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WHEN VOCATIONS COLLIDE:  
A STUDY OF THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING A  
MILITARY MOBILIZATION AGREEMENT

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May 1, 2011

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WHEN VOCATIONS COLLIDE:  
A STUDY OF THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING A  
MILITARY MOBILIZATION AGREEMENT

A MAJOR APPLIED PROJECT SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF CONCORDIA SEMINARY  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTORATE OF MINISTRY

BY  
MARK C. MORENO

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## ABSTRACT

The ministry of reserve military chaplains has an impact on their civilian ministry setting, the church in particular. Questionnaires were administered and interviews conducted with reserve chaplains and congregations that have already experienced a mobilization and had a mobilization agreement. Findings reveal that the process of developing a mobilization agreement is indicative of the healthy relationship between the reserve chaplain and their congregation.

CHAPTER ONE  
INTRODUCTION

As a United States Navy Chaplain serving in the Reserves for nine years and as a parish pastor for eight years serving two congregations, I have found incredible joy. At the same time there have been profound differences that have emerged between the two, and at times, brought conflict to the situation. This view becomes evident most in parish ministry.

The ministry of serving as a chaplain in the military is challenging and is especially so as a reservist. A reserve chaplain often serves as a member of the clergy in another setting, such as another institution or perhaps a parish. This challenge is also real for a majority of reservists as they work and live in a variety of contexts while serving in the military.

The United States is at a unique moment in history, one that has seen an unprecedented number of reservists (often referred to as weekenders or weekend warriors) serve the country fulltime during multiple wars all over the world. The truth of the matter is that reservists often lead a double life: their civilian occupation as well as their military one. To hold them in balance is a challenge, and this is especially true for the reserve chaplain that serves a congregation.

Many wonder what it means to be a reservist. The most common answer is that it means a commitment to train and serve any needs the military may have on a regular basis. This requires two days a month and two weeks a year (thus the idea of a weekender). Those thirty-eight days a year mean thirty-eight days away from the church, their family, and

normal life obligations. Those thirty-eight days a year include military training, ongoing education, and ministry in another context. The truth is, of course, that thirty-eight days is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to their commitment for preparing themselves for war. The obligations might easily be characterized by a similar ministry misconception of parishioners who say a pastor works one day a week. There is a commitment on the part of a reservist that on short notice, a reservist can be mobilized (deployed to serve with the military) for a period of up to one year. This presents unique challenges to both the reservist and his civilian employer which have been addressed by Uniform Service Members Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERA) of 1994. While this act defines the rights of the reservist over and against the employer, the issue is magnified with respect to clergy, especially if the reserve chaplain serves as a sole pastor. This is true for clergy because USERA does not apply to churches due to the separation of church and state.

My experience in the parish as a pastor and in the military as a chaplain has definitely defined me. When I attended Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, I signed up to join the United States Navy. I then had the opportunity to spend the summer in Newport, Rhode Island, to study all that the chaplaincy involved. However, when I went through this program, it was before the events of September 11, 2001. Everything for reservists changed that day, as well as everyday life for most Americans.

Even during my time in Newport, I could see the competing demands of the two ministries. As a matter of fact, I completed the chaplains' basic course the last day of July, and started my year long internship (called a vicarage) the very next day of August. My vicarage supervisor had a negative impression of my involvement as a chaplain, in part

because he would have preferred me to start my vicarage July 15. This was my introduction to the challenge of balancing parish ministry and reserve chaplaincy ministry.

Moving forward to my first call, I was intent to not repeat the same mistakes. During the interview process I made sure everyone knew I was a reserve chaplain and that it was my intent to participate by spending a minimum of two days a month and two weeks a year in that ministry. The senior pastor and the council stated that they welcomed my involvement as a chaplain and many members were retired military and would immediately connect with me.

That dynamic quickly changed with the senior pastor and council as they saw the amount of time and effort the chaplaincy demanded. It also changed as they asked me to start a mission congregation. The pressure was great and it was a stressful time. Peter Steinke articulates this pressure, "Anxiety can be infectious. We can give it to others or catch it from them. What triggers anxiety is unique to each system."<sup>1</sup> In many ways, the senior pastor and the council leadership questioned my commitment to the church and became more vocal in their criticism of me, as well as the chaplaincy. I, in turn, got more defensive, and the dynamic deteriorated.

There are many sacrifices a reserve chaplain makes in order to serve in both military and civilian settings, and more than a few times, I have felt the incredible pressure of the two competing for my time and effort. Some church leaders have viewed the military chaplaincy as "moonlighting" to make extra income; others have viewed it as a lack of commitment to the parish ministry. Still others have seen it as a vital Gospel outreach and mission.

The external pressure from the competing responsibilities was so great that for two years, I went into the IRR (the Individual Ready Reserve; a status that makes it highly

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<sup>1</sup> Peter L. Steinke, *How Your Church Family Works: Understanding Congregations as Emotional Systems* (Herndon: Alban Institute, 2000), 13.



unlikely to be mobilized) so that there would be no mention of the military chaplaincy. I thought by doing so, I would silence the critics and demonstrate my commitment to the parish. Those were two of the most miserable years of my life. I felt as though I was not doing what God had called me to do: to serve in the reserve chaplaincy as well as serve as a parish pastor. I returned to the reserves and those critics of military chaplaincy were vocal once again. At that time, I tried to articulate exactly why I felt the reserve chaplaincy and the parish ministry were actually compatible and beneficial to one another, as opposed to being in conflict or detracting.

Often the chaplain, the military, and the church can seem to be at odds in a conflict over the balance of these tensions. How does one man fulfill his duty to his country? How does a pastor care for his flock? What happens if one takes precedent over the other?

These are among the questions that I have often asked that have caused many sleepless nights. For many years, I have served as a pastor at a local congregation while at the same time serving as a reserve chaplain with the United States Navy. While the ministries in both settings have been wonderful and diverse, and often in harmony, there are moments when the balance seems lacking and priority needs to be established.

There were times I felt I was battling the congregational leaders about the reserve chaplaincy. The words of Ronald Richardson reflect my feelings when he wrote: "During times of higher anxiety, the less mature people in the church seek to promote sameness and conformity as the way to achieve unity or togetherness in the community."<sup>2</sup> Nowhere did this become more apparent than when it came time to draw up a document that detailed the agreement between the church and me in regards to my role and responsibilities as a reserve

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<sup>2</sup> Ronald W. Richardson, *Creating a Healthier Church: Family Systems Theory, Leadership, and Congregational Life* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 63.

chaplain and how that affects my parish ministry. This document covered the thirty-eight days a year and it also covered what to do in the event of mobilization. There was a strong desire on my part for our leaders and church to be healthier in our approach to this issue.

The process was rather poor in many respects because it reflected my inability to clearly and precisely articulate the reserve chaplaincy, and it also reflected the church leaders' limited view of the value and purpose of the military ministry. Furthermore, the paradigm being utilized was a framework of either/or rather than both/and. We all limped along somewhat disenchanting with the whole situation. I am currently serving as a mission planter in the same area as my first call, and while my church knows that I am a reserve chaplain, we do not have a mobilization agreement document. I think this new church and a new start can be the foundation for a balance of church and military ministry. Candace Benyei summarizes this when she writes, "A sense of mission provides the cohesive energy that keeps a community together in the face of divisive forces...for a community to be healthy, mission must extend beyond the boundaries of the family of faith."<sup>3</sup> The purpose of this project is to serve as the requirement for the Doctor of Ministry program at Concordia Seminary while at the same time serving in my immediate ministry context as a wonderful way to look at the process of developing this vital mobilization agreement document. In this respect, I will be using my prior experience with my former call and beginning afresh with the agreement and with the process at my new congregation.

Additionally, I know other reserve chaplains who feel like they are fighting the same fight with their churches. I feel that is incredibly sad and that perhaps this project will shed more light on the reasons why this ministry dynamic is so common. I also hope that it will

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<sup>3</sup> Candace R. Benyei, *Understanding Clergy Misconduct in Religious Systems* (Binghamton: Haworth Pastoral Press, 1998), 168-169.

give powerful insights to a much more positive view of the chaplaincy with respect to parish ministry.

The tensions I face now are quite different in my current congregation than at my first call. My current congregation and leadership are actively supportive of my reserve chaplaincy ministry and embrace it as a mission arm of the congregation. With that being said, there is sense of concern that I will be mobilized at some time. There is an expectation that, as I advance in rank, there will be more demands by the chaplaincy. There is a question as to whether I am “spreading myself too thin.”

While my current congregation is supportive, I want to make sure that we are as prepared as possible for the inevitable mobilization; by we, I mean the church, the pastor, the council, and even the pastor’s family. There is no question that mobilization will affect everyone’s view of the reserve chaplaincy. The challenge is to make it as positive as possible.

The tension does not lie in the monthly drills (the two days of military service per month), or the two weeks of annual training. It is much more focused on the dynamics of mobilization. This is where a chaplaincy agreement or a mobilization document can be a tremendous resource.

I will administer questionnaires to leaders of five churches that already had a mobilization agreement document when the chaplain was mobilized for a year. This data will then be compared to the emerging research data on the effect of mobilization of reservists to their families, their employers, and even the reservists themselves.

The project will also include feedback of the five churches researched, and result in a questionnaire designed for Hope Lutheran Church’s council in preparation for the creation of

a mobilization agreement document between Hope Lutheran Church and myself. This document will not only address the event of mobilization, but will also address the monthly drilling, the two weeks of annual training, as well as the other demands of reserve chaplaincy in respect to the pastor and his ministry at the local parish setting.

I have shared my personal and professional reasons for this project. However, it is my sincere hope and prayer that this project will be of help and use to the many reserve chaplains serving in parish settings around the world.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE PROJECT INTRODUCED

The problem addressed by the project is that the pastor and the members of Hope Lutheran Church are unprepared regarding the inevitable mobilization of their pastor (who also serves as a United States Navy Chaplain in the Reserves).

What is meant by the term “unprepared” is the following:

1. The lack of clarity and specificity of guidelines and mobilization agreements. The Ministry to the Armed Forces (hereafter MAF), which is part of Lutheran Church Missouri Synod’s (hereafter LCMS) World Mission department, provides mobilization agreement document samples, but individual pastors and churches are directed to develop the exact guidelines together. The issue is that there is a lack of specificity in the guidelines and that without a third party (i.e. the MAF) to help both the pastor and the church draw up the agreement, the process can result in confusion, division, and unresolved issues.
2. A deficient understanding of the relationship between the military ministry of a reserve chaplain and his parish ministry at the local setting. There is an evangelistic nature in both ministry contexts, but there is trouble relating the two. The problem is that the two ministries are held as separate and competing rather than integrated and complementary.
3. The lack of a clearly defined and agreed upon process for establishing a mobilization agreement document between the congregation and the pastor. Without a clear process it

can become somewhat of a power struggle, and the church or the pastor writes the document without much consensus.

These three factors cause a great deal of confusion for both the reserve chaplain and his congregational leaders and create an atmosphere of uncertainty. The problem then becomes magnified if the reserve chaplain and congregational leaders hold vastly different expectations, understandings, and values on the ministries involved.

An incredible number of mobilizations have occurred since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The mobilizations have occurred in every branch of the military and every rate (the serviceman's pay grade) of the enlisted and every rank of the officers. Chaplains are no different. Since the mobilizations have increased, so has the severity of this problem. It is prudent to prepare for the inevitable mobilizations that come at any time for a parish pastor.

The result of the more intense use of the reserve chaplains by the military has been two-fold: (1) an increasing reassessment by congregations of the dual role of a reserve chaplain and parish pastor, and what that means; and (2) the very real possibility of a pastor being involved outside of the congregation on a monthly basis attending to extra training and serving emerging military needs. Deployments are certainly the point where many outstanding questions present an opportunity to be answered.

### **The Purpose of the Project**

The purpose of this project and ministry effort is to develop a defined and agreed upon preparedness process to ready the congregation and the reserve chaplain that will enhance the ministry of the pastor at Hope Lutheran Church before, during, and after mobilization by utilizing guidelines and a mobilization agreement document. This project

will also potentially guide other reserve chaplains and their churches to use a dialogical process and the mobilization agreement document in a beneficial and God-pleasing manner.

The purpose of the research is to identify those key components of a healthy process between the pastor and his congregation, particularly in the context of the reserve chaplaincy.

Specific outcomes of this project include:

1. To determine through case studies the effectiveness of guidelines and mobilization agreements within five congregations.
2. To identify those ministry characteristics that denote a healthy relationship between the reserve chaplain and his congregation.
3. To help the church members view the reserve chaplaincy as an outreach of their ministry (i.e., as something positive, natural, and mission oriented versus negative, competing, or detracting). This will present to church members a view that helps them understand the powerful connection of the church's mission and the reserve chaplaincy's mission. The two are integrated and complimentary and reinforce the need to share the Gospel in a variety of contexts.
4. To establish an effective process for developing and implementing the mobilization agreement between a congregation and its pastor.

The goal of this project is to develop an implementation process to improve the mobilization agreement documents that will aid both the congregation and pastor as they deal with the dynamic of a military mobilization. The process is reflective of the ministry that the church and pastor share. The process will involve the church, both the laity and the elected leadership, as well as the pastor and those in his reserve chaplaincy ministry setting such as the commanding and executive officers.

The church will incorporate the utilization of the process to develop a mobilization agreement document. By being better prepared and equipped, the church will continue its mission and thrive even in the absence of the pastor. It will also demonstrate the evangelistic nature of the reserve chaplaincy. By assessing how other congregations and their pastors serving in the military reserves were able to deal with mobilization, valuable lessons can be learned on how to maximize the impact of ministry, minimize the conflict, and build a stronger foundation for all ministries.

### **The Process of the Project**

The process by which the project is conducted includes bibliographic research that will include a survey of books, articles, theses, journals, and documents that speak to the theology of the reserve chaplaincy ministry, to church outreach, and to the relationship of pastor and congregation. In addition, intensive study on the effect of mobilizations in many professional fields will be made and these findings will help inform the final form of the questionnaires as well as the questions for the interviews.

Field research will be the administration of questionnaires to LCMS congregations that have a pastor that serves as a reserve military chaplain who has been mobilized for at least one year. These congregations will then become case studies as the researcher interviews the pastors and church leaders (the president and head elder) on the dynamics of the relationship they had prior to the mobilization, during the mobilization, and after the mobilization.



## **Parameters of the Project**

Some parameters of this project include basic presuppositions and boundaries. This project is designed to enhance the ministry of the reserve chaplain in his parish ministry setting and to enhance the outreach ministry of the local church. Some basic assumptions of this project are:

1. Written guidelines and mobilization agreement will actually aid the congregation and pastor-chaplain in the event of a military mobilization.
2. A military mobilization would negatively affect the ministry of the congregation by causing the absence of the pastor from the parish setting. This project desires to minimize this aspect.
3. The church council comes to consensus in its outlook on its pastor's reserve chaplaincy ministry. Also that the church council reflect the view of the congregation and its leadership and strive for an understanding and support of the reserve chaplaincy.
4. That Operation Barnabas (an LCMS ministry to the military that strengthens the relationship between churches and its reserve chaplain) is a key and vital resource for congregations and pastors involved in the reserve chaplaincy. This resource is made possible through the Ministry to the Armed Forces (MAF).
5. The process by which the mobilization agreement document is developed is vitally important and embodies the spirit in which the reserve chaplain and congregation approach ministry.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE PROJECT IN THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

This chapter will establish the theological basis for the study by providing biblical and theological background for the project. In this chapter, key passages of scripture will be examined as well as three facets of theological application. By focusing on scripture first, the connections of the three facets (Church and the State, Vocation, and the Public Square) can then be demonstrated and explored. The purpose of this chapter is to address the core theological issues at the heart of parish ministry as it relates to military ministry.

There can often be a deficient understanding of the relationship between the military ministry of a reserve chaplain and his parish ministry at the local setting. There is an evangelistic nature in both ministry contexts, but there can be trouble relating the two. To be sure, the military context is radically different than the parish setting.

The over-arching structure that connects ministry of many contexts is the imperative to serve God and to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. So, a common thread in the ministries of a parish pastor and a reserve chaplain is that the Gospel proclamation is the basis for the ministry. This is an important assertion. In order for a church to see the military ministry in a positive light, the church needs to see it as an extension of its own ministry. In order for a theology of mission in these two ministry settings to be established, the focus needs to be sharpened for a thorough examination. There are three lenses by which this examination will occur: (1) the lens of Church and State, (2) the lens of Vocation, and (3) the

lens of the Public Square. Of course, the three lenses will first be placed on a biblical framework, and then concluded with a look at the institutional theology of the chaplain corps.

