Responsive Prayer

L: Lord God, You have sustained our nation in the past and continue to bless us. We recall how so many have given their lives for the cause of freedom. Men and women continue to sacrifice and serve in the Armed Forces. Today, we pause to reflect and honor those who gave, and continue to give, their lives.

R: We remember the great courage and selfless service of so many throughout history. We remember their honorable sacrifice for the freedom of others. Comfort the families who mourn the loss of loved ones. Comfort also those who suffer permanent injuries as a result of serving our nation in the military.

L: We remember with thankfulness the millions of Americans who give so generously of their life and labor in times of national conflict, particularly the family members of our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen.

R: We are grateful for the devotion and sacrifices of military families. Grant us the resources and willing hearts to support them in their needs.

L: Lord, You prayed earnestly for Your disciples, that they would be kept in Your Name, filled with Joy and sanctified in Your Word of Truth.

R: Keep our chaplains in Your Name. Fill them with the joy that comes from knowing You have defeated sin and death. Sanctify their ministry in Your Word of Truth.

L: Gracious Lord, we ask for Your strength for our chaplains who serve in the Veterans Administration hospitals as they provide pastoral care to hurting and wounded veterans.

R: Lord, mend the wounds of all who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Grant their physicians knowledge and wisdom as they seek the best treatments for patients' suffering.

L: God of mercy, grant patience and insight to our chaplains who serve in all branches of our Armed Forces, the Veterans Administration hospitals, federal prisons and the Civil Air Patrol. Only through Your sustaining love can they move out daily with confidence and joy. These and all things we ask through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and rules with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces
Ministry-by-Mail Registration

If you have members of the congregation who are in the military, be sure to send us their names and addresses so we can include them in our Ministry-by-Mail program.

Please return this form to:
LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces
1333 S. Kirkwood Road
St. Louis, MO 63122-7295

The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

❑New name addition ❑Change of address ❑Name change
Branch of Service:_____
City:_____State:_____ZIP:_____
Rank:_____
Last Name:_____
First Name:_____Middle Initial:_____
Address:_____
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(APO/FPO or regular mailing address with City, State, ZIP)

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LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces

1333 S. Kirkwood Road • Saint Louis, MO 63122-7295

800-248-1930, Ext. 1337 • Fax: 314-965-0959 • Email: *lcmschaps@lcms.org*

New Mission... New Orders: Move out!

Dear Friends:

We appreciate your support of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Ministry to the Armed Forces! Thank you for celebrating Ministry to the Armed Forces in your congregation in 2012! There are several opportunities to present this new bulletin insert to the members of your congregation.

- Armed Forces Sunday – May 20;
- Memorial Day Sunday – May 27;
- Fourth of July weekend – July 1;
- Veterans Day weekend – November 11; or
- The Sunday of your choice.

It's not so important which Sunday you choose to honor the men and women who faithfully serve our country as military members and chaplains, but that you remember them in a special way. To assist you in planning your special Sunday service, we have enclosed:

- This sheet of liturgical and sermon helps;
- Bulletin inserts; and
- Forms to add or correct names and addresses of actively serving military men and women from your congregation.

Worship materials and other helpful resources, along with downloadable bulletin inserts, are available from our website at *www.lcms.org/armedforcessunday*. If you have any questions about these resources, please feel free to call us at 800-248-1930, Ext. 1337.

The LCMS has 67 active duty military chaplains. Another 83 chaplains serve Reserve and National Guard units. Currently, five chaplains are in Afghanistan. We support 25 Veterans Administration chaplains, 29 Civil Air Patrol chaplains, and four chaplains for the Federal Bureau of Prison ministry. There are also eleven Reserve/Guard chaplains mobilized and serving in the United States.

In addition to recruiting, training and endorsing chaplains, we also offer Ministry-By-Mail support on a quarterly basis by supplying *Portals of Prayer* devotions and our *So Help Me God* newsletter to 6,000 Lutheran military personnel and their families stationed throughout the world.

We are grateful that your congregation will join other congregations in our Synod on the weekend of May 20 or on the weekend of your choice in remembering our soldiers and chaplains in their arduous duty to God and country. Thank you for your faithful support throughout the years.

