

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for wisdom and guidance for forces chaplains as they provide pastoral care, sometimes to people facing very difficult circumstances.
- Pray especially for forces chaplains posted overseas, especially those on deployment with service personnel and who are separated from their family.
- Pray that forces chaplains will use all the opportunities they have to share the gospel.
- Pray that many of those serving with the armed forces and those in training will come to know Christ and trust in him as their Lord and Saviour.
- Pray for forces chaplains who work with new recruits – often young men and women with little church connection before joining the armed services.
- Pray for members of the armed forces, that they will find comfort and strength in the Lord.
- Remember the families of forces personnel, including chaplains on deployment worried for the safety of their loved ones.



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Forces chaplaincy



NEWS AND PRAYER BULLETIN

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland currently has eight ministers who serve full-time with the armed forces, four in the Army, one in the Royal Navy, and three in the RAF.

Our chaplains are frequently called away from their home base on operations. In recent years, several of our chaplains have been deployed overseas, serving in places such as Eastern Europe or the Middle East. For some, being on home base in the UK means being separated from family in Northern Ireland.

In addition to our regular chaplains, we also have three ministers who serve part-time in the Reserves (two Army and one Royal Navy).

Reserve chaplains are trained up to the same standard as their regular counterparts and, like them, can be deployed on operations when required. One of our Reserve chaplains is preparing for a three-month stint of service overseas.

PCI also sponsors several ministers to act as chaplains to the youth organisations sponsored by the Army and RAF (the Army Cadet Force and the Air Training Corps). They do not have formal military training and have no call-up liability but provide an important ministry among large numbers of young people, many of whom have little or no contact with church.

*Please remember all our chaplains
and their families in your prayers.*

Our chaplain in the Royal Navy, Rev Dr Brent van der Linde RN writes:

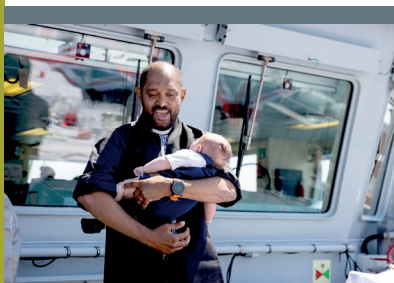
*“Padre, do you have a Bible for me?
My wife has been reading the Bible, and she is a
different person. I want my life to change with hers.”*

This is not an isolated conversation. Increasingly, we are seeing men and women, many with little or no prior connection to faith, encountering God in powerful ways. Service personnel and their families are picking up Bibles, coming to Bible study, attending church, being baptised, and often asking for prayer. Lives are being changed, especially people with no history of church attendance.

Recruits going through some of the most physically and mentally demanding training have shared how chaplaincy support was one of the reasons they stayed and completed their course. In the midst of challenge, something deeper is happening - people are seeking God.

These moments do not come easily. Being a military chaplain is about being present. We wear the same uniform, go on exercises together, and share in the same conditions. I have stood outside with men at -27°C and it can be in these places, often on the edge of endurance, that hearts begin to open and people ask why I became a chaplain. I tell them that it is because of the love Jesus showed me, that I want to be with them in such harsh environments. In moments like these, we have the privilege of pointing them to Jesus, telling them of Christ who brings hope, peace and new life.

Our people are being asked to do more with less and to sacrifice greatly. They carry pressures from family,



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work, and personal circumstances, while continuing to serve with professionalism and commitment. Under such strain, many find themselves stretched to breaking point. I count it as a real privilege to walk alongside them, to listen, to pray, and to share the hope we have in Christ. To witness lives being changed by the love of Jesus, even in the most unlikely and demanding environments, is something I feel blessed to be part of.

The future brings increasing uncertainty. The world is shifting, and the challenges facing our Armed Forces are real and serious. In such times, we need not only strength and resilience, but also a hope that is found in Christ alone. Please do pray for us as we continue this work. Pray that in places of darkness, the light of Christ would shine brightly. Pray that hearts would remain open, and that many more would come to know the love, grace, and transforming power of Jesus.