The lenses of Church and the State, Vocation, and the Public Square all go to the heart of the relationship between Christians and the world in which they live. There is much the Bible has to say on the topic, and a study of three key passages from scripture (Matthew 22:15-22, Romans 13:1-7, and 1 Peter 2:13-17) speaks to the Lutheran understanding of this topic.

Reserve chaplains are in a unique position to have a daily experience with this issue. Stephen Mansfield elaborates on the point, “Suddenly, America seemed to be wrestling with the role religion has to play in her military culture and for a simple reason: America is a nation religiously in tension with herself.”<sup>4</sup> Literally every day this relationship pulls and tugs a reserve chaplain in any number of directions. On one hand, they have the clear role and calling to share the Gospel and to serve God in that capacity. On the other hand, they have a clear role to be a citizen and carry out their duty for their country. Those two roles can at times be in conflict, at times be in unity, and at times one overshadows the other. David Hollinger articulates these tensions by sharing how it is often pushed into one of two extremes:

But its renewal today can promote pride in church-state separation and can celebrate a distinctive civic sphere in which persons of many religious orientations, including persons who count themselves as non-believers, can be full participants in their distinctive capacity as Americans. In keeping with such an understanding of our civic sphere, any religious ideas offered as justifications for public policy should be open to critical debate, and no longer given a “pass.” By “giving religious ideas a ‘pass’” I refer to the convention of maintaining a discreet silence when one hears a religious idea expressed, no matter how silly it may seem. This convention, which is deeply

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<sup>4</sup> Stephen Mansfield, *The Faith of the American Soldier* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 11.

rooted in the assumption that religion is a private matter, shields religious ideas from the same kind of scrutiny to which we commonly subject ideas about the economy, gender, race, literature, science, art, and virtually everything else.<sup>5</sup>

The chaplaincy thrusts the concept of “private religion” and “public policy” (i.e. service to country) against each other in a single person. The chaplain has the role and responsibility to hold these two seemingly exclusive concepts together in harmony.

A more centrist position is to explore and make some key distinctions that aid in a proper and healthy application. The first distinction to make is that a theocratic approach is detrimental to a healthy ruling authority in the secular arena. Aside from Israel in the Old Testament, no country has ever survived, much less thrived, by having a governing system of theocracy. In the current context of the United States, it is clear that there is little danger of erring by a theocratic approach. However, there are religious groups that espouse a form of this. Among the goals they espouse are making America a “Christian” nation; to enact legislation that would expand the role of Christianity in America; to elect Christians into office, and so on.

A second distinction to make is that a good and healthy government needs the church. If the government acts as a temporal ruler, then the church acts by the proclamation of the Gospel. The government should not usurp or assume the role of the church and the church should not usurp or assume the role of the government. They are not in the same “business”, so to speak. While the government is to rule justly and provide protection and freedom, the government needs someone to speak to the moral and spiritual needs of its people. This is

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<sup>5</sup> David A. Hollinger, “Civic Patriotism and the Critical Discussion of Religious Ideas,” in *Debating the Divine: Religion in 21st Century American Democracy*, ed. Sally Steenland (Washington, D.C.: Center for American Progress, 2008), 9.

precisely where the church comes in. Newt Gingrich summarizes well the concept of the government with respect to the church, “It is a testament to the Founding Fathers that they were able to design a practical form of government that allows religious groups the freedom to express their strong religious beliefs in the public square.”<sup>6</sup> The church provides a vital and needed service when the church provides morality and spiritual care, especially through the military chaplaincy.

A third and final distinction is that the church does not need a good and healthy government to survive and do its proper work. A good and healthy government can aid in the church’s function by providing a land in which the church is free to operate, but history clearly shows us that even under the harshest of governments and peoples, the church survived: the Jewish authorities, the Roman Empire, Muslims, the Soviet Union, Franco’s Spain, the French revolution, Nazism, and many more are examples of this. The church can do its job with or without a hospitable government, but the government cannot do its job without a church.

Scripture speaks at length about the relationship between His people and the civil authorities. In Matthew 22:15-22, Jesus makes a strong statement about the relationship:

<sup>15</sup> Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words. <sup>16</sup> They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. ‘Teacher,’ they said, ‘we know you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren't swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are. <sup>17</sup> Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?’ <sup>18</sup> But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, ‘You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? <sup>19</sup> Show me the coin used for paying the tax.’ They brought him a denarius, <sup>20</sup> and he asked them, ‘Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?’ <sup>21</sup> ‘Caesar's,’ they replied. Then he said to them, ‘Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's.’ <sup>22</sup> When they heard this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away.

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<sup>6</sup> Newt Gingrich. *Rediscovering God in America: Reflections on the Role of Faith in Our Nation's History and Future* (Nashville: Integrity House, 2006), 11.

As Jesus answers this question, Jesus makes key distinctions. There are items that belong to Caesar (the state) and items that belong to God (the church). It is not a choice of one or the other, but rather both held in a balance at the same time.

The word *kensos* (yearly tax) in the text is linked closely to Latin (*census*) which was a tax paid by each adult to the government (Mt 17:25; 22:17, 19; Mk 12:14). The word "give" in Jesus' reply could mean "give back" (*apodidomi*). The word was used in the sense of "paying back" a debt in the parable of the unforgiving servant (Mt 18:25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 34). While not literally a "pay back," the word was used of the new tenants who will "give back" the owner the fruit at the proper time (Mt 21:41). The word carries the sense of giving back something that already belongs to the other person.<sup>7</sup>

That thought is also conveyed with the phrases, "The things of Caesar" and "The things of God." The genitive case demonstrates possession -- the things that belong to Caesar or to God. How do we know what things belong to Caesar? They have his image on them. How do we know what things belong to God? They have God's image on them. In verse 21 there is a striking comparison between the uses of "Ta"; the genitives are both adjectival and possessive, and in both parts there are indirect objects.<sup>8</sup>

In this text, the Pharisees tried to force Jesus into a corner by giving him a no-win situation where something was at stake: either God or Rome. Jesus not only outwitted them, but he also gave the truest of answers--there are two kingdoms: one is eternal and of God, whereas the other is temporal and of men. Both are to be given their due.

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<sup>7</sup> R.C.H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), 841.

<sup>8</sup> Harold H. Buls, *Exegetical Notes Series A Gospel Texts*. (St. Louis: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1981), 81.

Another passage that speaks to the church and state issue is found in Romans 13:1-7, as Paul establishes a sound approach to the relationship:

<sup>1</sup>Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. <sup>2</sup>Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. <sup>3</sup>For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. <sup>4</sup>For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. <sup>5</sup>Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience. <sup>6</sup>This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. <sup>7</sup>Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

Paul makes the further assertion that God works through means. In this case, He works through governing authorities. Let every person be subject (*hypotassō*) to the governing authorities (*exousiais hyperechousasis*), for there is no authority (*exousia*) except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted (*tassō*) by God.

He also makes a noticeable shift from making statements of fact (the indicative mood) to a command “pay to all what is due them” (the imperative mood). *Tassō* has many nuances, meaning to appoint, to order, to ordain, or to determine. *Exousia* refers to an ability to perform an action and the right or permission to perform that action.<sup>9</sup>

In verse four, the civil authority is called “God’s minister.” Therefore, those in authority should receive their due, be it honor, fear, or tribute. This passage wonderfully captures the balance of the relationship and highlights the obligations and duties of Christians in respect to that balance.

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<sup>9</sup> Harold H. Buls, *Exegetical Notes Series A Epistle Texts* (St. Louis: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1984) 62.

A third and final text for our examination on the topic of church and state is found in 1 Peter 2:13-17, where we have another clear statement on the relationship of the two:

<sup>13</sup>Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, <sup>14</sup>or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. <sup>15</sup>For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. <sup>16</sup>Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. <sup>17</sup>Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, and honor the king.

This passage also makes it clear that the governing authorities have a purpose and we are to abide by the laws of the land when they are consistent with the biblical witness.<sup>10</sup>

There is a clear distinction between the means by which God operates in eternity and the means by which He operates in the temporal. The word *kakopoi* means "bad actors" and governments used the word to speak against Christians with derision. This word appears in verse 12, as well as in verse 14, where a court actually convicts.

This passage is not merely abstract and theoretical. Christians need admonition regarding government when government turns against them; their conduct is not to be rebellion but submission. This submission has a limit when the government forces one to deny the faith.<sup>11</sup> Verse 15 of this passage gives the purpose clause, the reason why Christians are to submit to human authorities: *to Thelema tou Theou*. God wants His people to do good irrespective of foolish men; to be subject to the government for the Lord's sake as being perfectly free and in no way slaves to men. 1 Timothy 2:1-3 and Titus 3:1-8 suggest that all civil institutions, whether good or bad, are ultimately ordained and utilized by God.

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<sup>10</sup> R.C.H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Epistles of Peter, John and Jude* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961) 110.

<sup>11</sup> R.C.H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Epistles of Peter, John and Jude* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961) 111.



After reviewing these verses, the question remains: What has come of these passages on the topics of Church and State, Vocation, and the Public Square with respect to the ministry a reserve chaplain and his congregation?

The three distinctions laid out at the outset suggest a joint expression of doctrine and practice on this topic. The first distinction is that a theocratic approach is detrimental to a healthy ruling authority in the secular arena. Jesus said as much in Matthew 22:15-22. Jesus also made a powerful statement in John 18:36: "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place." Theocracy simply does not tend to work.

The second distinction is that a good and healthy government needs the church. In 1 Peter 2 we read we are to live as free men, but not to use freedom as a cover-up for evil, and to live as servants of God. By living as servants of God's church, the state benefits. The church undertakes forming Christians into good citizens by the power of the Holy Spirit while the state is in the "business" of governing both good and bad citizens.

The third and final distinction is that the church does not need a good and healthy government to survive and do its proper work. Who was Jesus speaking to in Matthew 22? The Jewish ruling authorities, the Herodians, and the Pharisees, just to name a few. None of them were interested in seeing Jesus' cause being furthered and aided by the ruling authorities. Even as Paul and Peter ministered in a variety of setting and cultures, they endured harsh persecution from the ruling authorities. The church is not in the "business" of governing over a nation or people; the church is to be where believers gather to hear the Gospel proclaimed in its purity and where the sacraments are to be administered rightly.

The reserve chaplain is one place where church and government come together. This is supported by Richard Hutcheson, "The chaplain is not just half military and half church. He is fully a member of both institutions. His function in the armed forces is that of a clergyman."<sup>12</sup>

The application in our life and world today is to have a solid understanding of these three principles as well as a good understanding of Luther's two kingdoms. More aptly stated as "Two Reigns/Two Realms," this framework comes to us from Luther's introduction to his commentary on Galatians. How God operates on His left is by power and the sword (Romans 13); He uses law and justice. How God operates on His right is by weakness and grace; He uses His Word, Gospel, and peace. It is a distinction more than a separation, and is also immensely helpful in a proper understanding of a Christian's role with regard to ministry in the world.

One expression for understanding the balance of the Christian in this world that has been demonstrated from the Lutheran tradition has been Robert Benne's four connections: (1) the ethics of character (indirect and unintentional influence), (2) the ethics of conscience (indirect and intentional influence), (3) the church as social conscience (direct and intentional influence), and (4) the church with power (direct and intentional action).<sup>13</sup>

The powerful truths that come from the three passages of Scripture that we have examined in this section reflect the vast richness that Scripture has to offer in respect to the topic of church and state. Over the course of time and in many different places and cultures,

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<sup>12</sup> Richard G. Hutcheson, *The Churches and the Chaplaincy* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1972), 19.

<sup>13</sup> Robert Benne, *The Paradoxical Vision* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995) 6-9.

Christians have struggled with what it means to submit to the authorities. This is especially true when the authorities have little or no regard for the One True God.

This biblical foundation of Christian faith in respect to the governing authority has set upon it three lenses to sharpen the focus: Church and State, Vocation, and the Public Square. This foundation has reaffirmed the respective roles that both the civil authority and the church are to exercise.

### **Church and State**

Christians have long struggled with how best to be a citizen under a governing authority. This struggle is all the more intensified when the governing authority does not conform to God's Word. The two extremes of the issue would be a complete separation from any system of moral understanding (secular) or an enmeshed sense of religion. The Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the LCMS articulates the goal of avoiding these two extremes, "This aims to navigate between the two extremes of the culture war: The "re-imposers" and the "removers." For the goal is not re-imposing or removing Christianity, but creating a common ground in the public square."<sup>14</sup>

At various times, the church has been persecuted by the governing authorities. Other times, the governing authorities have actually been persecuted by the church. Take Rome as an early example: worship of the Emperor was required of all those under Roman authorities. Christians could not in good conscience do such a thing, and they were persecuted for not following the accepted laws of the empire. Just a few years later, Constantine became emperor and made Christianity the official established religion. This led the way for politics

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<sup>14</sup> CTCR, *Render unto Caesar...and Unto God: A Lutheran View of Church and State* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1995) 4.

and theology to be one in the same. As a matter of fact, the reformers dealt with this incredible dynamic with respect to the Roman Catholic Church and the various governing authorities of Germany and Italy.

The Lutheran Confessions also speak at length about the relationship of God's people and the civil authorities. In both the Augsburg Confession and the Defense of the Augsburg Confession, the reformers share valuable insights about the relationship.

### **Augsburg Confession Article XVI: Of Civil Affairs**

1] Of Civil Affairs they teach that lawful civil ordinances are good works of God, and that 2] it is right for Christians to bear civil office, to sit as judges, to judge matters by the Imperial and other existing laws, to award just punishments, to engage in just wars, to serve as soldiers, to make legal contracts, to hold property, to make oath when required by the magistrates, to marry a wife, to be given in marriage. 3] They condemn the Anabaptists who forbid these civil offices to Christians. 4] They condemn also those who do not place evangelical perfection in the fear of God and in faith, but in forsaking civil offices, for 5] the Gospel teaches an eternal righteousness of the heart. Meanwhile, it does not destroy the State or the family, but very much requires that they be preserved as ordinances of God, and that charity be practiced in such 6] ordinances. Therefore, Christians are necessarily bound to obey their own magistrates 7] and laws save only when commanded to sin; for then they ought to obey God rather than men.<sup>15</sup>

In this article, the Lutheran reformers are consistent with the biblical witness as they avoid the two extremes (as the Anabaptist said no involvement and still others would wish to destroy the state) and uphold a healthy relationship of church and state. It is quite striking that the reformers made such a clear point on this matter, given the political turmoil of their

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<sup>15</sup> F. Bente and Dau, W.H.T., eds. and trans. *Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), under AC XVI 1-3: "Of Civil Affairs," <http://www.bookofconcord.org/augsburgconfession.php> (accessed September 4, 2010).

day. This passage gives a concise summation that touches on vocation as well as the living of Christian faith in a community context. This was neither an encouragement of quietism nor a radical militant approach. While this article spoke to civil affairs (i.e., people in their everyday life in respect to the governing authorities), the reformers also addressed how the church is to be involved with civil affairs.

This passage also makes it abundantly clear that the government is a proper agent for God's ruling authority. The state is affirmed in this passage of the Confessions in its role of just wars, as well as just punishment. These are literally matters of life and death, and this article extends the authority of the state to property as well as marriage. These are basic provisions with which God has blessed Christians, and He governs these rights through government. However, the confessions are quick to address the scope and power of the secular ruling authority with respect to the ecclesiastical authority of the church.

#### **Article XXVIII: Of Ecclesiastical Power**

12] Therefore the power of the Church and the civil power must not be confounded. The power of the Church has its own commission to teach the Gospel and 13] to administer the Sacraments. Let it not break into the office of another; let it not transfer the kingdoms of this world; let it not abrogate the laws of civil rulers; let it not abolish lawful obedience; let it not interfere with judgments concerning civil ordinances or contracts; let it not prescribe laws to civil rulers concerning the form of the Commonwealth. 14] As Christ says, John 18:36: My kingdom is not of this world; 15] also Luke 12:14: Who made Me a judge or a divider over you? 16] Paul also says, Phil. 3:20: Our citizenship is in heaven; 17] 2 Cor. 10:4: The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the casting down of imaginations.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> F. Bente and Dau, W.H.T., eds. and trans., *Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), under AC XXVIII 4: "Of Ecclesiastical Power," <http://www.bookofconcord.org/augsburgconfession.php> (accessed September 4, 2010).

