure we, too, may leave a memory and example that shall serve as a hope and inspiration to those who follow us.

"Send Thy consolation, we pray Thee, to those who today recall the loss of loved ones. Speak peace to hearts that are wounded by recent bereavement. Comfort them with the thought of Thy wisdom and justice, which Thou in Thy fatherly love, grants to Thy trusting children.

"In final submission to Thy will and in joyous hope of life everlasting, we praise Thee in whose hands are the souls of all creatures and the spirits of all flesh."

**Unit President:** "Extolled and hallowed by the name of God throughout the world which He has created, and which He governs according to His righteous will. Just is He in all His ways, and wise are all His decrees.

"May His kingdom come, and His will be done in all the earth."

**Unit Chaplain:** "Praised be the Lord of life, the righteous Judge forevermore. Amen."

*(Music if desired.) Scripture. Appropriate portion, such as the 90th, 103rd or 130th Psalms — Donay version, 89th, 102nd, or 129th; Jewish Publication Society version, Psalms 15th, 23rd, or 91<sup>st</sup>.*

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## **Funeral Service Continued**

**Unit President:** "This final moment of visible presence with the one who has left us is sacred. Let us not remember her in anguish, for she would not have it so. Tears or words of sympathy cannot bring back the comfort of those loving hands, or the music of the voice that is stilled. Only solemn pride in her service is theirs who live to remember.

"To those who are left behind, we realize how futile are mere words to express our deep and abiding sympathy in their loss. May they feel that she is at rest and in endless peace.

"Surely there is an after-life for all who have been loyal and true: a life to which light and peace shall come, where the burden shall be lifted and the heartache shall cease, where the love, the hope, and the fulfillment that escapes us here shall be given to us to be ours forever."

*When there is a service at the home, the President and members may at this point place a poppy or carnation within or upon the coffin.*

*Benediction by Chaplain, if desired.*

**Unit President:**

"Goodbye, till morning come again,  
We part, if part we must, with pain, But night is short, and hope is sweet,  
Faith fills our hearts, and wings our feet  
And so we sing the old refrain,  
Goodbye, till morning come again.  
"Goodbye, till morning come again,  
The thought of death brings weight of pain  
But could we know how short the night  
That falls, and hides them from our sight,  
Our hearts would sing the old refrain,  
Goodbye, till morning come again."

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**Chaplain:** We gather this day to remember.

**Members:** We come to affirm our faith and our hope. We come longing for the Caring One who calls us from darkness into the light of love.

**Chaplain:** We gather this day to be drawn together.

**Members:** Embraced by nurturing arms of all who walk along this path we call life.

**Chaplain:** We gather this day in sadness,

**Members:** remembering our friends and loved ones who have died. We gather before You, O Lord, in praise and song to seek Your healing for all who live in fear and pain.

**Chaplain:** We give praise for the gift of healing and love.

**Members:** We gather today as one Auxiliary to remember our members and to lift up and praise Your holy name. We seek to live our lives in courage and strength and hope. Move us from suffering to healing; out of darkness to light; and from silence to celebration.

**Music.**

**Prayer.**

**Chaplain:** We give thanks, O God, for our friends – those whom we love and those who love us – for in our love we meet You!

**Members:** Come Spirit of God, to the friendless, the needy, the lonely, and the brokenhearted. Empower us as those You love. We give thanks, and for the quenching of our deep thirsts.

**Chaplain:** Come Spirit of God to the hungry and thirsty. Empower us as those You love.

**Members:** We give thanks Gentle Maker of our earth, for this fragile planet; for all that grows; for the beauty of clear lakes and summer green; for the music of birds, for the sweet aroma of flowers; for the rhythm of seasons and change, of living and dying; for the resources of our common wealth!

**Chaplain:** Come Spirit of God, to this creation groaning from environmental stress. Empower us as those You love.

**Members:** We give You thanks, O Empowering God, for our sisters and brothers in all nations – black, brown, yellow, red and white; older and younger, richer and poorer, spouses, parents, children, teachers and learners, workers in many tasks, siblings in a common home.

