

Prayers & Blessing at the Deployment of Military Personnel

by **The Rev. Thomas L. Weitzel**
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

L = Leader C = Congregation

The following order is intended for congregational use at the end of a service and replaces the usual benediction.

L: The following person(s) from our church family *has/have* been called to military service at this time of national emergency, and we invite *him/her/them* to come forward to receive our prayers and blessing: *Name(s)*

Those military personnel who are being deployed present themselves before the minister. The minister addresses them:

L: *Brothers and sisters* in Christ, you have been called to duty on our behalf to serve and defend our nation and our liberty. This body of Christ thanks you with heartfelt gratitude for your willingness to serve at this time. United with you in faith and in citizenship, we wish to enfold you in our love and surround you with prayer, blessing and the assurance of God's presence as you go forth from this place to fulfill your call.

Let us pray. Lord of the nations and King of the universe, we give you profound thanks for all those who answer the call at this time to serve our nation and to defend and protect our way of life, especially for *First Name(s)*. What lies ahead is in large measure unknown to us and unknown to those who serve. Yet some awareness of the perils and dangers gives us prayerful pause to seek your aid.

C: Be present with those who serve, O Lord.

L: Be present with and guide all our military personnel. Sharpen their skills. Make their judgments true. Give them those things necessary to achieve their goals and defend our cause.

C: Be present with those who serve, O Lord.

L: Give to each man and woman your special love, strength, wisdom and grace, that their fears may be laid aside, their faith fostered, their courage made sure, and their spirits comforted by the knowledge of your divine presence throughout their days.

C: Be present with those who serve, O Lord.

L: Guard and protect them from evil and the ways of darkness that threaten us. Send your holy angels to have charge over them and bear them up. Bring to us all the victory of light over darkness as you are the God of light and love.

C: Be present with those who serve, O Lord.

L: Above all, bless these men and women with a holy blessing that will sustain them in the face of whatever may come. Bless as well our nation, its leaders and its military services that truth, justice, and liberty may prevail and prosper by your aid. For you are the God of blessings and providence, the Source of all good, the Sustainer of our lives, and to you belongs all praise and glory, through your Son Jesus Christ, now and forever.

C: Amen

Those being deployed turn to face the congregation, who stands for the final blessing:

L: People of God, send forth *this/these* patriot(s) to serve with your commission and the blessing of almighty God.

C: Servant(s) of our nation, go forth on our behalf. Do your duty with honor. Defend us against the darkness. Know that no task is too trivial or small in this cause. Know also that our love and support goes with you. Go forth with blessings in abundance from almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit. And may God's peace be with you always.

Those being deployed respond: Amen!

The service may close with a national hymn such as "God Bless Our Native Land" or "God Bless America." Those being deployed are encouraged to recess with the ministers to a place where they may be greeted by members of the congregation. A reception or dinner may also be held in honor of those who serve.

Liturgy

Original Services, Worship Ideas and Articles by TLW =