The Lutheran reformers stay even-handed in their approach between church and state. It is powerful to see the very clear distinction of the church's role as well as the state's role. There is care given and caution added that the two are never mingled and that one not overstep the other's boundaries. This article was quite controversial at the time because the reformers found themselves battling not just on religious issues, but political issues, as well as social issues. It was very hard to see where one issue ended and the other began. During this time, the reformers found themselves writing their Confessions in the midst of Germans unhappy with sending money to Rome; people unhappy with the power of the Emperor with respect to the local electors; and also anger with the imbalance of power and rights between the peasants and the nobility. While none of these issues are exclusive to the church or exclusive to the state, it was important for the reformers to address the proper contexts in which the two institutions would respond to these emerging dynamics. The Defense of the Augsburg Confession has many great pages of material that expounds upon a healthy approach, and here is an excerpt:

#### **Defense of the Augsburg Confession Article XVI: Of Political Order**

53] The Sixteenth Article the adversaries receive without any exception, in which we have confessed that it is lawful for the Christian to bear civil office, sit in judgment, determine matters by the imperial laws, and other laws in present force, appoint just punishments, engage in just wars, act as a soldier, make legal contracts, hold property, take an oath, when magistrates require it, contract marriage; finally, that legitimate civil ordinances are good creatures of God and divine ordinances, which a Christian can use with safety. 54] This entire topic *concerning the distinction between the kingdom of Christ and a political kingdom* has been explained to advantage [to the remarkably great consolation of many consciences] in the literature of our writers, [namely] that the kingdom of Christ is spiritual [inasmuch as Christ governs by the Word and by preaching], to wit, beginning in the heart the knowledge of God, the fear of God and faith, eternal righteousness, and eternal life; meanwhile it permits us outwardly to use legitimate political ordinances of every nation in which we live, just as it permits us to use medicine or 55] the art of building, or food, drink, air. Neither does the Gospel bring new laws concerning the civil state, but commands that we obey

present laws, whether they have been framed by heathen or by others, and that in this obedience we should exercise love. For Carlstadt was insane in imposing upon us the judicial laws of Moses.<sup>17</sup>

It is clear in the confessional writings of the reformers that there is a delicate balance and that both sides can at times overstep their bounds. It is worth noting that the reformers found a bit of consensus with the Catholic Church on this point. The consensus was the recognition of both the civil authority and the church authority; however, the discord was in knowing where one ended and the other began. It is also important to note the admission that Carlstadt's actions and teachings were not in agreement with the reformers' view of church and state. This is another great example of the care that must be given in applying a healthy balance and biblical framework to the topic of the relationship between church and state.

### **Vocation**

One of the most important theological concepts essential to a productive faith and ministry is that of vocation. This is particularly so in the context of the reserve chaplain and his congregation. In many respects, these two vocations can appear to compete with and detract from one another. By examining the unique properties of these two vocations, a correlation can be reached on how they can interact in a productive and positive manner. A resource for a proper understanding of vocation is Martin Luther, as stated by John Pless:

Against such a backdrop, we consider one of the lost treasures of the Lutheran Church, that is, the doctrine of vocation. We call the doctrine of vocation a "lost treasure" not because Lutherans have excised this doctrine from the *Book of Concord*, but because, we have, in large part, ignored what Dr. Martin Luther and our confessional writings have to teach us about vocation and have instead turned to other

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<sup>17</sup> F. Bente and Dau, W.H.T., eds. and trans., *Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), under Ap XVI: "Of Political Order," <http://www.bookofconcord.org/augsburgconfession.php> (accessed September 4, 2010).

sources in our search to speak meaningfully about the place of the laity in the church and world.<sup>18</sup>

All Christians have a calling in the church and a calling into faith. Luther viewed this in large part as a better way to understand God the Father's true presence in the Christian's life. This understanding of vocation was instrumental in the theology of Martin Luther according to Gary Chamberlain:

It fell to Martin Luther to envision an entirely new understanding of work in the world as a means of the glorification of God. Luther's distinction between the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of earth is a key to understanding the meaning of vocation or calling. Our relationship to God, based on faith, refers us to the kingdom of heaven, while our relationship to the neighbor, based on love, refers us to kingdom of earth. Vocation belongs to the kingdom of earth.<sup>19</sup>

All Christians are called to a local congregation, where they each have a part to play in the community of faith. The boards and committees, the Sunday-school teachers, the trustees, the elders, the ushers and the altar guild, the choir members and the organist, the officers and the voters assembly, are all doing their part to serve one another and their fellow members, building up with the pastor the complex, living organism that is the church.

Lawrence Wohlrabe shares this view:

Vocation includes our work or profession, but only as one small part of a larger whole. In truth, God calls (*vocare* is the Latin term) us in all sorts of ways, roles and "stations" in life. This all-encompassing understanding of vocation was one of Martin Luther's great gifts to the world. And yet it often seems like a hidden treasure, right under our noses—one of the gems we Lutheran disciples have silently squirreled

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<sup>18</sup> John T. Pless, "Reflections on the Life of the Royal Priesthood: Vocation and Evangelism" in *Shepherd the Church: Essays in Pastoral Theology Honoring Bishop Roger D Pittelko*, ed. Frederic Baue et al. (St. Louis: CTS, 2001), 317.

<sup>19</sup> Gary L. Chamberlain, "Protestant and Catholic Meanings of Vocation: Is Business a True Vocation?" *Business as a Calling Interdisciplinary Essays on the Meaning of Business From the Catholic Social Tradition*, ed. Michael Naughton and Stephanie Rumpza (St. Thomas, MN: University of St. Thomas, 2004), 4. <http://www.stthomas.edu/cathstudies/cst/publications/businesscalling.html> (accessed November 22, 2010).



away in our treasure chest. It's time to bring vocation out into the light of day—to appreciate the multitude of ways it, too, is a means whereby Christ's life overflows through our down-to-earth callings.<sup>20</sup>

Christians have a calling to be citizens. God is hidden in the offices of earthly government. God protects us through police officers, firefighters, and the members of the armed forces. God uses earthly authorities to administer the "first use of the law," to restrain and punish evil in society. Christians should also obey the laws, pay their taxes, and honor and pray for their governing officials. Feelings of patriotism and acts of civic-mindedness are fitting responses to the blessings God has given this country and to the citizenship; He has called us to be faithful to His Word.

Vocation challenges us to combine God's calling to us with the gifts He has given to us. This is well stated by Mahan, "Vocation speaks of a gracious discovery of a kind of interior consonance between our deepest desires and hopes and our unique gifts, as they are summoned forth by the needs of others and realized in response to that summons."<sup>21</sup>

In many respects, we do not choose our vocations; God chooses us for them. God gives to His people certain skills and abilities, First Article gifts that are unique to every individual. This allows the Christian to understand that ordinary labors of life are charged with meaning according to Gene Veith: "All callings, no matter how humble in the world's eyes, are the gifts of God to His people. All are avenues of service to one's neighbor and

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<sup>20</sup> Lawrence R. Wohlrabe, "Life Overflowing: Vocation," The Larry Wohlrabe Blog, entry posted March 6, 2010, <http://larrywohrlabe.blogspot.com/2010/03/life-overflowing-vocation.html> (accessed October 20, 2010).

<sup>21</sup> Brian J. Mahan, *Vocation and the Ethics of Ambition* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2002), 11.

ways of glorifying God through one's work."<sup>22</sup> Through our labor, no matter how humble, God is at work.

To the reserve chaplain, he has several vocations: Pastor of a church, chaplain of a military unit, husband of a wife, father of his children, and son to his parents, just to name a few. Each and every one of the vocations demonstrates God at work in the reserve chaplain's life. How is he to reconcile these callings? Each competes for his time, energy and attention. Each is important and is a calling from God. How does he manage these callings and hold them in balance? Again, to answer this question, the concept of vocation needs to be expanded according to A.J. Conyers:

The meaning of the term "vocation," even in the context of the church, but much more so in the world at large, has suffered at the hands of linguistic habit. Like many terms that were once rich with religious implications, it has over time become first narrow in its association with only certain forms of religious life, and then secularized. While early in the life of the church, the teaching on vocation by Origen and Augustine would have included the call to every Christian, even to every human being, the later monastic movement so powerfully affected people's notions of the extent to which one might go in answer to a divine call that "vocation" came to be associated with that one role in the church. Luther and the Protestant Reformers sought to reintroduce the teaching that everyone, no matter their occupation, was a proper object of divine call. The correction was long overdue, but the unintended effect was to suggest that vocation had merely to do with occupation; thus the way was open to a purely bourgeois and secular use of the term.<sup>23</sup>

A brief answer is to rely upon God in fear, love, and trust. Just as mission is the overarching thread that connects the parish ministry setting and the military ministry setting, service of God is the overarching thread that connects the different vocational callings a

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<sup>22</sup> Gene Veith, *A Place to Stand: The Word of God in the Life of Martin Luther* (Nashville: Cumberland House Publishing, 2005), 181.

<sup>23</sup> A.J. Conyers, "The Meaning of Vocation," *Vocation: Christian Reflection* (Waco: Baylor University, 2004), 11.

reserve chaplain has. They are not just “different jobs,” but are actually part and parcel of a similar vocation.

Vocational struggles occur within individuals, within churches, and even within institutions like the armed forces. This is reflected by Reggie McNeal, “I believe the central doctrine for missional renewal is the biblical teaching of the priesthood of all believers, the people of God called out and empowered to join Him in His redemptive mission in the world.”<sup>24</sup> This understanding of vocation sees the variety of callings, all equal in importance and effort. Just like all Christians, the reserve chaplain has to be vigilant in the delicate balance with respect to vocations. The major key to this is the most vital aspect of any relationship: healthy communication of expectations between the church and chaplain. Edward Swanson reiterates this truth, “They (the members of the church) will respond gratefully to the clergyman’s summons to Armed Forces work. Individually and collectively they can do an amazing job.”<sup>25</sup>

Of course, we have focused the whole discussion of vocation upon the individual Christian, but there is room for discussion of vocation upon the collective group of Christians, i.e., the congregation members and the military members. Martin Luther incorporated that understanding into his teaching on vocation, as stated by Heiko Oberman, “On the rare occasions Luther employed the common term *reformatio*, he meant corrective action. Luther did not leave governments and societies an unalterable plan for all times and

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<sup>24</sup> Reggie McNeal, *The Present Future: Six Tough Questions for the Church* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2003), 147.

<sup>25</sup> Edward I. Swanson, *Ministry to the Armed Forces* (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 1996), 57.

all centuries, a “Handbook of Public Life” or a binding program of Christian politics.”<sup>26</sup> A clear understanding and application of vocation is vital for the Christian. Moreover, congregations and reserve chaplains have much to gain from a careful study of the various vocations involved in their congregation members’ lives.

### **The Public Square**

This section addresses the area where vocation of the pastor and the congregation meets the military ministry opportunity. This final section in many respects connects the theological understanding of church and state with the doctrine of vocation.

Theology of the public square incorporates pluralism, inclusivism, and exclusivism concerning the Christian theological approach to other religions. Christian theology takes a decisive public stance and develops a public voice. Kevin Miller suggests the same when he writes:

We have looked at several dimensions that might impact a pastor’s approach to the issue of speaking out on public policy. Issues in the public square are not everybody’s cup of tea. But “rendering to Caesar” in the American system would minimally seem to make every Christian citizen accountable for an informed vote. Derivatively, pastors must have a well-considered and thoughtful answer—and professional practice—regarding how public square issues are handled in the local church where the pastor serves.<sup>27</sup>

There are various challenges and tensions that exist in maintaining integrity in the call of the Gospel. These challenges include that many view the public square as a dangerous place and do not want to take the risk of sharing the Gospel in such an unpredictable setting. There are others that view the public square a powerful and relevant setting that is a promising place to share the Gospel, such as David Hall:

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<sup>26</sup> Heiko A. Oberman, *Luther, Man between God and Devil* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 147.

<sup>27</sup> Kevin Miller, “Pastors and the Public Square,” *Compass Magazine*, October, 2007), 9.

Augustine was a pioneer in asserting that the divine will was more foundational in human affairs than even the greatest of human governments. According to Augustine (and Calvin later), “Divine Providence alone explains the establishment of kingdoms among men.” Even the Roman Empire did not rise and fall apart from the sovereignty of God, and those attempting to account for the rise and fall of governments were counseled not to ignore the active outworking of the provident will of God in nations: “God allows nothing to remain unordered and he knows all things before they come to pass. He is the Cause of causes, although not of all choices.”<sup>28</sup>

The very pluralistic culture of the military challenges the theology and integrity of every chaplain and stands in stark contrast to the culture of a parish church setting.

Because these two ministry contexts are so different, the lay people of a given church could have misconceptions about military ministry, as well as their pastor’s involvement in such a ministry. By examining a Lutheran understanding of sharing the Gospel and faithfully continuing the church’s ministry in a challenging context, such as the military, both the pastor and his congregation can come to a proper understanding and be edified.

Of course, there are incredible challenges to the public square. Eric Treene affirms the challenges when he states, “This problem of many people viewing personal religiosity as out of step with modernity, and public displays of it as the equivalent of second-hand smoke, something which you can indulge in private but which the government must protect you from in public, is a troubling phenomenon touching a wide range of society.”<sup>29</sup> The public square can be very troubling to the Christian because at times it seems a caustic and hostile environment. For example, it is not unusual at all for a service member to approach the chaplain and share a word of correction or rebuke about the prayer he just spoke.

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<sup>28</sup> David Hall, *Calvin in the Public Square: Liberal Democracies, Rights, and Civil Liberties* (Phillipsburg: P & R Publishing, 2010), 41.

<sup>29</sup> Eric W. Treene, “Religion, The Public Square, and the Presidency,” *Harvard Journal of Law & Public Policy* 24 (2001): 8-9.

Noah Feldman highlights the troubling challenge of consensus, “Moreover, with so many different, competing faiths and traditions in our society, it seems hopeless to find consensus once we allow religion to be invoked in public discourse.”<sup>30</sup> At times, the sentiment can seemingly be expressed as a hopeless cause; there are simply too many faiths and they are irreconcilable. So throw them all out. While this is far from the truth, the public square can often allow for this thought and application. For all the challenges, there are incredible opportunities in the public square as well.

The fact of the matter is that the public square will continue to exist, with or without a distinct Christian voice, but it is of utmost importance that the church goes into the public square to share the message of Jesus. The very freedoms that provide roadblocks for Christians also provide incredible avenues.

There are men and women serving in the military that would never set foot in a civilian church. However, they are open to the Gospel simply for the fact that they have a chaplain serving with them. By providing for the allowance of a religion, the public square actually becomes the context in which the Gospel can be shared. The very uniform gives legitimacy to the faith, as does the various duties and responsibilities.

During a time of war, the service members are even more open to the message of Christ. Clarence Abercrombie elaborates, “Since time immemorial men have cried out to powers beyond themselves for deliverance in time of trouble and if you are fighting a war, you’re frequently in a heap of trouble.”<sup>31</sup> The public square affords a mission field unlike any other. One may recall Paul’s words in Acts 17:22-23 as he looked around at the many statues

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<sup>30</sup> Noah Feldman, *Divided by God* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre Ltd., 2005), 222.

<sup>31</sup> Clarence Abercrombie III, *The Military Chaplain* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, Inc., 1977), 31.

on Mars Hill and said, “People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you.”

There is no doubt that we live in a mixed community and that the public square is one of many important locations where the Gospel of Jesus Christ must be proclaimed. To avoid or shun the public square simply leads to quietism; to exclusively stay in the public square simply leads to an enmeshed sense of church and state. These truths lead us, according to Jane Vennard, to an exhortation: “We are called to speak and act for peace and justice, live with kindness and forgiveness and treat our neighbors as ourselves.”<sup>32</sup> The public square is an opportune location to live, show and proclaim the Christian faith. It is in this forum the chaplaincy has a platform to engage the military community.

### **The Theology of the Chaplain Corps**

The mission<sup>33</sup> of the Chaplain Corps is to:

- PROVIDE religious ministry and support to those of our own faith.
- FACILITATE for all religious beliefs.
- CARE for all Marines, Sailors and their family and friends.
- ADVISE commanders to ensure the free exercise of religion.

These four points illustrate the core values of the pluralistic setting that is chaplaincy in the military. Some of the specific actions and duties that chaplains are directed to carry out include:

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<sup>32</sup> Jane E. Vennard, *A Praying Congregation: The Art of Teaching Spiritual Practice* (Herndon: The Alban Institute, 2005), 65.

<sup>33</sup> Clifford M. Drury, *History of the Chaplain Corps US Navy*, Vol. 1. (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Print Office, 1949), 3.

1. Worship practices, holy days, and Sabbath or similar religious observance requests shall be accommodated, except when precluded by military necessity.
2. Religious beliefs shall be included as a factor for consideration when granting separate rations.
3. Religious beliefs shall be considered as a factor for the waiver of required medical practices, subject to military requirements and medical risks to the unit.
4. Familiarization with religious accommodation policies shall be included in the training curricula for command, judge advocate, chaplain, and other appropriate career fields or assignments.
5. Applicants for commissioning, enlistment, and reenlistment shall be advised of their Military Department's specific religious accommodation policies.<sup>34</sup>

In many respects the review of separation of church and state leads to the theology of vocation and the public square. These come together in the expression of military chaplaincy theology. This theology balances the roles and responsibilities of the civil and religious authorities. It also balances the individual's vocation and the collective environment of the public square. It also provides a strong connection for the ministry that occurs in parish settings across the country. We will closely examine the use of reservists, including chaplains, in the next chapter, so that a greater understanding of military ministry can occur. The purpose of the project engages the balance of the relationship between parish ministry and military ministry, and with the theological foundation set, that balance can be achieved.