**Chaplain:** Come Spirit of God; to the poor and oppressed. Empower us as those You love.

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**Members:** We give You thanks, for teaching us, calling us, encouraging us, bearing us into our vocations as lovers of humanity and all creation. We thank You for those who go with us, and for those who have gone before us.

**Chaplain:** Come Spirit of God, stand beside us. Empower us as those You love.

**Members:** We give thanks to You, O Loving God of justice, a lover of humanity, who opened His heart to Your power and in doing, helped us see that You are here, an eternally active source of our well being and common good.

**Chaplain:** Come Spirit of God, to us and to those who cannot be here today. Empower us as those You love.

*Light a candle and then give any memorial tribute.*

**Music.**

**Prayer.**

**Chaplain:** Dear Lord, help us always to remember that You are for us, therefore, who would dare be against us. Through You we can gather strength and face tomorrow no

matter what it may bring. Help us to always remember You are but a prayer away. Thank You, Lord, for Your grace and forgiveness. We love You Lord. In Your name we pray. Amen.

### **At the Graveside**

*If no previous American Legion Auxiliary service has been held, the service for church chapel or home may be read at the grave, prior to the following committal.*

**Unit President:** "Forasmuch as it has pleased God to take unto Himself the soul of our departed member (name), we therefore place these poppies, the memorial flower of the American Legion Auxiliary, in her memory."

*Chaplain places poppies on casket or in some designated place.*

**Chaplain:** "The Lord bless and keep you. The Lord make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace, both now and evermore. Amen."

**Benediction.**

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### **MEMORIAL SERVICE**

#### **TAPS**

*Any officer or member other than those designated may be assigned to parts in the memorial service.*

**Unit President:** "We have come to that time set aside in our program, to pay tribute to the memory of those members of the American Legion Auxiliary who have answered the call of our Heavenly Father during the past year. The rich blessings of their lives of Service to God and Country inspire us to rededicate ourselves anew in their memory."

**Unit Chaplain:** "Many years ago a group of women had a dream. They visioned the formation of an organization that could render SERVICE to others — an organization to give a hand of love and comfort to the wife, the mother or the orphan of the hero dead and to those in sickness. Those valiant women, with the true spirit and ambition of pioneers, surged forward to great heights and their dreams became a reality, The AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY. An organization founded on the sacred principles that there is no rank among us; no distinction as to color, race or creed, but rather the wish, the desire and the firm determination to be of SERVICE to others. As we observe a quiet moment to pay tribute, by word and song, to the

memory of those beloved members whom Our Heavenly Father, in His Infinite wisdom hath called Home; those whose lives have reflected much glory for us; we believe it is a time for rededicating our SERVICES and ourselves for 'GOD AND COUNTRY.' It is time for remembering that death is not the end, rather it is the beginning of a new life to be lived in the presence of our Lord.

"As we assume the unfinished tasks of these departed members, may we consecrate that task as a living memorial within ourselves; a firm determination to so live our lives that our priceless heritage, won for us at so great a cost, shall be ours to uphold, to defend, to pass along to those who shall follow in our footsteps."

**Memorial Chairman:**

"There comes a time for all of us, when we must say Goodbye,  
But Faith and Hope and Love and Trust can never, never die;  
Although the curtain falls at last, is that a cause to grieve?  
The future's fairer than the past if only we believe  
And trust in God's eternal care. So when the Master calls  
Let's say that life is still more fair, although the curtain falls."

**Solo.** (*"You'll Never Walk Alone," or an appropriate piano solo is suggested.*)

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**Unit Chaplain:**

"A child or loved one to us loaned;  
Was ever by the Father owned;  
Allotted time they're ours to keep;  
When God reclaims, we'll trust, not weep."

"Deep within our hearts will remain the sainted memory of those members whose names shall be engraved on the pages of our BOOK OF MEMORIES," as we honor them today."

*Unit Chaplain reads the names of all deceased Unit Members Deposits white and colored flowers in their memory.*

**Gold Star Mothers:** "To those members whose lives had been saddened by the sacrifice of War, but whose Loyalty and Devotion to the American Legion Auxiliary, in order that they might be of service to others, has ever been an inspiration, a guiding light to all. We pay homage to their memory. "May they live together in Faith and Love and with the Hope of Divine Blessing, which is immortality."