In Christ Jesus, I am,

Mark J. Schreiber

Mark J. Schreiber
CAPT, CHC, USN, (Ret.)
Director, Ministry to the Armed Forces

The Lutheran Church
Missouri Synod

Armed Forces Ministry Sunday 2012
Sermon Resource
New Mission... New Orders: Move Out!
John 17:11-19 (ESV)
11 *And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.* 12 *While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.* 13 *But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.* 14 *I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.* 15 *I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.* 16 *They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.* 17 *Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.* 18 *As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.* 19 *And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.*

MOVE OUT! That is the typical shout to kick off a new mission for anyone in the military. Our troops today have heard those words thousands of times so far and will continue to hear them well into the future. The mission continues for those entrusted with guarding our nation. In our reading for today, as He comes to His Heavenly Father in prayer, our Lord knows that a new mission and new orders will soon be given to His disciples.

Our dedicated men and women who serve in the Armed Forces are constantly training for that next mission. Anyone who has served knows that training is absolutely critical to success. The text for today comes from someone who knew His mission and completed it — Jesus. Our Lord came to conquer sin, death and hell. When He died on the cross and rose again, He declared victory. Now He prays for all those who begin a new mission — the mission of proclaiming that victory to a sinful and often hostile world. In His prayer for those who remain, Jesus asks three things of our Heavenly Father.

I. God KEEPS us "in His NAME" (vv. 11-12)

A. The text – unity of effort is essential to any mission, so Jesus prays that His God keeps His disciples unified "in His NAME."

B. Our Church gathers regularly together "In the NAME of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

C. As the Armed Forces are united in mission, "one nation, under God," The Church is united by the faith confessed in The Apostles' Creed, given to us at our baptism.

D. Our Lord keeps you in His NAME and His Holy Spirit calls you to MOVE OUT! with the Gospel.

II. God fill us with JOY

A. The text – Jesus asks that God fills the disciples with JOY, a joy in knowing Christ has defeated the enemies of sin, death and hell.

B. Our Church, as she faces many challenges, is reminded through Word and Sacrament that Christ continues to bless and sustain her; a source of JOY.

C. Many of our military members and families have faced 10 years of steady strain and hardship due to deployments. Our chaplains continue to proclaim the JOY of ultimate victory in the Gospel.

D. The JOY of knowing our sins are forgiven in Christ energizes us take on new missions before us.

III. God sanctifies us in the WORD of TRUTH

A. The text – the disciples would face many obstacles, yet they were fearless since they were sanctified in the WORD of TRUTH.

B. Our Church continues to proclaim the WORD of TRUTH to a fallen world.

C. Our military chaplains daily carry the "sword of the spirit," God's WORD of TRUTH.

D. You are sanctified in the WORD of TRUTH by God so you never MOVE OUT! without His sustaining grace.

As we celebrate Armed Forces Sunday, we acknowledge the many sacrifices our military members make every day. We thank all who have served; who accepted new missions. Now, our Lord challenges all of us to boldly proclaim with joy His promise of life and salvation. So, MOVE OUT!

Optional Sermon Illustration:

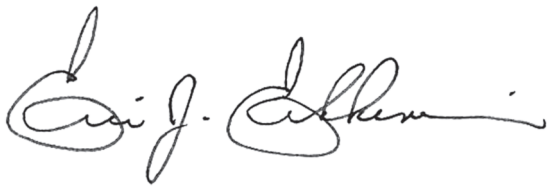
Not long ago, one of our senior LCMS chaplains planned to visit a remote site near a village at the Pakistan/Afghan border. He told the battalion chaplain he would like to conduct a Lutheran communion service the morning of his visit. "No problem, sir!" said the young chaplain. The service was coordinated for 10:00 a.m. sharp. Six grateful Soldiers gathered around Word and Sacrament at the Lutheran service in a hot and dusty field chapel. At worship's end the Soldiers chatted briefly with the chaplain, thanked him for coming, and departed. Packing up the chaplain kit, he headed toward the flight line to catch the plane to his next stop, Bagram Air Base. As he left the chapel tent, a young Soldier ran up to him. Breathless, he asked, "Are you the Lutheran chaplain?"

"Yes, I am," was the reply.

"Great! When's the Lutheran service?" was the next question. For whatever reason, the Soldier didn't "get the memo."

Knowing the dangers that our troops face every day, the senior chaplain answered, "Five minutes! Right there in the chapel!" And in a slightly abbreviated service, that young Soldier received Christ's body and blood for the forgiveness of sins.

It is what our chaplains do, day in and day out, as they face a new mission, new orders, new challenges. They seize every opportunity to provide the best pastoral care to our men and women wherever they serve. We dare not lose sight of our mission and purpose as Christ's people. As Christ was "sent into the world," we are sent into the world.



Chaplain (LTC) Eric J. Erkkinen
US Army (Ret.)
Assistant Director, Ministry to the Armed Forces

The back page has been formatted to accommodate reproduction on a 5.5"x 8.5" Sunday bulletin.