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<sup>34</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Accommodation of Religious Practices Within the Military Services*, Directive 1300.17 (Washington, DC, 2009).



## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE USE OF RESERVISTS BY THE MILITARY

This chapter will establish the theoretic basis for the study, providing field research that gives theoretic, historical, sociological and contextual background for the research project. To gain a better context to the relationship of the reservist to its two employers (the military employer and civilian employer), this chapter seeks to look at a number of key studies on the recent use of reservists by the military. This will entail exploring what a reservist is required to do for the military and how that affects the individual reservist, the reservist's family, and the reservist's civilian employer. Once that has been established, this chapter will move to the military's use of chaplains. The purpose of this chapter is to continue to provide context for the military ministry a reserve chaplain conducts while at the same time serving the needs of the parish.

Since September 11, 2001, America has been at war. It is a war against terrorism that is fought at home and overseas, in big cities and rural farm towns, in cyberspace and outer space. As the military engages this war, it must utilize all resources at its disposal. One major resource is reserve military members. In this section the focus of the discussion will fall on two areas: (1) the military's use of all reservists since the events of September 11, (2) the military's use of reserve chaplains in that same period.

The military is comprised of two groups: active duty members and reserve duty members. Active duty members are fulltime uniformed employees that have devoted their

entire life to military service. Reserve duty members are part-time employees that have devoted a portion of their life to military service as stated by Jacob Klerman:

Because reserve duty is only part-time, almost all reservists have a civilian job (or are attending school part time or full time). Inevitably, reservists (and therefore DoD policymakers contemplating using reservists) must juggle the requirements of reserve duty with the requirements of that civilian job (or school). For a given level of compensation, the greater the conflict is between reserve responsibilities and civilian jobs, the fewer the people who would be expected to enlist in the reserves.<sup>35</sup>

The reserve military members had not been utilized (mobilized) on a large scale previous to September 11, 2001. Until that time, many reservists had spent twenty or thirty years without being mobilized for active duty even once. That is not the reality of today's reservist as stated by John Lewison:

As a result of the war in Iraq and the nation's increased vigilance against terrorism, tens of thousands of reservists have been and are being called to active military duty. Most will return to civilian life and their jobs. CPA firms and their clients whose employees have been called to serve need to understand their obligations under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA). Signed into law nine years ago by President Clinton, USERRA was designed to give employees who take a leave of absence for active military service certain statutory right--not only to reemployment, but to specific coverage for retirement and wellness benefits.<sup>36</sup>

The role and use of reservists has shifted radically in the past few years and that shift has placed a great pressure on the reservist, their family, and their civilian employer.

A significant use of reservists happened in Operation Desert Storm in the first Gulf War in the 1990s. That awakened a new military dynamic according to David Paap, "Operation Desert Storm has placed both people and support systems under unusual stress.

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<sup>35</sup> Jacob A. Klerman, *Rethinking the Reserves* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2008), xii.

<sup>36</sup> John Lewison, "Military Call Up Prompts Focus on USERRA," *Journal of Accountancy* (January 2004): 74.

Families are suffering and calling hotlines and asking for help in record numbers.”<sup>37</sup> This use of reservists sent a signal that everyone needed to adjust the paradigm of the role of reservists. While this was a significant use of reservists, it was on a fairly short time increment as most reservists served less than six months. While the time was shorter compared to subsequent mobilizations, it was a precursor to the modern day template for the use of the reserves.

This emerging need created an opportunity for more extensive training and preparation. It also highlighted the fluid nature of the relationship of the military to both active duty and reservists. The needs of the military have increasingly incorporated a more significant use of reservists. Reservists are seen as a valuable and important resource, and as such, the military created and maintains programs to support reservists. This is reaffirmed by James Hosek when he writes:

The importance of training and preparation in helping personnel deal with and perform under stress is supported by the literature, data analysis, and focus group comments. Many personnel in our focus groups agreed that training prepared them to perform their duties, but many also felt that existing training needed to be revised to include more training for nontraditional, counterinsurgency, and peacekeeping operations. The military is already adapting its training, using lessons learned in Iraq. Training programs should be kept flexible and responsive, so that changes in enemy tactics can quickly be incorporated into predeployment preparation. Many service members cope with combat-related stressors informally by turning to their peers for support. It may be worthwhile to consider ways of removing the stigma, or reluctance, to seek professional counseling and, further, to consider additional training to enable service members to be more effective in counseling or supporting one another. Our data analysis found that involvement in OEF/OIF combat operations was often unrelated to higher-than-usual stress and intention to stay—a finding that may be a product of the time of our data, 2003 and early 2004. The

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<sup>37</sup> David A. Paap, *Caring for Military Members Facing Separation, War and Homecoming* (St. Louis: Stephen Ministries, 1991) 38.

results could differ in 2005, now that many more service members have been subjected to stress from insurgency attacks.<sup>38</sup>

In a time where our country is at war, the national economy is struggling, and there is a rapid expansion of military care providers, there is still plenty of room to improve. A variety of researchers and studies have indicated that the increased numbers of reservists in use has taxed a care system set up predominately for the active duty personnel. Because of the increased workload, the care system is simply not as effective as it could be, and many reservists found themselves unable to easily access those resources. In addition, many reservists found increased workload and stressors in their own lives. It appears as though there are high turnover percentages for reservists just prior to mobilization, but that percentage is still significant even during the absence of mobilizations according to Thomas Lippiatt:

Reserve personnel units are subject to considerable personnel turbulence, in the normal course of events. As we have seen, within a given unit, turnover rates are often in the range of 20 to 30 percent per year, even in peacetime. In wartime, as units approach mobilization and deployment, one might expect the unit to be stabilized to permit efficient and sequential training of the myriad tasks that must be mastered before deployment. However, our data have shown that *instability*, rather than *stability*, is the rule.<sup>39</sup>

This increased use of reservists is having an incredible rippling effect on three distinct groups: the reservists, their families, and their employers. While the immediate effect on these groups were planned for and there was an attempt to minimize the negative impacts,

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<sup>38</sup> James Hosek, Jennifer Kavanagh, and Laura Miller, *How Deployments Affect Service Members* (Santa Monica: RAND Publications, 2006), 25.

<sup>39</sup> Thomas F. Lippiatt and J. Michael Polich. *Reserve Component Unit Stability: Effects on Deployability and Training* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2010), 55.

there were and are many unplanned consequences of the widespread use of reservists over a prolonged period of time.

### **The Reservists**

Looking for just a moment at the reservists themselves, many have seen impacts on their educational pursuits, their employment goals, as well as personal achievements. This impact is readily apparent according to Laura Werber:

This research analyzed the extent to which interviewees mentioned employment or education problems when asked broadly about the issues resulting from deployment. In addition to this question, on which most of the findings in this chapter are based, we specifically asked reservists and guardsmen about the effect of their Reserve or National Guard service on their education or employment, and we asked spouses about the extent to which their employers or coworkers were supportive during their service member's deployment. When asked directly about the effect of their reserve component service on work or education, 47 percent of service members indicated an effect of some type on education or employment. Of those who mentioned an effect, roughly three-fourths cited a negative effect, and approximately one-fourth referred to a positive effect.<sup>40</sup>

Reservists' see military service in many different ways, but studies clearly indicate there are many sacrifices that are made. The effect of mobilizations on reservists often exaggerates some of the pre-existing dynamics that are present in the reservist's life. Most reservists wake up each morning knowing that it is quite possible to receive word that they will be mobilized for a period of a year or more. That knowledge affects the way they live with respect to their family, their job, the way they spend money, and how they plan for the future. One such study by Bruce Jancin notes: "Reservists are subject to a heavier load of low-intensity war-related stressors that begin piling up even before they reach the combat

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<sup>40</sup> Laura Werber Castaneda, Margaret C. Harrell, Danielle M. Varda, Kimberly Curry Hall, Megan K. Beckett and Stefanie Stern. *Deployment Experiences of Guard and Reserve Families: Implications for Support and Retention* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2008), 86-87.

zone. These include family worries, financial difficulties, unfulfilled obligations back home, misunderstandings about the duration of deployment, and uncertainty about their civilian job security.”<sup>41</sup> In many ways, this can be very difficult for the reservist to process and deal with, much less impart that understanding to others.

While some reservists struggle with keeping balance in their “two lives” of military service and civilian employment, many thrive in this balance. One demonstrable effect of being a reservist is increased training that can be very beneficial to the reservist and the civilian employer. Also, the military has a zero tolerance stance on drug use, which would signal to the employer that their employee is keeping physically fit and not abusing illegal drugs. Many of the effects on reservists are articulated in the next two topics in this section: The reservists’ families and the reservists’ employers.

### **The Reservists’ Families**

The increased and prolonged mobilizations have also impacted the families of reservists. There are thousands of reservists that have been mobilized in the past five years. Some reservists have experienced multiple mobilizations in that same time period. Reservist families have been placed under incredible stress, and that stress has resulted in problems such as divorce, substance abuse, and financial losses. Stacy Bannerman speaks about these stressors and the difference between the support reservists receive as compared to their active duty counterparts:

Our Guardsmen and Reservists perform the same duties as regular active troops when they are in theatre, but they do it with abbreviated training and, all-too-often, insufficient protection and aging equipment. Guard families experience the same stressors as active duty families before, during, and after deployment, although we do

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<sup>41</sup> Bruce Jancin, "Stressors Differ for Reservists," *Internal Medicine News* 38, no.11 (June 2005): 36.

not have anywhere near the same level of support, nor do our loved ones when they come home.<sup>42</sup>

The families are to carry on with the duties and responsibilities of everyday life in the absence of their military reservist. This means the responsibilities of paying the bills, raising the children, managing the finances, administering the paperwork of insurance, legal documents, and correspondence. The burden that was once shared by two people now falls onto one. Children miss their father or mother every day of mobilization, and they try and help the parent left with taking care of the everyday and mundane duties of house cleaning, laundry, cooking, etc. They often also are left to do more on their own without the attention and encouragement to which they are accustomed. Homework and school tests can become harder; their ability to participate in after-school activities such as sports is often affected; and on top of it all they are concerned about the health and well being of their parent as they serve. They may have nightmares that their parent is killed and have unfounded fears (but very real to them) that inhibits their ability to function in their day-to-day life.

Many of these same stressors and dynamics take place with the spouse that is left behind. Often they can feel abandoned and build up resentment at the absence of their spouse. They find themselves in unfamiliar roles: knowing how and where to pay what bills at which time, dealing with a broken toilet or trying to address a car repair. While these seem fairly small, it can become taxing on the spouse. In addition, with the increased work and stress load, the spouse can feel incredibly overwhelmed. Many couples experience these very same problems, but the reservist families can expect them regularly.

Of course, the families try their best to prepare for their military member's mobilization. There are pre-mobilization workshops. There are ombudsmen that are there to

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<sup>42</sup> Stacy Bannerman, "The War at Home," *Foreign Policy in Focus* (March 19, 2008), 19.

help, as well as family readiness volunteers that offer plenty of resources and aid to the families. One dynamic that reservists' families have to deal with is the fact that they may be hundreds of miles away from the reserve center where their military member drills. The reserve families are spread out all over the country; they are not located on one base or in a given community, like their active duty counterparts often are. They are spread out so much that they can become "invisible" and no one in their own neighborhood may know that they are going through a mobilization.

Families also can experience difficulties when their military member comes home. While it is a joyous occasion, there is a significant period of adjustment. There is a "honeymoon" period, but this soon fades away. Spending that much time apart requires the whole family to re-learn family roles and responsibilities as well as reintegrate together. The family and the military member need to focus on communication and sharing their experiences while they were apart. Sometimes this sharing can be a "who had it worse" debate and can illuminate some of the issues experienced during the mobilization.

Thankfully, the military has taken notice of the immense need to care for reservists as well as their families. Military One Source was launched as a way to get military members connected to resources that address virtually every care issue. Military One Source is a resource available to both active duty and reserve members.

The military as a whole had put many resources in place to help the military member and the family with the dynamics of serving. This includes pre-mobilization, mobilization, and post-mobilization.



## **The Reservists' Employers**

The impact of the increased mobilization of reservists has also acutely impacted the employers around the country. Evan Pondel speaks to the effect on the workforce when he notes:

Small businesses throughout the country have seen their reservist employees come and go in time of war. And as U.S. military intervention persists in Iraq, many employers are beginning to factor the cost of losing a valuable worker for several months. The bigger the firm or public agency, the less stress usually imposed on the overall flow of doing business. The problem is, companies are having a difficult time quantifying the losses and that in itself is drawing concern.<sup>43</sup>

It is a burden for a company or business to lose an employee for such a long period of time. It is also a constant worry that at any moment they may lose that reservist employee. These factors contribute to frustration and stress regarding military duty both on the part of the reservist and the employer.

As much as employers want to support their reservist employee, there are some notable instances where the employer goes above and beyond, as noted by Leigh Strope:

When National Guardsmen and reservists ship off to Iraq, their employers often answer the call too, with care packages, extra paychecks and continued health-care benefits. 'The dominant response has been to pull together and make it work, and to stand behind those called to serve,' said Bob Hollingsworth, executive director of the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.<sup>44</sup>

It is encouraging that so many employers see supporting the reservists not simply as a legal requirement, but an opportunity to support the military and its members. When an employee is diligent in his work at his civilian job, when he clearly communicates the demands of reserve duties to that employer, and when he strengthens the relationship with his

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<sup>43</sup> Evan Pondel, "Reservists Leave Employers Hanging," *Los Angeles Daily News*, March 16, 2004.

<sup>44</sup> Leigh Strope, "Companies Ease the Way for Reservists," *Seattle Times*, April 13, 2003.

employer, it is much more likely that there will be positive and healthy support. Michele Forte states as much in her research:

Employers play a critical role in helping the men and women of the National Guard and Reserve carry out their mission. In offices, schools, hospitals, and other workplaces, employers provide time off, pay, health-care benefits, and job security to their Guard and Reserve employees. These patriotic efforts allow our men and women in uniform to focus on their military assignments and help strengthen our country.<sup>45</sup>

From a review of the literature regarding the military and their use of reservists, it is apparent that there is a toll on families and the employers of reservists. Jacob Wilson stated, “An unabated demand for volunteers needed to meet national security requirements continues to place a strain not only on Reservists and their families, but also on employers of Reservists. This strain can affect the relationship between employer and employee, and, if not addressed properly, it may lessen an employer's support for Reserve volunteer duty.”<sup>46</sup>

These issues certainly pose a challenge but also an incredible opportunity for the ministry and direction of the chaplaincy. The next section will examine the role of the chaplain in respect to the changing needs of the reservist community, their families, and their employers.

### **The Military's Use of Chaplains**

The effect of mobilizations upon reserve chaplains has also been profound. Chaplains serving in a combat zone often have growth in the faith according to M.S. Ernstmeier, “For some, it promoted sincere soul searching and a restudy of church teachings

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<sup>45</sup> Michele Forte, “Reemployment Rights for the Guard and Reserve: Will Civilian Employers Pay the Price for National Defense?” *Air Force Law Review* 59 (March 2007): 349.

<sup>46</sup> Jacob Wilson, “Easing the Strain,” *Citizen Airman*, February 1, 2009, 18.

for them to function as a Protestant chaplain and a pastor.”<sup>47</sup> For many reserve chaplains, they have employment as a sole or an associate pastor at a local church, or perhaps as an institutional chaplain at a hospital, nursing home or hospice facility. In most contexts, the reserve chaplain serves as the sole pastor in their civilian job. When he is mobilized, it often is received as “devastating” news. For those reserve chaplains that serve in a ministry team at their civilian job, there are also consequences. The other staff members assume the roles and duties of the mobilized chaplain, thereby creating stress and an imbalance as fewer people try to accomplish the same (or greater) amount of work.

The reserve chaplains have a unique contribution to the dynamic of reservists and their employers. By definition, every pastor is considered a “key employee” that adds great value to their employer, the local church. At most churches, the pastor is the single most visible employee, the spiritual leader, and the model of leadership for the council and other church members. If the pastor is absent, especially for a prolonged time such as a mobilization, members of the church begin to feel a sense of loss, or identity, and direction.

Of course, the military utilizes reserve chaplains in many ways: sometimes it is for mobilization purposes, but often, like most reservists, it is for monthly drills at their duty station. Chaplains are to provide for the spiritual needs of the military men and women in their care. This most often takes the form of worship services, Bible studies, and counseling sessions. However, chaplains also teach classes and lead training on topics such as suicide awareness and prevention, marriage, pre-mobilization, post-mobilization, substance abuse, world religions, and much more.