*Place flowers for deceased Gold Star Mothers.*

**Junior Members:**

"She is not dead—the child of our affection-  
But gone unto that school

Where she no longer needs our poor protection.

But day after day we think of what she's doing

In those bright realms of air;

Year after year, her meager steps pursuing,

Behold Her, grown more fair."

"To those Junior members, Our Seeds of Destiny, whom we have loved and lost so soon, and who hold in their hands the future of the American Legion Auxiliary, we lovingly place these flowers."

**To Our Membership:** "To the memory of those members, numbering including our Past Unit Presidents who have been mourned by the Unit this year, we bow in tribute. To those members units unrecorded but who leave a vacant chair at their family fireside and whose passing is known to God, we reverently add these flowers."

**Unit Chaplain:** "God's beautiful handiwork, the blossoms of Youth and Life are so closely associated with our organization and with our membership, that we leave these flowers, knowing that they too, as all material things do, shall wither and die but their fragrance shall linger forever in our memory."

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**Solo.** (*"The Lord's Prayer" or any appropriate solo is suggested.*)

**Unit President:** "The Chaplain will offer prayer." The Presided shall give three raps of the gavel and the members shall rise.

**Unit Chaplain:** "Now that they have gone, we can well believe that a voice is saying:

"Well done Thou good and Faithful Servant, Enter Thou into the Joy of Thy Lord.' To all of these members whose well-won right to stand among that valiant company of women, who by their courage, their unselfishness and their vision have helped so largely down through the years to make America great, we solemnly bow our heads in Prayer.

"O Gracious Heavenly Father, we lift our voice to Thee, to thank Thee for continuing to watch over us in our hour of trial, ever ready to direct and guide our faltering steps. We thank Thee for the rich experiences and for the many friendships enjoyed by Thy children here. We Thank Thee for the knowledge that In their passing they do not tread the Valley of Shadow alone, that always that Giver of Gifts, the Great Comforter is present as they enter that Eternal Haven of Rest.

"Grant O Lord, continued Peace to the souls of our departed members and give us understanding and appreciative hearts. Help is to bequeath added blessings to the generations yet to be. Lead us and guide us evermore by the teachings of Thy goodness. As we witness Thy handiwork in the Heavens and the beauties about us, we feel Thy presence ever near. Grant that Thy spirit may continue to dwell in the hearts of the American Legion Auxiliary. Let us not fail those whom we honor by ceasing to do good, or to turn from Thy guiding hand. "We know, O Lord, Thy will be done. Amen."

*One rap of the gavel and the members shall be seated.*

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**MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR AUXILIARY MEMBERS — Short Form**

**Music.**

**Prayer.**

**President:** "Death has entered our ranks and we pause to pay tribute to those of our members who have passed to the Great Beyond during the past year.

"We shall keep in hallowed memory the lives of these members whom we have loved and `lost awhile.' We shall strive to pattern our lives after their zeal for patriotism and their devotion to duty, and we rededicate ourselves to the unfinished work which their hands began."

*As each name is called, a candle is lighted or a white flower placed in a low bowl while soft music is played.*

**Memorial Chairman:**

In God's great garden of our lives,  
Some rain is sure to fall,  
But after that He sends the sun  
To triumph over all  
And so when sorrow comes to us  
And teardrops cloud our day  
He sends us strength to bear our load  
And light to guide our way:

**President:** "The Chaplain will offer prayer."

*Three raps of the gavel for membership to stand.*

**Chaplain:** "Let us pray. We give Thee thanks for the good examples of all those Thy servants who, having finished their course in faith, do now rest from their labors. Have us to know that we shall be remembered for what we have done for others, not what others have done for us. Each one of us exerts an influence upon those with whom we come in contact. As we go along the years, a single act of advice, encouragement, or caution, may decide a question of usefulness and happiness for another. O God, whose presence is everywhere and whose mercy never fails, we magnify Thee for Thy gifts, especially for the promise of the peace, which passes all understanding. We commit ourselves to Thee. Amen."