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<sup>47</sup> M.S. Ernstmeier, *They Shall Not March Alone* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1990), 215.

The chaplain is used in various ways while serving in the military context. Paul Croxon summarizes the most basic function of chaplains when he states, "Chaplains, as members of the unit, learn what religious or non-religious needs each member has. If someone has a particular religious need, the chaplain is often able to meet it or find a chaplain from that faith to support it."<sup>48</sup> The chaplain has many duties outlined in the directives and orders of the branch of military service in which he serves.

In addition, the chaplain is to be the moral and ethical advisor to the command. This entails, according to an article in 2009, a strong relationship with the command and being knowledgeable to speak to the variety of issues that would involve morals as well as core values and ethics:

As commissioned officers, Navy chaplains are professionally qualified clergy of a certifying faith group who provide for the free exercise of religion for all military members of the Department of the Navy, their family members, and other authorized persons, in accordance with reference (a). Chaplains advise commands in matters of morale, morals and spiritual well being. In accordance with Article 1063 of reference (b), chaplains shall be detailed or permitted to perform only such duties as are related to religious ministry support. Chaplains shall not bear arms. Chaplains shall not be assigned collateral duties which violate the religious practices of the chaplain's faith group, require services as director, solicitor, or treasurer of funds other than administrator of a Religious Offering Fund, serve on a court-martial or stand watches other than that of duty chaplain.<sup>49</sup>

Chaplains also are valuable resources to prepare families and the command for mobilizations. The recent surge in reservist mobilizations has seen the reserve chaplains expand deeper into the community and deeper into reservists' families. This surge and its impact is stated by Jeff Hink, "As of November 2008, more than 120,000 members of the

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<sup>48</sup> Paul Croxon, "Defending Freedom through Religion," *Airman* 53, no. 7 (November 2009): 12.

<sup>49</sup> U.S. Department of the Navy, *Religious Ministry Support Within The Department of the Navy*, SECNAVINST 1730.7B, N097, 12 (Washington, DC, 2000).

National Guard and military reserves have been activated as part of recent war efforts.”<sup>50</sup>

Each one of these reservists has family of some sorts: spouse, children, parents, etc. The ministry of reserve chaplains has reached much farther than just the service men and women.

The military also has utilized reserve chaplains in innovative ways. For instance, reservists have been utilized for emergency needs around the country as well as plugging into everyday local community needs. Bo Joyner speaks about the ways in which reservists have been trained to meet these needs, “Innovative readiness training (IRT) continues to be a great way for Reservists to practice their skills while helping out needy communities across the country. IRT is also about building relationships with people in the communities where the Reservists are serving.”<sup>51</sup> Reservists (chaplains as well as many other ranks and rates) found themselves helping in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, as well as helping those in Haiti after powerful earthquakes. This not only serves as help to those in need, but also acts as a facet of the military’s role: humanitarian aid and peace keeping missions. As the military engages in a mission, that mission may begin as a combat mission and then shift into a humanitarian mission or vice versa. The reservists that serve gain valuable experience through programs such as IRT. This is a vital component of chaplains’ ministry.

Often the chaplain will spearhead community relation projects (COMRELS) both in the states and overseas. This is a golden opportunity to interact with the local community and to build and strengthen relationships through service projects and events. It may be building an orphanage, serving food, or helping repair a damaged road. There are few limits on what a

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<sup>50</sup> Jeff Hink, *The Returning Military Veteran: Is your Organization Ready?* (The FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, August 1, 2010).

<sup>51</sup> Bo Joyner, “Innovative Readiness Training,” *Citizen Airman* 58, no.2 (March 2006): 28.

COMREL can be, but the ministry to both the military and the local civilian community can be powerful.

As reservists come back from mobilization, they can have incredible difficulties re-integrating back into their lives. In many respects, they have missed out on a year of their “normal” life, and have sacrificed that as service to the country. They miss birthdays and anniversaries, holiday celebrations, and major life moments like a birth, a death, a graduation or a marriage. Chaplains play a key role in serving the reserve community: they care for the reservists and their families before mobilization, helping prepare them for that experience. They also are vital in helping reintegrate reservists back into their civilian life after mobilization as recognized in a government report:

As demobilized reservists return to civilian life and their civilian employment, the difficulties some face in maintaining positive working relationships with their employers is an area of interest. Maintaining employers' continued support for their reservist employees will be critical if DOD is to retain experienced reservists in these times of longer and more frequent deployments. The employment and reemployment rights of service members as they transition between their federal duties and their civilian employment are governed by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) of 1994.<sup>52</sup>

A significant and emerging ministry of the reserve chaplain is helping address the relationship between his reservists and their employers and their families. It is a challenging and ongoing task. The reserve chaplain has a number of resources to accomplish the task, and this is due to the military's increasing use of reservists.

In conclusion, this chapter has given a great deal of information as to the scope and the challenge of military ministry in the reserves. It has highlighted the demands and requirements of not only reservists, but chaplains as well. This information is vital to the research project design as well as the heart of the project itself. The purpose is to seek a

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<sup>52</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Improvements to Promote Positive Working Relationships*, prepared by Stephen Byrnes (Washington, DC, August, 2008).

healthy balance to the two ministry settings of the reserve chaplain: the military setting and the parish setting.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE RESEARCH PROJECT DESIGN

This chapter demonstrates how the project is designed to address the problem (the pastor and the members of Hope Lutheran Church are unprepared regarding the inevitable mobilization of their pastor), as well accomplish the purpose (to develop a defined and agreed upon preparedness process to ready the congregation and the reserve chaplain that will enhance the ministry of the pastor at Hope Lutheran Church before, during, and after mobilization by utilizing guidelines and a mobilization agreement document).

This chapter seeks to share the theoretic influence that has informed the very structure, design, and process of the research design project. This will entail sharing the chronicle of the field research. The purpose is to clearly see the connection of the design to the theological foundation. It will also relate the study of reservists to the design of gathering the information to better understand the process of drafting a mobilization agreement document.

The research design was built around the concept of getting at the heart of the process of developing a mobilization agreement document. The goal was to identify those elements of a healthy process and incorporate them into the development of the document for Hope Lutheran and their pastor.

It was key to start the research targeting the demographic that would produce the most relevant information and accurate results. Therefore, many Lutheran Church Missouri



Synod congregations being served by pastors that are also in the military reserves were considered. These congregations were further qualified by such factors as having a mobilization agreement document and/or experiencing a mobilization.

Theoretic research influenced the design of the project by examining a few key dynamics in the life of the churches surveyed as well as their pastor. For instance, the design is predicated on the various doctrines of the relationship between church and state, of vocation, as well as the public square. Each of these churches and pastors had different ministry contexts and different experiences upon mobilization. All of it had to do with theological beliefs that would affect the perception of ministry both at the church and with the military.

The theological research influenced the design of the project in many ways. Scripture is an anchor and foundation for all that we do. In particular, the various lenses that were utilized focused God's truth into the context of the issues that confront congregations with pastors serving in the military. Looking at the connection between church and state offered a rich examination of a Christian's role and responsibility to the governing authorities.

Studying the doctrine of vocation was meaningful in that it deepened an understanding of the roles that define the life of a Christian. For instance, God calls reserve chaplains to other vocational roles such as father, husband, and pastor. The research design reflected this in two major ways.

First, the research focused on other congregations that had experienced mobilization. Not only was the pastor interviewed, but so were the congregational president and the head elder of the church. This interview was administered in the context of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed by the researcher and consisted of five short answer questions.

The questions were designed to focus on the process used to develop the mobilization agreement as well as to evaluate the usefulness of the document during mobilization.

Second, the research design took into consideration that the theological outlook on mission and ministry would see a diverse application in the roles of these three people (the pastor, the president and the head elder).

Theoretic researched influenced the design of the project by including the impact of military ministry both on the reserve member as well as his employer. In the study of contemporary scholarship on the military's use of reservists, it became increasingly clear there are several stressors that impact both the reservist and his civilian employer. The research questions were written and presented based on this research.

The theoretic research influenced the design of the project by connecting the theology to the very real and tangible issues of today's military reservist. The use of reservists is always evolving into new models and the trends and movements are crucial to having the proper connection between theology and practice, ie., a mobilization agreement for a reserve chaplain and his congregation.

The theological and theoretical research also influenced the design of the project in the following manner: The project design required the theology to guide and inform both the church and the reserve chaplain in this process. Without a proper examination and exploration of such topics as church and state, vocation and the public square, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to have a foundation to deal with the reserve chaplaincy.

## **A Chronicle of Field Research**

For a better understanding of the project, it is vital to examine the manner in which the field research was conducted and that data was gathered. The field research for the project conformed to the following chronological process and implementation:

1. In October 2010 the researcher informed Hope Lutheran Church that he would be conducting research that would both better prepare the church for the drafting of a mobilization agreement as well as serve as the Major Applied Project for his studies at Concordia Seminary. The researcher had spent from June 2010 through October 2011 researching dozens of mobilization agreements from different churches. Many patterns emerged during the comparison and contrast of these documents.
2. In November 2010, the researcher drafted a questionnaire to be administered to three church leaders in a given congregation: the president, the head elder, and the pastor/reserve chaplain. These questionnaires targeted the pastor/reserve chaplain for obvious reasons. The selection of the other two leaders was also deliberate. Elders hold the role in most churches as offering spiritual oversight to the pastor and the congregation, and also, elders often deal with administering policy regarding the pastor. The president was targeted because often times he is given the responsibilities of speaking for the church, as well as leading the council and lay leaders. A survey questionnaire was developed by the researcher and approved by the leaders of the Ministry to Armed Forces (MAF) of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS). The survey consists of five open-ended questions and the same survey was administered to reserve chaplains as well as the key leaders. The surveys were initially given through electronic mail and then followed up with telephone calls to probe deeper into the answers.

3. In November of 2010, the researcher again contacted Lutheran Church Missouri Synod's MAF director, Mark Schrieber, to inform him of the project and request a list of names of reserve chaplains that had been mobilized. These chaplains and their congregations also had a mobilization agreement in place before mobilization occurred.
4. In November of 2010, the researcher contacted those chaplains and churches and informed them of the project and asked if they would be willing to participate. Of the fifteen chaplains and churches contacted, only ten committed to participating.
5. In November and December of 2010, the researcher administered the questionnaires and analyzed the data. Follow up phone calls were made to assure the process went smoothly. The questionnaires were sent out via e-mail and were sent back in the same fashion. The data gathered was analyzed to ascertain patterns that denoted health and stability in the relationship between the church and the military ministry. Such factors as monthly duties, yearly duties, and mobilization were also explored. The questions stemmed directly from the literature review that suggested these factors have strong bearing on the employer/employee relationship.
6. In January of 2011, the researcher analyzed and used the data to help create a questionnaire for the council of Hope Lutheran Church in order to aid the process of developing a mobilization agreement document. The data influenced the council questionnaire in three major areas: (1) the data on the formation of the document, (2) the data on the reserve military ministry on the church, and (3) the data on how the document served their needs during mobilization. The questionnaire for the council was markedly different than the questionnaire developed in phase one of the research. This difference was due to Hope Council's limited knowledge of the chaplaincy and the fact that there was no agreement

document in place, nor had a mobilization occurred. The council questionnaire inquired as to the knowledge the council had of the chaplaincy and the chaplaincy's impact on their church.

7. In February of 2011, the researcher administered the pretest questionnaire. In light of all of the research and data collected, the church council, together with the researcher, created a first draft of the mobilization agreement. This put into application the information that had been acquired through the project research and design. Finally, the researcher administered the post-test questionnaire. The researcher then analyzed the data collected. The analysis of the first phase of the data collected (the other churches and their pastors) is based on the counting of key words and phrases that emerged as patterns. The analysis of the data also focused on the process of developing a mobilization agreement; special attention and depth was spent on this topic.

In addition, analysis took into account the variety of variables such as length of mobilization, health of the church, size of the church, etc. The findings would then lead to identifying a healthy process for Hope Lutheran Church and its reserve chaplain to draft a mobilization agreement. This data directly resulted in the second phase of research as well as being instrumental in the formation of a mobilization document.

The second phase of the data collected (Hope Lutheran Council pretest and post-test) is based on the comparison of Likert scale questions as well as short answer questions. This second questionnaire was also developed by the researcher to simply ascertain the knowledge the council had as to the scope and impact of the reserve military chaplaincy on the church. It also sought to identify the council's response as to what would happen to the church, the pastor, and the pastor's family in the event of mobilization. By comparing the responses of

the two, any learning that took place during the process of developing the document could be assessed.

These findings reflect the process and creation of a mobilization agreement document for Hope Lutheran Church in Melbourne, FL.

## CHAPTER SIX

### PROJECT RESEARCH RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The project research consists of two major portions: (1) the questionnaire administered to church leaders and their reserve chaplains and (2) the questionnaire administered to Hope Lutheran Church council members. The purpose of the entire project, as well as each component of the study and research, is to gain better understanding of the process of developing a mobilization agreement. The project goal is to enhance the mission and ministry of Hope Lutheran and its pastor as he serves in the military.

The study began by engaging congregational leaders and their reserve chaplain/pastors and finding what process they used to develop a mobilization agreement and how the agreement was utilized once mobilization had occurred. In addition, it looked at what went well or poorly during the mobilization and how the mobilization agreement connected to those issues.

In regards to the study involving the reserve chaplains and their churches, it is worth noting that ten churches, along with their pastors, committed to doing the questionnaire and to participate in this project. Of that ten, only five actually did. Therefore, the findings of this study include a small number of participants, only fifteen people in three congregations. However, there was important data gathered from the five that didn't participate. In follow up phone calls and e-mails, patterns began to emerge.

One church (and their pastor) indicated that the timing was simply not convenient for them as the study occurred shortly before, but also during, the Thanksgiving holiday and the busy season of Advent. One church shared that the pastor had just taken a call, and that the obvious transition that was taking place made participation impossible.

However, the last three churches revealed something quite significant. They found “old wounds” they didn’t want “re-opened” and they also shared that some of the various leaders (i.e., the president and/or head elder) involved at the time of the mobilization either had left the church or no longer wished to “rehash a difficult time.”

In addition, there were five other churches and pastors that never committed to participating in the project for a number of reasons. These reasons include such dynamics as the pastor being unwilling or unable to engage his church on this topic. There were also those churches that had such a rough experience that the pastor was no longer serving there, or the church leaders involved at the time had actually left the church.

Speculating on these findings is not just an argument from silence. Even though all churches did not formally participate in this project, it is clear that there are many churches and reserve chaplains hurting out there. They had difficulty with mobilization, are having difficulty dealing with the past mobilization, and most likely will continue to have difficulty. This implies that there is much work to be done to address the hurt and pain still present in many churches as a result of mobilization.

There are many other possible factors for non-response that have been observed in other studies involving reservists. Many times, reservists have no time for reflection once they come back from mobilization. Once they are back in the United States, the military runs a series of assessments to assure that there are no post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD)



issues. This encourages reservists to say to everyone that they are “fine.” They do this because they just simply want to go back home. If they were to truly share, they might be held longer and get more tests instead of going home right away.

Once they are home, many reservists get thrown right back into their old life. They reconnect with family, settle into the old routines, report to their civilian employer, and reintegrate back into their lives as they knew it. In a sense it is an environment one year older than it was before they left. It is an environment that is disconnected for the chaplain who has lived a year in a much different context.

Another possible reason for non-response is that this study is predicated on the response of three people in key positions. During a stressful time, like the pastor being mobilized, it is a great strain on a layperson, even one that is experienced and a gifted leader. Often, these three leaders saw the situation differently and the non-responses could be reflective of the inability to have unity on the mobilization, even now.

The findings of the non-responsive churches and their pastors give incredibly valuable information for Hope Lutheran as they proceeded with the formation of a mobilization agreement document. Those non-responsive churches had a document in place and still had a difficult time, so that reveals that simply having a document does not guarantee the church peace and stability during mobilization.

The findings of the three congregations and pastor/reserve chaplains that did participate provided many intriguing insights into the project.

### **Findings Regarding the Knowledge of the Church Prior to Calling the Pastor**

All of the churches and pastors knew of the commitment given to the military ministry. It is clear that the leaders and pastors knew the basic duties and responsibilities.

Included in this understanding was the fact that a minimum included two days a month (twenty-four days a year) of “drills” where the chaplain would be serving the military. In addition to that, there was a clear understanding of two weeks (fourteen days a year) of training. They also understood that the chaplain would also have other days in the year serving military needs as they arose. Finally, they all knew that the chaplain could be mobilized for up to one year. Knowing all of these factors, these three churches, their leaders, and their pastor made the commitment.

The findings also indicate that the perception of those duties changed over a period of time. For instance, one respondent noted that the impact of the military ministry seemed to grow bigger as the chaplain was promoted. Also, two chaplains noted that it grew increasingly difficult to balance the responsibilities of the “two jobs” as time went on. The ultimate expression of this finding was found during the mobilization. It was one thing to understand there was a possibility of mobilization; but upon mobilization, it felt as though it was a commitment they wanted to reconsider.

The findings here are consistent with the situation of Hope Lutheran Church. Hope also knows and understands, as does their pastor/chaplain, the demands and commitment of serving in the military. It is suggested that Hope also take great care in how this understanding needs to be checked and strengthened over time to expand and meet the needs of a changing church as well as a changing world.

### **Findings of the Impact of the Reserve Chaplaincy on Congregational Ministry**

These findings are at the heart of the project and study. Three churches came away with what they characterized as an overall “positive” impact, whereas two churches characterized it as an overall “negative” impact. These characterizations are directly

connected to the process they employed to create a mobilization document and the quality of the document they created. In other words, the churches that had a positive impression of military ministry had done the hard work of employing a process and creating a relevant and applicable mobilization document. The churches that did not have a positive impression simply did not invest time or effort in the process and also did not have a document that was of any worth.

Another finding of the churches that had a positive impact was that they could articulate clear benefits to the congregation from the military ministry. These were such statements as: (1) “the church gained several new military families due to the chaplain/pastor’s military involvement,” (2) “the church saved a lot of money by using TRICARE (military healthcare) instead of typical LCMS options,” (3) “it made what we heard in the news more personal and we felt personally involved in the war,” and (4) “the congregation saw ministry to the military as an extension of its ministry.” These churches were able to look at a number of areas in which the impact was positive in nature, including impact on staff. These two churches also shared that while the overall impact was positive, the impact of mobilization was disruptive to the life of the congregation. There is no denying that all churches were united on that point.

The churches that had a negative impression saw the mobilization not only as devastating, but almost fatal. The congregations said the impact on church ministry was “silent suffering for all” and that the military “took the energy and time and performance” out of the pastor/chaplain. They saw virtually no positive impacts of the military ministry and saw it primarily as “a distraction” and as “a threat” to the church. Interestingly, these views were shared by all of the representatives of the church. Another strong finding in this

church's response is that during the mobilization itself, it was chiefly concerned with the "offerings and attendance" because they dipped considerably. This church also had negative staffing issues with other employees as a result of the pastor's military ministry.

These findings suggest that Hope Lutheran build positive connections to the military ministry and that the pastor/chaplain also build positive connections between the church and the military ministry. Any way in which the two ministries can be connected, strengthened, and celebrated will be of great benefit to all.

### **Findings of the Process Creating the Mobilization Agreement**

The findings of this section is of high value to Hope Lutheran because there is an assumption that the process of creating the document affects the document's worth and use inasmuch as it is indicative of the relationship of the church and pastor, as well as their approach to military ministry.

All of the churches used templates to create their mobilization document. Many of them looked at a variety of samples and simply edited a template of a mobilization document to fit the needs of their situation. One church simply let the pastor/chaplain write it all and then signed off on it, while another church utilized the board of elders to create the document.

One critical finding was that the more people were involved in the process, the better the document. The documents of the churches that had many people in the process had more detailed documents, more accurate documents, and clear courses of action. The document of the church that had a sole person involved in drafting the document was a very abstract document that neglected to address even the most basic needs.

Most of the mobilization agreement documents were created in a session or two consisting of a few hours. Very little education was involved in preparing for the creation of the document, nor was theological reflection given in the instance of these three churches.

However, the creation of these documents highlighted the church leadership's views on the pastor's military ministry. Often times, in the formation of the document, church leaders were able to engage in discussions and debates about the dual ministries of the pastor. All three churches report these discussions in the formation of the document as "fruitful and good."

These findings suggest for Hope Lutheran to consult a variety of document templates and edit the documents to meet their immediate needs. It is also recommended that the process be one that involves many of the church leaders so as to gain a broader perspective and have a more detailed and relevant document.

### **Findings of Proactive Activities Preparing for Mobilization**

These findings are beneficial inasmuch as they point the congregation and pastor to one probability: That one day the pastor/chaplain will be mobilized. Based on this truth, church leaders will either be prepared or unprepared.

The churches that had positive impressions of military ministry did amazing things prior to the pastor being mobilized. They actively prepared for that event. These churches did the following:

- developed lay leadership
- educated the congregation and leaders on what would happen if mobilized
- brought on a part time pastor to help with pastoral duties
- developed a plan that everyone agreed on and committed to

These churches did their normal ministry activities and programs, continued on with the mission and vision of their congregations, but they were also intentional in developing a plan for success in the event of mobilization. They did not “live in fear” or “stick their heads in the sand” hoping somehow their pastor/chaplain would be spared mobilization. They reflected a quiet confidence in being proactive in that ministry situation.

One church, however, did virtually nothing to prepare itself for mobilization. In contrast, they “hoped it would never happen,” and anytime a discussion came up about the possibility, they simply stopped the talk. This church viewed the ministry and direction of their congregation as “completely separate” from the ministry and direction of the pastor/chaplain’s military ministry. They rarely viewed the chaplaincy as an extension of their ministry, nor did they do any proactive activities to prepare themselves.

These findings suggest that Hope Lutheran be engaged with the development of lay leaders, as well as the formation of small groups. There is also a recommendation to educate the lay people about the chaplaincy and its impact on the church, both the good and the bad.

### **Findings of Benefits and Shortcomings of the Mobilization Document**

The respondents to the questionnaire had quite a number of reflections on this final section, and it gives yet more intriguing findings. This is of vital importance to Hope Lutheran as its members consider what the mobilization document can do for their situation.

One church leader reflected, “The document reminded me of our responsibility to the pastor, his family, and to our church.” For that church, it was not simply some obscure document that was filed away and forgotten, but rather it was a document that characterized their calling. The pastor in that same church also stated the document “wasn’t particularly useful in our case because we had a high level of trust and communicated regularly. Had that

not been the case, I imagine a document like this would be much more important.” How compelling that this church and its leaders had such a wide-ranging, but remarkably consistent, view.

Another church saw the benefits of the document limited to the “easy stuff” regarding general month to month military duty but “completely useless” regarding actual mobilization. The church leaders expressed frustration and anger over the limited nature of the document and the inability to control “how, when, and where” the mobilization occurs.

The application for Hope Lutheran is that the document will most likely not cover every single detail, but it will most certainly reflect the relationship of the pastor and church. The findings here suggest the chief benefit of the document is that the church and pastor are clearly communicating roles and expectations, as well as a “game plan” on how to minister no matter what may come.

### **Findings of Phase Two Research**

#### Hope Lutheran Council Pretest Results (The council has seven members.)

**Table 5.1 Question One: The military chaplaincy is an extension of our church’s outreach.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Pre-Test	6	1			
Post-Test	5	2			

Overall, the findings were very positive in support of the military chaplaincy and its impact on the church, and a good knowledge of the chaplaincy was displayed. The first question states, “The military chaplaincy is an extension of our church’s outreach,” to which the results were six responses strongly agreeing, while one response agreed. These responses

lead one to believe the leaders of Hope Lutheran Church see the reserve duties of their pastor as consistent and strongly connected to the mission and ministry of the church. Interestingly, the post-test reflected a shift of at least one member of the council from strongly agree to agree.

**Table 5.2 Question Two: A mobilization document is required for all churches with reserve chaplains.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Pre-Test	4	2	1		
Post-Test	5	2			

The second statement “A mobilization document is required for all churches with reserve chaplains” resulted in four responses of strong agreement, two agreed, and one response was neutral. This reflects that not all of the leaders of Hope Lutheran were aware that indeed a document is required. This begins to reflect the limited knowledge the lay leadership had with regard to requirements of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. However, the post-test result saw a change of a council member from being neutral to strong agreement. This demonstrates a level of learning in the process of drafting the mobilization document.

**Table 5.3 Question Three: The pastor’s monthly military duties detract from church ministry.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Pre-Test			1	2	4
Post-Test			1	1	5

The third statement, “The pastor’s monthly military duties detract from church ministry” also reaffirmed the finding that the leaders saw the chaplaincy as part and parcel of



the church ministry. Four responded that they strongly disagreed, while two disagreed and one remained neutral. The church leaders could not identify any issues in the past five years in which the military duties of their pastor detracted from church ministry. The post-test revealed that one council member went from disagree to strongly disagree. This may indicate that the council members were able to reflect on the low impact nature of monthly drills.

**Table 5.4 Question Four: The pastor’s yearly military duties (two week annual training) detract from church ministry.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Pre-Test			1	2	4
Post-Test			1	1	5

The pretest continued with the fourth statement, “The pastor’s yearly military duties (two week annual training) detract from church ministry.” The results were identical to the third statement just reviewed. This finding concludes that the leadership at Hope Lutheran Church has a similar view of monthly military drills and the annual two-week training, in terms of impact. This indicates that there is minimal impact in any negative way. The post-test shift is identical to the third statement just reviewed as well. This suggests remarkable consistency in the view of the council upon monthly drills and annual training.

**Table 5.5 Question Five: The military chaplaincy provides resources to enhance the pastor and our church.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Pre-Test	3	3	1		
Post-Test	3	3	1		

The fifth statement, “The military chaplaincy provides resources to enhance the pastor and our church,” reflected another positive finding. Three strongly agreed, while another three agreed, and one was neutral. This suggests that the leadership of Hope Lutheran can identify and observe resources gained in the military setting and their impact and use on both the pastor’s ministry and the church’s ministry. This was the one statement that saw no change whatsoever between the pretest and post-test. This suggests a general support of what the chaplaincy provides in terms of resources. This finding suggests that more education can be done to highlight the many benefits the military provides to their chaplains and churches.

**Table 5.6 Question Six: The likelihood of mobilization is a significant challenge.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Pre-Test	1		2	4	
Post-Test	1	1	2	3	

The sixth statement, “The likelihood of mobilization is a significant challenge” drew a finding I did not expect. Four disagreed, while two remained neutral and one strongly agreed. I would have expected all council members to agree or strongly agree. This finding suggests that the council members seem to think that the mobilization would not be a significant challenge to the church at all. I would have expected all council members to agree or strongly agree yet again. This finding suggests that the council members still seem to think that the mobilization would not be a significant challenge to the church at all.

**Table 5.7 Question Seven: The pastor’s family is a chief concern and responsibility of the church.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Pre-Test	4	2	1		
Post-Test	6	1			

The seventh statement in the pretest, “The pastor’s family is a chief concern and responsibility of the church” showed that four strongly agreed, two agreed, and one remained neutral. This finding suggests that the church council is in agreement that the pastor’s family is both their responsibility and a chief concern. This response is consistent with their care and oversight of the pastor and his family. This finding suggests that the church council became even more convinced that the pastor’s family is both their responsibility and a chief concern. This response remains consistent with their care and concern of the pastor and his family.

**Table 5.8 Question Eight: The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod supports the reserve chaplaincy.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Pre-Test	5	1	1		
Post-Test	6	1			

**Table 5.9 Question Nine: The SELC District supports the reserve chaplaincy.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Pre-Test	5	1	1		
Post-Test	4	3			

The eighth and ninth statements, “The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod supports the reserve chaplaincy,” and “The SELC District supports the reserve chaplaincy” were answered in identical fashion in the pretest. Five strongly agreed, while one agreed, and one remained neutral. This suggests the council is well aware that indeed the LCMS and the SELC are both in support of the reserve ministry. For the eighth statement, six strongly

agreed, while one agreed. However, the ninth statement was responded to with four strongly agreeing and three agreeing. This suggests the council may perceive a lack of connection between the LCMS and the SELC in support of the reserve ministry. This provides an opportunity for greater learning and dialog.

**Table 5.10 Question Ten: Hope Lutheran has a defined plan in the event of the pastor’s mobilization.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Pre-Test	1	3		2	1
Post-Test	6	1			

The final statement of the pretest, “Hope Lutheran has a defined plan in the event of the pastor’s mobilization” had an interesting finding. One strongly disagreed, two disagreed, three agreed, and one strongly agreed. This is one of the most relevant findings of the entire project. The leadership was divided over the perception of having a defined plan in the event of mobilization. No neutral responses were given, and this was the only statement that generated four different responses. This suggests that the council is simply not united on a mobilization plan. However, the post-test had a profound finding. Six strongly agreed while one agreed. The leadership was divided over the perception of having a defined plan in the event of mobilization at the pretest. The post-test response suggests that the council is much more united on a mobilization plan. This has profound implications for the church and pastor.

**The Findings of the Pretest Short Answer Questions**

The first question was “What is he required to do for the military in regards to”:

Monthly Duties – Five council members responded with the same answer of “Spend two days a month in military duty,” while two members responded that they did not know. These

findings suggest that the majority of the council knows the responsibility and commitment, while two members simply did not know what the chaplaincy entailed on a monthly basis.

Yearly Duties – Four council members responded with the answer, “Spend two weeks a year in training,” while one responded “a week a year,” and two members responded that they did not know. These findings are consistent with the previous part of this question and highlights that two members have a deficient understanding of the military chaplaincy’s requirements.

Training Requirements – This question generated varied responses from the council. They included: “various schools as offered”, “2 weeks yearly”, “physical training”, “pass physical and various exams,” and “perform all functions of military officer at commander grade, be ready to mobilize at all times, maintain uniform and gear.” Two members responded they didn’t know. These findings suggest the council is very unsure as to what the military requires of its chaplains. This may also be an answer as to why the council had trouble identifying resources that improve the pastor and the church.

Other Requirements – Five council members responded with “I don’t know” which reflects they are beyond their knowledge base in the latter part of this question. One member responded, “Be fit and properly dressed” and another answered, “Be available for frost call contact, keep military informed of anything that affects performance of duties.” These responses highlight that there is certainly a limited knowledge of what the military requires of it’s reserve chaplains. This suggests educational opportunities to expand the knowledge base of the lay leaders.

## **Findings of the Post-Test Short Answer Questions**

The post-test included the same five, short answer questions as the pretest. The first question was: “What is he required to do for the military in regards to”:

Monthly Duties – All members but one answered with “Spend two days a month on military duty” while one still responded they didn’t know. This suggests that great learning did take place and the council members have a very good understanding of monthly duties.

Yearly Duties – The findings here are the same as above in that all responded with “Spend two weeks a year on military duty” and one responded that he didn’t know. This finding highlights the great need for instruction and repetition.

Training Requirements – The findings from these responses were similar to the pretest answers in that they were varied and included: “two days a month” (a reflection of the monthly duties), “two weeks ADT” (which reflects this member has an extensive knowledge base about the military), “some additional days per month” (which may be a vague catch all type of response), “additional training specific to billet”, “additional training”, “sporadic additional training,” and finally “training throughout year” are all similar ways of expressing they know additional training occurs, but again, unsure of exactly what. This suggests much room for growth and learning.

Other Requirements – One council member still responded “I don’t know” which suggests that the process of drafting a mobilization document really didn’t impart any new knowledge about military requirements. Some responses included: “Ministry to Marines and Sailors that could be in addition to regular drills and yearly requirements”, “additional help to military as

needed”, “various conferences or training may be needed,” and “other days away may occur.” While none of these answers suggest specifics, there is clearly an understanding there are requirements that exist of which they are unaware.

In conclusion, the findings of the short answers in the pre-test and post-test demonstrate that a fair amount of learning occurred in the process of drafting the mobilization agreement document. It is equally clear that further education and communication needs to occur to facilitate that learning process.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CONCLUSIONS

In this concluding chapter, a summary of the outcome of the project will be shared as well as drawing conclusions about its implication for ministry. Beginning with exploring the contributions to ministry, the data will be placed into both the specific ministry context in which the project was conducted as well as the broader context of ministry. The chapter will conclude with contributions to the personal and professional growth of the researcher and also recommendations for practical application and additional research.

#### **Contributions to Ministry**

This project has made incredible contributions beyond my expectations. At Hope Lutheran Church, I was able to spend half of a year preparing for this project and specifically tailoring it to all work together. The church leadership and I were able to engage in education, accumulate and access resources, speak with other churches, chaplains, and one another.

On the church level, we are developing lay leaders through a variety of programs. We created and strengthened small group ministry. We set three goals for the church for 2011, and all of them are connected to our military ministry:

1. To grow closer together with members in the church – This goal may sound like just fellowship, but it is intentionally becoming invested in and accountable to other people in the church. Many churches (especially mission plants like Hope) are too dependent on the



pastor. Ergo, if he leaves, many others leave. That is not the case at Hope Lutheran Church.