**TAPS or Solo.**

*One rap of the gavel for members to be seated.*

**DRAPING THE CHARTER**

When a Unit is deprived of one or its members by death, it is customary to drape the Unit charter with black crepe during the period of mourning. There is no set time for how long the Charter is draped. The following ceremony is suggested for the draping of the charter.

**President:** "We have assembled here at the call of our Maker who has taken from us one of our beloved leaders. We have come to give, by simple token, official expression of the grief of the Unit of ..... Let us first bow our heads in prayer."

*Chaplain offers a brief prayer.*

**President:** "We stand before the document which gives our Unit life and being. Under its authority years of devoted service were given by ..... She contributed greatly to its significance. Her service is ended, but the results of her loyal efforts will go on and on for our American Legion Auxiliary and for God and the country which the Auxiliary serves.

"It is therefore fitting that about our charter we should drape this crepe of black, an expression of the sorrow that is in our hearts and of the mourning of the Unit of ..... over its great loss. (Drapes the charter.) Now we will ask God's blessing for our departed friend and co-worker, then go silently to carry forward the tasks to which she was giving so much when called away."

*Chaplain gives a brief concluding prayer.*

**Other Ceremonies**

*The following commemoration ceremonies are under the direction of The American Legion.*

- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Veteran's Day

## **POW/MIA Ceremony**

**Narrator:** Today, we pay tribute to the men and women who have served our nation unselfishly. Within each of us lies the American spirit, a burning desire to dedicate and commit ourselves to the American ideals of freedom. This desire is deep within the heart and soul of each soldier, sailor, airman, marine and coast guardsman. It is undaunted by weather conditions, living conditions, or hardship of mission.

When the bells of freedom first rang out, we were there at Bunker Hill, Lexington and the brutal winter at Valley Forge. Thousands of us gave our lives at Bull Run, Manassas, Antietam and Gettysburg. We rode with Teddy Roosevelt and his rough riders up San Juan Hill.

Whenever and wherever America called, we were there.

We fought battles of the Marne and Chateau Thierry in World War I. We were at the Battle of the Bulge, the Ardennes Forest and all along the European front of World War II. We endured Corregidor. We survived the Bataan Death March. We raised the Flag at Iwo Jima. We landed at Utah and Normandy on D-Day, 1944.

We have never failed to answer our Country's call.

We fought the unrelenting fight at the 38th parallel, better known as Korea. We trudged through the rice paddies and jungles of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. We were the 241 marines killed in Beirut. We were the pilots who flew the daring mission against Libya and international terrorism.

America has always counted on us.

We were the peacekeepers in the Sinai; liberators of the tiny island nations of Grenada; restorers of democracy in Panama; victors in the sand of the Middle East. We were givers of hope in Somalia and Bosnia.

America's military has always been the beacon of freedom, shining for all to see. We have marched with our heads held high and served with pride.

Through all these periods of war and American history, one question remains unanswered. Where are our brothers: our prisoners of war; our missing in action veterans?

This is not an absence of choice but rather one, which emulates duty, honor and country. Let us remember their absence. (Pause)

We call your attention to the small table, which occupies a place of dignity and honor. It is set for one symbolizing the fact that members of our armed forces are missing from our ranks. They are referred to as POWs and MIAs.

We call them comrades. They are unable to be with their loved ones and families, so we join together to pay humble tribute to them, and to bear witness to their continued absence.

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The table is small, symbolizing the frailty of one prisoner, alone against his or her suppressors.

The table cloth is white, symbolic of the purity of their intentions to respond to their Country's call to arms.

The single rose in the vase signifies the blood they may have shed in sacrifice to ensure the freedom of our beloved United States of America. This rose also reminds us of the family and friends of our missing comrades who keep faith, while awaiting their return.

The red ribbon on the vase represents the red ribbons worn on the lapels of the thousands who demand, with unyielding determination, a proper account of our comrades who are not among us.

A slice of lemon on the plate reminds us of their bitter fate.

The salt sprinkled on the plate reminds us of the countless fallen hearts of families as they wait.

The glass is inverted, they cannot toast with us at this time.

The chair is empty. They are NOT here.

The candle is reminiscent of the light of hope, which lives in our hearts to illuminate their way home, away from their captors, to open arms of a grateful nation.

The American Flag reminds us that many of them may never return - and have paid the supreme sacrifice to insure our freedom.

*(As you say the following, a veteran of each military branch will place his or her cap, on the appointed plate. If preferred, members of The American Legion; American Legion Auxiliary, including Juniors; or Sons of The American Legion could place a flower rather than a cap.)*

Please rise.

*(Wait a few seconds)*

In honor of the United States Army, we place this cap. (flower) In honor of the United States Marines, we place this cap. (flower)

In honor of the United States Navy, we place this cap. (flower) In honor of the United States Air Force, we place this cap. (flower)

In honor of the United States Coast Guard, we place this cap. (flower)

Please observe one minute of silence to honor these missing Americans.

*(Pause for one minute)*

Remember them, for surely they remember you. May God forever watch over them and protect them and their families.

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### **Four Chaplain's Day Program**

- Words of welcome by the President or Commander
- Invocation

- Pledge of Allegiance
  - The Story of the Chapel (See below.)
  - Talk in Memory of Chaplain George L. Fox by Protestant Minister
  - Music
  - Talk in Memory of Chaplain Alexander D. Goode by Rabbi
  - Offering (Donated to American Legion Program of Chapel of Four Chaplains)
  - Talk in Memory of Chaplain John P. Washington by Catholic Priest
  - Music
  - Talk in Memory of Chaplain Clark V. Poland by Protestant Minister
  - “God Bless America” – Sung by all
  - Benediction
  - Taps
- (Refreshments and social hour for community Fellowship.)*

### **The Story of the Chapel**

Early on the morning of February 3, 1943, the U.S. troop transport “Dorchester” was wallowing through icy seas off Greenland. Most of the 900 troops on board were asleep in their bunks. Suddenly a torpedo smashed into the Dorchester’s flank. Frantically pounding up the ladders, the troops milled in confusion on the decks.

In those dark moments of panic, the coolest men aboard were four U.S. Army Chaplains: First Liets. Clark V. Poling (Reformed Church of America); Alexander D. Goode (Jewish); John P. Washington (Catholic); George L. Fox (Methodist). The four chaplains led the men into boxes of life jackets, passed them out to the soldiers with boat-frill precision. When the boxes were empty, the four chaplains quietly slipped off their own precious life preservers, put them on four young GIs and told them to jump.

The Dorchester went down 25 minutes later in a rumble of steam. Some 600 men were lost, but the heroic chaplains had helped save over 200. The last anyone saw of them, they were standing on the slanting deck, their arms linked in prayer to the one God they all served.

Far away in North Africa, Dr. Daniel A. Poling, distinguished American clergyman and father of Chaplain Clark Poling, was crouching in a foxhole when he learned of the heroic death of his son and his three fellow Chaplains. In his mind was born the idea of a shrine in the memory of this noble sacrifice; a shrine where people of all faiths could worship God in a spirit of unity without the need of uniformity.

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In the heart of a great city, Philadelphia, PA, the Chapel opens its doors to people of all races and religious faiths. Every Sunday there is a service of worship. It is also a memorial to the Four Chaplains who went down on the S.S. Dorchester. It is an interfaith shrine; in it are three alters, one for each faith – Catholic, Jewish and Protestant. Above the entrance burns an eternal light, which calls men to the unity these four chaplains so heroically demonstrated. Chiseled deep into the stone is this dedication:

Chapel of Four Chaplains  
An Interfaith Shrine  
Here is Sanctuary for Brotherhood  
Let it never be violated

***George L. Fox***

George Fox was the oldest. Up in Vermont they called him, “The little Minister,” because he was only five feet seven inches tall. Back in 1917 he lied about his age and enlisted in the Marines as a medical corps assistant. He won a Silver Star for rescuing a wounded soldier from a battlefield filled with poison gas, although he himself had no gas mask on.