2. To increase an emphasis on outreach and evangelism – This may seem straightforward for a congregation, especially a mission, but this goal has included challenging everyone to consider where God has placed them and how they can share the faith in that context. What better way to express mission than to have a pastor serve also as a chaplain with the military? This church sees sharing the Gospel as the most important function of the church and so military ministry is an extension of church ministry.
3. To be financially independent. As a mission church, we have received subsidy to support the starting of the church. By opting to use TriCare Health Plan for reservists, the church is saving two thousand dollars a month. It is wonderful that the military ministry has such a tangible and positive financial impact at Hope Lutheran.

This project has also been an incredible learning curve for Hope Lutheran's leaders. I had assumed they knew much more about my military ministry than they actually did. Had I not done this work and project, I wouldn't have found out until after I was mobilized.

As I was doing this research, I also became aware of a number of resources and how to use them. For instance, there was an Operation Barnabas workshop in Florida. Operation Barnabas is an LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces program that focuses on helping pastor/chaplain reservists and congregations before, during, and after mobilization. In the spirit of full disclosure, my brother, Michael Moreno, leads that effort. I was able to attend that workshop with a congregational leader and gain some great insights for the congregation.

Also, there is a group called Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR). It is a Department of Defense (DOD) organization that promotes cooperation and

understanding between Reserve component members and their civilian employers and assists in the resolution of conflicts arising from an employee's military commitment. I learned that they have various awards, and I was able to nominate our church for a "Patriot Award" and they received the award in January 2011. It was great to have the representative come to our church services and award our church with that honor. Hope Lutheran has been incredibly supportive and encouraging to our military ministry.

In a broader sense, it has also made numerous contributions to ministry. As I have gone through this project, I have met many chaplains, pastors, and churches that have gone through, are going through, or will go through mobilization. As I have shared what I am doing and what I am hoping to find, I have had many requests to make sure and share the results, information, and applications to them for immediate use in their contexts. I have heard this from active duty chaplains, reserve chaplains, Lutherans, non-Lutherans, churches, and the military.

I know this project and this research will be of value to many groups for a variety of reasons. I know there are many church bodies out there that are struggling with how to help their churches being served by reservists. It is clear that mobilizations will continue to occur, so this dynamic is not expected to stop anytime soon.

I also know that my brother, Michael Moreno, as well as the other members of the Ministry to the Armed Forces, serving in LCMS World Mission are going to benefit from this research project.

### **Contributions to personal and professional growth**

I can honestly say that the Doctorate of Ministry program, complete with the Major Applied Project, has been the most worthwhile educational undertaking in my life. This

project has affected me because this project is actually my life, my vocation, and my calling. This project has everything to do with my personal life.

When one is a reservist, as I am, every time the news shows violence and war, I am thinking about the fact that I will be there someday. It doesn't matter if I am at home watching TV or at a basketball game coaching my son, my life is lived with the knowledge that I will go and serve. That used to wear me down emotionally. I would get depressed, stressed out, or conflicted. Personally, I didn't know what to think or feel at times.

I am not saying this project has "cured" all of that, but I know that I am in a much better place now. Spiritually, I have seen a much stronger reliance on disciplines such as prayer and living at peace. It is so easy to get worked up and worried over a great number of circumstances that I can't control, but as I spoke with so many people during this project, I have learned that a quiet and confident faith in God's ability brings peace. By doing the work of this project, I see God's presence and grace much more clearly.

In terms of vocation, this project has given me a true peace that passes all understanding. Before this project, I would vacillate in my understanding of vocation. I am so grateful for this project because I was able to dig deep and get the fullness of the doctrine of vocation. I used to feel guilty about my commitment to military ministry. It made me wonder if I wasn't fully committed to Hope Lutheran. I realize now that I am truly committed to both the military and to Hope Lutheran in a beautiful way. God has called me to both ministries, just as He has called me to be both a husband and a father. The biggest contribution this made for me was to understand that military and church isn't an either/or, but a both/and situation.

Finally, in terms of my professional life practice and ministry, I have seen at least six major contributions:

1. The Great Commission reigns supreme – In undertaking this project, it has been abundantly clear that ministry to serve God and His people is what Hope Lutheran Church is focused on, what I am focused on, and is the motivation for serving in the United States Navy Reserve. I am glad to know that mission in the various contexts have been reaffirmed and interconnected in many ways.
2. Hope Lutheran Church is at peace – After chartering and calling me as the pastor in 2010, we had the establishment of the mobilization document as a high priority. We had an earlier document from my previous call that served as our document while we went through a period of research and the process of developing a new and more applicable document. This project has seen the creation of a new document and given a great sense of peace and relief knowing we have had a great dialog and a document in place that reflects the congregational and pastoral relationship. This document will be reviewed regularly to assure it meets our needs.
3. I use resources much more frequently – A chief contribution to the entire doctorate program and especially this project has been discovering a wide array of resources for use in both the parish context and the military context. Often it is easy to think that we need to “reinvent the wheel” and create something completely new. This project certainly taught me that there is an incredible resource base out there for churches and chaplains.
4. God’s people are gifted – A very real contribution I have seen is the many gifts God’s people have. In speaking with lay leaders from various churches regarding their pastor’s military ministry, I have been amazed at the way in which they demonstrate commitment to

ministry both in their church and in their country's military. Coming from all walks of life, and coming with different skills and abilities, it was clear to see that they came together to serve in astounding ways. I know this very same dynamic is true of the people at Hope Lutheran Church, and I have a new respect for this truth.

5. An understanding that all reservists experience this – I have served in the reserve community for ten years, and in that time I have seen many mobilizations and the affect it has on families, but by researching the recent literature on reservists, I realized that the stressors confronting reservists are much more than I knew. Each one of them has an employer, a family, and a God that created them. By doing this project, I am much better equipped to care for marines and sailors, as well as interact with the command to better serve the emerging needs of the military.
6. God is in control – During the course of this project, I was notified twice that I might be mobilized. As a reservist, we get these types of notices a few times a year. My head would start spinning with all sorts of thoughts, including the irony of being mobilized before I completed this project. Through it all, the research, the interviews, and the ministry in two contexts, I definitely have been reassured that God Himself is present and powerful.

### **Recommendations**

Many findings of this study can be applied further through four major additional applications of the work:

1. Communication in developing church documents – I focused on a mobilization agreement document between the pastor and the church. However, there are a myriad of other contexts in which pastors and churches need to secure agreements. Call documents would be an obvious application. However, any documents that cover any ministry the pastor may be

serving outside the church would apply. There are pastors that serve on community boards, parachurch ministries, teach at a local college, and serve many different forms of chaplaincy (hospice care, nursing home, jail, prison, etc.). At times, the pastor and church may feel a need to clearly outline the roles and responsibilities for the church and pastor in respect to those ministries.

2. The relationship between the church and military ministry – I focused on churches that happen to have a pastor that serves the military as a reserve chaplain. However, there are further applications to churches that are in or near a military community, churches that have former or current military, churches that want to reach out to the military community. Interestingly enough, Operation Barnabas of the LCMS is already addressing these needs and engaged in ongoing study and application. Also, many ministries have popped up in the last few years trying to address these needs, so it is indeed an emerging area of ministry.
3. Vocation in the life of the Congregation – This project surveyed the doctrine of vocation and a further application would be to better educate and/or research the concept of vocation as understood by the laity. This could be done in the pastor's preaching and teaching, but also by programs, workshops, or other means of gaining resources. A further application is that the better the understanding of vocation, the greater the amount of work and ministry a church and its members can do to the glory of God.
4. The Benefit of Using More Sources when Applying a Program – Every church uses a variety of programs to conduct ministry. They also are constantly evaluating programs to incorporate in the life and mission of their church. A further application from this study could involve the process by which churches discover programs, evaluate programs, and

implement programs. In this study we looked at resources that applied solely to churches and pastors that are involved in military ministries. This study suggested the more resources consulted and the more people involved in the process, the better the product (or program).

These topics are just a few of the many that can be further explored and studied.

There are some short-term recommendations that can be given to three distinct groups:

Reservist pastors, churches being served by a reservist pastor, and the MAF of the LCMS.

1. Reserve chaplains that serve as parish pastors – It appears that pastors can be an invaluable asset in communicating the vision and mission of the church, which entails the Gospel proclamation to all, including the military. If reservist pastors are at peace with their calling to serve God in an array of capacities, they will articulate this understanding of vocation with their church leaders much more effectively. I recommend reservist pastors include reports on their military ministry at the monthly church council meetings, as well as report in the newsletter their military activities and drill dates. I also think it would be powerful and appropriate to teach his church about the chaplaincy ministry throughout the year. This could include leading worship in military uniform (especially around Fourth of July or Memorial Day), awarding his church the Patriot Award from ESGR, and having Bible studies or sermons imparting facets of military ministry.
2. Churches being served by a reservist pastor – It appears that churches often view mission as a vital component of their identity. If a church views the military community as part of their mission, then their pastor serving as a reservist would only strengthen and enhance that truth. I recommend that church leaders seek to learn more about the chaplaincy and how the church can be involved in that ministry and support and encourage their pastor. It

appears that the church council is in an excellent position to monitor the relationship (both the positive and the negative impacts) between the pastor, the church, and the military. The council must be informed of what the chaplaincy demands from the pastor. The council also should task the elders to provide more in-depth care for the pastor and his family as they serve. Communication with the pastor about his military service needs to occur regularly so that a healthy balance and fruitful relationship can be built and maintained.

I also recommend that the church investigate if obtaining TriCare health coverage is an acceptable and beneficial option for their pastor and the church. This becomes a stewardship issue and could facilitate a financial appreciation of the chaplaincy.

3. Ministry to the Armed Forces (MAF) – While there is a tremendous amount of resources and many areas of military ministry, it is clear that more can be done for reservist pastors and their churches. I recommend the development of a resource kit for that audience that would concentrate on the mission emphasis of the chaplaincy, as well as include an exhaustive amount of resources such as sample mobilization agreement documents, checklists for both the pastor and the church leaders, a FAQ sheet, contact information including e-mail addresses, web addresses, and phone numbers for church, parachurch and military organizations.

In conclusion, this project of researching how the parish ministry can be balanced with the reserve chaplain ministry has been insightful. I am very thankful for the experience of researching and writing about the vital role that mission plays in all ministry contexts. It is my hope and prayer that future research can uncover even more resources and guidance for those who seek to serve both God and country.



## APPENDIX A

### Questionnaires

#### Questionnaire Text Given to Church Leaders and Reserve Chaplains

1. How much did you know about your pastor's involvement as a reserve chaplain before he was called to serve your congregation?
2. How do you view the reserve chaplaincy's impact on your congregation's ministry?
3. What steps or sequence did you follow in order to create an agreement with your pastor/congregation regarding a mobilization document?
4. What specific things did your congregation do beforehand in preparation for the mobilization of your pastor?
5. What benefits did this document have for you/congregation when your pastor was mobilized? What mistakes were made? How would you have done it differently as you reflect back?

#### **Findings of Phase One Research: Questionnaires Given to Church Leaders and Reserve Chaplains**

##### **Question One**

How much did you know about your (or your pastor's) involvement as a reserve chaplain before he was called to serve your congregation?

##### Chaplain "A" Response: Question One

“I was not involved in the chaplaincy until five years after being in the ministry. As I made the decision, I gathered as much information as possible and shared that with the church council. They were a big part of the decision making process.”

Congregation “A” Response: Question One

“We knew what pastor shared with us as he researched being in the military. He had been at our church some time and then wanted to go into the chaplaincy. We were fully supportive.”

Implications “A”: Question One

In this context, the chaplaincy emerged as a ministry well after the pastor and church had made a commitment to one another. This may be reflective of some of the difficulties this congregation and pastor experienced during mobilization.

Chaplain “B” Response: Question One

“The congregation was my first call out of Seminary. In our first conversation, I told them of my plans to go straight to Chaplain School before being installed. As the church is in a military community, most had an idea of what would be expected of a pastor serving as a reserve chaplain.”

Congregation “B” Response: Question One

“In calling pastor as a candidate from the seminary, the district president informed us that he was in the naval reserves and would be attending the chaplains school before coming to serve us. We were well aware of the requirements as a number of people in the church

(including me) are retired Navy or civil servants with the Navy. My son is also a reserve Army chaplain on active duty the past four years.”

Implications “B”: Question One

The responses here suggest that the church and pastor had a very good idea of the impact of the chaplaincy on their church and life. Included in this response is that the seminary and the district president were both involved in this dynamic.

Chaplain “C” Response: Question One

“The CEO knew of my involvement as an Army Reserve chaplain and was very supportive; the rest of the senior administrative and the entire organization has been very supportive and to a lesser extent also realized the implications for me (and them) in terms of my being mobilized and deployed. The CEO himself served as an officer, Active Duty, in the Army for a few years. I was called to the Lutheran Home in 2002. I was here one and a half years when I received word that I was being sent to Iraq. It was not a big surprise to the CEO. I kept him informed and aware of the possibility.”

Congregation “C” Response: Question One

“We knew of his involvement and are very supportive of the military chaplaincy. As a matter of fact, several leaders of the staff have served previously in the military. We knew that it meant two days a month and two weeks a year, in addition to inevitable mobilization.

### Implications “C”: Question One

The findings of these responses suggests a high level of familiarity with the military and the impact it would have on the ministry. This ministry setting is a nursing home instead of a church, so it appears the dynamics are more streamlined. This response denotes a institutional ministry in relation to another institutional ministry, so these findings are interesting when compared to parish ministry.

### Chaplain “D” Response: Question One

“I was blessed that the church had a reserve chaplain a few years before I got there. The church and the council was supportive and knowledgeable, although that knowledge was somewhat outdated. I had to help them understand how reservists are used now as opposed to the 1990s.”

### Congregation “D” Response: Question One

“We had a previous pastor that was also a chaplain, so we had a very good idea of what was involved. We were not as prepared for the changes that came after September 11, because we had never experienced something like that before. It seemed as though his military duties really picked up after that day.”

### Implications “D”: Question One

This church leadership had a previous pastor serve as a reserve chaplain, so they seemed to be well aware of the requirements and demands. It is worth noting how they specifically spoke about September 11, 2001 as turning point for additional work for their reservist pastor.

### Chaplain “E” Response: Question One

“I was fresh out of seminary and I didn’t really know what all I had gotten myself into, much less the church. I knew about the two days a month and two weeks a year, but that was about it. I didn’t know how to sell the church on what I did with the military”.

### Congregation “E” Response: Question One

“We knew almost nothing about what the military chaplain did. We also didn’t know what our role was in that ministry, so we got off on the wrong foot. It seemed like he didn’t know what he was supposed to do with the military or with our church”.

### Implications “E”: Question One

It appears in this situation that the pastor was new to ministry in general and was still trying to gain an understanding of church ministry and military ministry. This suggests that perhaps the LCMS and MAF should review policy on pastors serving as reservists. On the active duty side, the LCMS and MAF requires 2 years of parish experience before active service. Maybe reservists should have a 2 year requirement also.

### **Question Two**

How do you view the reserve chaplaincy’s impact on your congregation’s ministry?

### Chaplain “A” Response: Question Two

“I currently view the chaplaincy’s impact on my congregational ministry in a negative way. I tried to do too much and it pulled me away from what I could have done. I would show up to service after a drill weekend half asleep and had no energy. I was always having to run myself ragged. When I was mobilized, my church’s building program stopped

completely and the interim pastor really messed up the church's direction. It took me a year and a half just to get it back to where it once was."

#### Congregation "A" Response: Question Two

"Before his mobilization, I viewed it very positive. I worried for pastor running himself ragged, but he did well and the church did well. During the mobilization, I viewed it very negative. We saw attendance and offerings take a big dip, disruption of ministry and loss of momentum. In some ways, we lived in fear before his mobilization."

#### Implications "A": Question Two

The findings here are quite important. Both the pastor and the congregation viewed the impact overall as very negative. The regular impact was viewed negatively primarily by the pastor. He characterized the military ministry impact as one that impinged upon and detracted from church ministry. The mobilization impact was measured by such items as attendance, offerings, building programs and the overall church direction. Another finding here is that the church leadership seemed to be unaware of the toll the monthly drills and duties took on their pastor.

#### Chaplain "B" Response: Question Two

"The ministry had an overall positive impact on the congregation. We gained several new military families as members because of my involvement in the lives of local military personnel. We also saved the church a lot of money by using TRICARE medical instead of other options. The congregation saw my ministry in the military as an extension of its ministry. I was recalled to active duty for a year. That was disruptive in the life of the congregation."

### Congregation “B” Response: Question Two

“Very positive. Navy families from the local base attended our services and we provided baptisms for these families and offered counseling and other help. When pastor was mobilized, we reviewed the document and planned for interim help as well as assigned elders for preaching and caring for shut ins. We also conducted a service at a care center twice a month. We started a prayer service especially to pray for pastor and his family on Thursday evening and continued this for a year after he returned from mobilization.”