When George Fox came home to Vermont, he continued his education and became a public accountant as he had planned. He was successful, happily married, with two children. Then one evening he came home from work and told his wife he wanted to study for the ministry and she approved. So George Fox became a minister. The war came again. “I’ve got to go,” he told his wife. “I know from experience what our boys are about to face. They need me.” Before he boarded the Dorchester he wrote a letter to his little daughter. She received it after the news that the ship was torpedoed. “I want you to know,” he wrote, “how proud I am that your marks in school are so high - but always remember that kindness and charity and courtesy are much more important.”

***Alexander D. Goode***

Alexander Goode was too young for World War I. While George Fox was winning medals on the battlefield of France, Alexander Goode was receiving medals in Eastern High School, Washington D.C., for tennis, swimming and track. He led his class in scholarship too. He planned to follow in his father’s footsteps and become a Rabbi, but that did not keep him from having a laughing, shouting, hail-fellow-well-met boyhood with all the Protestant and Catholic boys in the neighborhood.

He married his childhood sweetheart and they had four children. After he got his synagogue, he felt he was still not worthy. He would know better how to heal men’s souls if he knew how to heal their bodies too, and so for three years he drove everyday to John Hopkins University, forty-five miles away, until he won his medical degree.

On day in 1943, Mrs. Goode received a telegram from her husband... “Having a wonderful experience,” it read, and then Mrs. Goode knew that her husband had found a warm companionship with the men with whom he could share his faith and his laughter.

***Clark V. Poling***

Clark Poling was the youngest of the Four Men of God. Clark’s first letter was written to his father. It was written in square block printing and was addressed to his mother. The letter found

Dr. Poling, February 1918, in a dugout on the Western front of another World War. The letter read: "Dear Daddy: Gee, I wish I were where you are. Love, Clark." And in exactly twenty-five years, that eager little boy received his wish. Clark was the seventh generation in an unbroken line of ministers of the Gospel.

When the war came along he did not want to go as a Chaplain, "I can carry a gun as well as the next guy," he told his father. "I'm not going to hide behind the Church in some safe office out of the firing line." "I think you're scared," the elder Poling joked. "Don't you know the mortality rate of the chaplains is the highest of all? As a Chaplain, you have the best chance in the world to be killed. The only difference is, you can't carry a gun to kill anyone yourself." And so Clark Poling became a Chaplain.

Just before Clark sailed, he visited his father and they were alone in D. Poling's study when Clark turned to his father and said: "Dad, Dad – you know how much confidence I have in your prayers, but Dad, I don't want you to pray for my safe return – that wouldn't be fair. No, Dad. Don't pray for my safe return – just pray that I shall do my duty and something more, pray that I shall never be a coward. Pray that I shall have the strength and courage and understanding of men, and especially pray that I shall be patient. Oh, Dad, just pray that I shall be adequate."

### ***Johnny P. Washington***

Up in Newark, New Jersey, there was once a little Irish boy named Johnny Washington. Things weren't always easy in an Irish immigrant family. Things usually aren't easy for poor immigrant folk. But, Johnny had his Father's Irish grin and his Mother's Irish tick-to-itiveness, and Johnny sold newspapers. Sure, he liked to play ball, just as much as the rest of the kids in his block, but if he took time off from his newspaper route, it was just so many pennies less to take home to Mom, and there were nine mouths in the Washington household to feed. Johnny loved music and sang in the church choir and Johnny loved to fight.

And Johnny was always laughing, right through his training as a priest and after he was ordained. He played ball in the streets with the boys from his parish; he organized baseball teams, and when the war came along and his boys went into the Army, Father Johnny went right along with them as a matter of course. They say that when the Dorchester went down he was still laughing – laughing and singing and praying to comfort those who could not reach the lifeboats.

And so, these four men – Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, from four different towns; the country boy from Vermont; the city boy from Washington, the slum kid from Newark; and the parson's son from New York City – met on the slanting deck of the Dorchester. It was a rendezvous with God, too, and their voices rose above the cold, black churning water: "Our Father... which art in Heaven... hallowed be Thy name..." "Schma Yisroel Adonay Eoohenu Adonay Echod," ...Thy Kingdom come... Thy will be done..." The hand of God plucked these four men from their parishes and set them together in that icy February fog... and all at once the fog melted away and all about them there was light.