### Implications “B”: Question Two

The findings here are fairly remarkable. Both the church leaders and the pastor were able to articulate a variety of positive impacts but also to share some of the challenging impacts. These responses also reaffirm an understanding that the ministry of the church and the ministry of the chaplaincy are held in unity. The comments by both the pastor and the church leadership make it clear there is a high level of communication at work in this relationship.

### Chaplain “C” Response: Question Two

“The CEO and other senior staff have told me that my involvement in the Reserves and subsequent deployment was very positive for the organization. It made what they heard in the news more personal and helped them to feel more involved in a personal way through my involvement.”

### Congregation “C” Response: Question Two

“Great, in a good way! The military gives great resources that worked well in our ministry setting. The impact was positive in every way professionally and personally. It also helped us feel connected to the effort of our men and women all over the world. It put a face on the conflict.”

### Implications “C”: Question Two

The findings here suggest a unified feeling of positive impacts on the ministry by the military service. The organization recognized the resources the military provides and also highly valued participation in this ministry. Good communication is evident in these responses.

### Chaplain “D” Response: Question Two

“It (chaplaincy) has a great and good impact on church ministry, for the most part. The day to day and month to month training and resources I get work both ways: What I learn at church I use in the military and what I learn in the military I use at church. In other words, being a pastor makes me a better chaplain and being a chaplain makes me a better pastor. The mobilization was tough in some ways, but the impact on the church was overall a positive one.”

### Congregation “D” Response: Question Two

“The impact has been pretty good. The only negative was the mobilization, because no one wanted to see pastor go. But just like any loss, others really keyed in and stepped up to continue church ministry. That was really very positive too.”



### Implications “D”: Question Two

This pastor and church have a unique dynamic in that they had a previous reserve chaplain serve their church. It is very noteworthy that the impact is described as positive, including the mobilization! The implication here is that it is possible to see all of the impact of military ministry on church ministry as positive.

### Chaplain “E” Response: Question Two

“I view it as mixed. At times I feel like I am running inbetween two jobs. The church has been less supportive of the military ministry as time has gone on. I am unsure if I want to continue in the military ministry. There have been some bright spots though, because we had two families join that I made first contact with as a chaplain.”

### Congregation “E” Response: Question Two

“The majority view of the council is that the impact is overall negative. The pastor has grown in good ways since first getting here, but the military ministry seems more a distraction than anything else. Sometimes after a drill weekend, it is evident that he is not all there. There are some good impacts too, of course, but the bad outweighs the good.”

### Implications “E”: Question Two

This seems to be a difficult situation for the pastor and church, as they are both unsure of the other. The overall description of impact appears to be negative and may suggest better communication needs to take place as well as accountability.

### **Question Three**

What steps or sequence did you follow in order to create an agreement with your pastor/congregation regarding a mobilization document?

#### Chaplain “A” Response: Question Three

“We were foolish and had no real written document concerning my chaplaincy work. It took the form of minutes from council meetings. But here are the steps we took to create the understanding: I proposed what I was asking for which was to be a reserve chaplain with two days a month and two weeks a year. I knew I’d have to do some extra work, but I figured we navigate it. The congregation leadership went along with whatever I thought best. I paid out of pocket for substitute preachers for when I was gone and always found ways to “make it up “to the church.”

#### Congregation “A” Response: Question Three

“At council we adopted an “understanding” which addressed the two days a month and two weeks a year, plus a little extra training here and there. We never had any problems with that. But pastor brought us the information and we just signed off on it. We never had a formal document, but the process was pastor to us and then we approved it. We never changed or expanded it.”

#### Implications “A”: Question Three

The findings here give some very obvious reasons why this church had difficulties. The document, while written, was informal and vague. It addressed only monthly drills and didn’t explore annual training, and completely omitted additional training or mobilization. It also shares that the communication between the pastor and congregation was not of high

quality. Even the response of the pastor here gives a sense of “making it up” to the church for any negative impact on the congregation. The chaplain’s words suggest he viewed the two ministries as different and separate, as opposed to a unified whole.

#### Chaplain “B” Response: Question Three

“We obtained a copy of an agreement from another LCMS congregation that had a reserve chaplain as a pastor. We edited it to fit our congregation and had it in place years before we needed it.”

#### Congregation “B” Response: Question Three

“The board of elders collected a number of agreements and studied them to see what would fit our congregation and pastor and his family best. The elders worked with pastor closely on this.”

#### Implications “B”: Question Three

The responses here direct to a number of qualities that have impact on the process: One, they accessed external resources to gather a sample of various agreements. This denotes objective research and study. Two, many people were involved in the process and creation. The pastor said “we” (instead of “I”), and the leadership tasked the elders to also participate in addition to the council. Three, This was done well in advance (i.e., “years before we needed it”). Finally, the leadership included care of the family in this process and document.

### Chaplain “C” Response: Question Three

“I received a copy of one through MAF, I believe, rewrote it to fit my situation and gave it to the CEO who took it to the Board of Directors.”

### Congregation “C” Response: Question Three

“The pastor simply handed us a document and we more or less went with it. It is my understanding that he got this from MAF and tailored it to our ministry. From there, we went to the board of directors to finalize and adopt it. It basically was rubber stamped and left in it’s original form.”

### Implications “C”: Question Three

This instance reveals that the process for developing the document falls upon the pastor in many situations, including this one. Clearly, the pastor knew to access an outside resource to obtain a template of a document and then edit it. It does not appear that much dialog took place as the document was “rubber stamped” and turned in. Not much of a value was placed on developing the document together.

### Chaplain “D” Response: Question Three

“We actually used two documents as the template: the one the church had with the previous pastor that served as a reservist and the one I had used at my previous church. We were able to easily modify it to be a perfect fit for our situation.”

### Congregation “D” Response: Question Three

“We used the previous pastor’s document as well as the current pastor’s document from his previous church. We had it done in one meeting and filed it away.”

### Implications “D”: Question Three

There seemingly isn't much of a process used between this church and pastor. It appears many churches use other templates or samples to draft their document but little reflection takes place; it becomes more of a copy and paste document.

### Chaplain “E” Response: Question Three

“I asked other chaplains for suggestions or examples for a document and also looked on the internet. The head elder also helped me with this and we brought the best documents to the council. From all of that, we were able to draft a document that covered everything BUT mobilization. We still need to work on that.”

### Congregation “E” Response: Question Three

“At council, we tasked the head elder and pastor to research documents and bring them to our next council meeting. They brought about seven documents and we took the best and applicable sections together for our church. Our council could not come to any agreement about what to do in case of mobilization, so that part is still under consideration.”

### Implications “E”: Question Three

The church and pastor employed a typical process is drafting the agreement but the document remains incomplete. The implication here is that this process has been perhaps long and difficult, and perhaps that they are unsure how to move forward. This suggests that mobilization is really the sticking point for the relationship between military and parish ministry.

## **Question Four**

What specific things did your congregation do beforehand in preparation for the mobilization of your pastor?

### Chaplain “A” Response: Question Four

“We didn’t do very much in preparation for mobilization looking back. We always talked about the possibility but never did much about it. One thing we did was to affirm and support the gospel outreach nature of the chaplaincy. We also drew up a plan of action if I were to be mobilized. We targeted a few retired pastors in the area and they were open to helping out in case of my mobilization.”

### Congregation “A” Response: Question Four

“Not nearly enough. We contacted some area retired pastors and set up a committee to address some of the bigger concerns if pastor was mobilized. We never contacted the synod or district, which was a mistake. We tried to set up small groups but it didn’t go.”

### Implications “A” Question Four

These findings suggest that the pastor and church did virtually nothing to prepare for mobilization. Anything that they did do was as a result of responding to the news of the mobilization. The finding here is that being reactionary, as opposed to being proactive, is not the preferred response to mobilization. Both the church and thier pastor lived and behaved as if mobilization was not a real possibility. The lack of preparing for mobilization is directly responsible for the hardships experienced by both the pastor and his church.

#### Chaplain “B” Response: Question Four

“We put a lot of effort into developing lay leadership. It really paid off while I was deployed. We did a lot of educating the congregation on what would happen. We also brought on a part-time pastor to assist with preaching in my absence.”

#### Congregation “B” Response: Question Four

“Secured interim help. Asked the ladies group to take care of sending care packages to pastor while mobilized. Encouraged members and friends to pray for his safety and the safety of the military. Asked men’s group to check with the pastor’s wife to take care of lawn maintenance and repairs around the home. Also made sure family was taken care of.”

#### Implications “B”: Question Four

It is worth noting here that the responses here involve a large cross section of the congregation. Many times the answer to these questions involves the pastor and the council members only. These findings suggest that educating the congregation and developing lay leadership are keys to a more healthy impact of military duty, much less mobilization, on a given congregation and their pastor.

#### Chaplain “C” Response: Question Four

“I developed a plan for interim chaplaincy coverage here during my absence to which the CEO and Chief Operating Officer agreed.”

Congregation "C" Response: Question Four

"Here again, the pastor developed a plan and we went with it. It was great that he thought ahead and figured out a way to provide coverage. It made it easy for us, because we had a plan in place."

Implications "C": Question Four

These responses are consistent with the previous answer, where the plan originated with a single person as was reaffirmed. However, this response indicates the only preparation that took place was arranging for "coverage" without any education, development of other programs, involvement of other staff, etc.

Chaplain "D" Response: Question Four

"We did our mobilization document and that specifically put the vice president in charge of a subcommittee to deal with mobilization when it occurred. We found out about mobilization on a Wednesday and I had two weeks before I had to report. We informed the church on Sunday and had people step up to cover my various duties. These people had been approached and trained well in advance, before I knew of my mobilization."

Congregation "D" Response: Question Four

Other than the document, we didn't do a whole lot. The vice president was instrumental in carrying out many responsibilities when pastor's mobilization occurred. The church seemed well prepared for mobilization, as did pastor."



#### Implications “D” Question Four

The implication here is that the church and pastor primarily used their mobilization document to plan how best to prepare and execute a plan upon mobilization. They used the vice president of the church, but it seems possibly problematic to have one person with all of that responsibility, even though it appears to have worked here.

#### Chaplain “E” Response: Question Four

“I have never been mobilized, so I am unsure of how best to answer. We have continued to work on the document, so I am hopeful that will answer most of those questions. I know it’ll be important for the church, the church council and me and my family to be ready.”

#### Congregation “E” Response: Question Four

“We haven’t gone through a mobilization (yet), and we are still working on the plan (see above question three).”

#### Implications “E” Question Four

The pastor and church are still unprepared for mobilization. This is the one church surveyed that had not experienced mobilization. The implication here is that this dynamic creates some undue stress and uncertainty on the church and the pastor. They appear to need help, direction and resources to move forward.

#### **Question Five**

What benefits did this document have for you/congregation when your pastor was mobilized?

What mistakes were made? How would you have done it differently as you reflect back?

### Chaplain “A” Response: Question Five

“The benefit we had is that we actually talked about it (as opposed to ignoring it). It also made everyone feel a bit more secure knowing we had a plan. It took some pressure off and gave us a game plan as to what we’d do next. Mistakes that we made were not making the document more formal and detailed, and we also didn’t get much input from anyone outside the church. Like I said, the church leaders pretty much went along with what I said, so it wasn’t much of a process. One major mistake and something I’d do different would be to detail the responsibilities of the other church workers as they try to fill the void. I’d also like to get more input from the district and synod.”

### Congregation “A” Response: Question Five

“Our informal document (in the form of council minutes) proved to be somewhat helpful for the normal month to month stuff, but really didn’t address mobilization. One big mistake made was that we didn’t really address the mobilization in written form. We’d also have done things different with small groups, the other staff, and the church leadership. The mobilization was very hard on the church and pastor and I feel if we had done these things differently, it might not have been so rough.”

### Implications “A”: Question Five

Both the pastor and church leaders were able to reflect and see the consequences of the lack of a discernable process of developing the mobilization document as well as the limited value of the document they did have. The responses here also indicate that the poor planning impacted other staff at the church. Perhaps an application of this finding would include input of other staff when drawing up a mobilization document.

#### Chaplain “B” Response: Question Five

“While I see the importance of a document like this, it was not particularly useful in our case. The congregation and I had a high level of trust and we communicated regularly. Had that not been the case, I imagine a document like this would be much more important. One mistake I made was to preach the first Sunday I was back. I would take a little more time transitioning back to civilian ministry if I did it again.”

#### Congregation “B” Response: Question Five

“The assurance that our pastor would return to serve us again providing that he was mentally and physically capable. In rereading it quite often it reminded us of our responsibility toward him, his family, and to our church as he was endorsed by our synod to serve in this capacity for our church and country.”

#### Implications “B”: Question Five

The findings of this final question suggest that there is very little this church leadership and pastor regret with respect to the document. Of the lessons learned, the chaplain came back “too soon” and should have taken more time to transition back to family and life. The church leadership reflects the comfort and assurance the document and process gave, which is very important indeed.

#### Chaplain “C” Response: Question Five

“As I look back I can’t see anything that we would have done differently. I don’t know how the CEO or COO would answer. I did not hear any criticisms of the document or the interim chaplaincy coverage plan.”

#### Congregation “C” Response: Question Five

“There are no complaints about the document, the process or the mobilization. There were some hardships but nothing I think that could be avoided. Whenever you have a key employee in a skill position and he is gone for a period of time, it is going to affect the team dynamic and ministry. But the positives far outweighed any negatives.”

#### Implications “C”: Question Five

These responses indicate that the document and process they employed “worked for them” and that they were satisfied with the process and the scope of the document. There appears to be a disconnect as the pastor shares “I don’t know how the CEO or COO would answer. I did not hear any criticisms...” when contrasted to the leadership response “There were some hardships...”. Perhaps communication is lacking in this particular relationship.

#### Chaplain “D” Response: Question Five

“The benefit is that it worked like clockwork. We all had been prepared, we bought into it, and we did just what we agreed to. I don’t think any mistakes were made, to be honest. It seemed like everyone and everything clicked and it was great when I got back. Looking back, the only thing the document didn’t cover was how much time I should spend with my family after I got back. I wanted a month and the church wanted two weeks. We split at three.”

#### Congregation “D” Response: Question Five

“There was a great blessing and benefit to the document being in place. It covered almost everything that came up and the church was really able to get ownership in ministry to the church, the community and to pastor’s family. We are truly blessed.”

#### Implications “D”: Question Five

Both the pastor and church leaders felt the document was sufficient for their needs and addressed most of the issues they encountered. The implication here is that a pastor and church that are knowledgeable about the requirement of military ministry can better respond to a mobilization. The document here appears to reflect that.

#### Chaplain “E” Response: Question Five

“Again, we are in the process of drafting the mobilization portion of the agreement. I want to protect myself and my family, the church and the ministry. The council shares this goal and we are trying to figure out the best way to do that. This is part of why I am unsure if I’ll stay in.”

#### Congregation “E” Response: Question Five

“We have not gone through a mobilization, much less written a plan for it. We’ll get back to you as soon as we do.”

#### Implications “E”: Question Five

The church and pastor were not really able to answer this question satisfactorily because they simply have not experienced mobilization.

## APPENDIX B

### MOBILIZATION AGREEMENT DOCUMENT

#### ***HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH*** **Reserve Chaplaincy Agreement and Contingency Planning Document**

This Agreement is between Hope Lutheran Church (Hope) and Mark Moreno (the Chaplain), Pastor of Hope. The Chaplain is currently a chaplain in the United States Navy Active Reserve and as a Pastor of Hope, serves the congregation of Hope Lutheran Church. Hope is fully supportive of the ministry of Military Chaplaincy.

This agreement between Hope and the Chaplain is in accordance with a resolution adopted at the 1983 convention of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod which encourages congregations whose pastors serve in the U.S. Military Reserve to establish procedures to facilitate their pastors participation in and fulfillment of the requirements placed upon them as members of our nation's military forces and to provide contingency plans for the continuance of their chaplains' pastoral ministry. The need for stability within the church demands that both Hope and the Chaplain plan together to reap the benefits of their expanded ministries and prepare in advance to meet potential contingencies in an orderly fashion.

This document sets forth agreed upon arrangements with regard to the Chaplain's Inactive Duty Training and his Active Duty for Training. In addition, this document contains a contingency plan of action which will be required in the event of Mobilization.

#### **I. Inactive Duty Training (two days per month)**

**A.** The Chaplain should exercise care and negotiate advance arrangements with Hope related to travel time and drill days.

**B.** If the Chaplain holds a paid billet and is away for drill on a Sunday, he will pay for the required pulpit coverage at his congregation.

**C.** The ministry and needs of Hope are to remain top priority in the life and planning of the Chaplain. Scheduled pastoral activities should not be canceled as a result of Inactive Duty Training.

**D.** The Chaplain will not be required to forfeit compensation or benefits with respect to his inactive duty training.

## **II. Active Duty for Training (fourteen days per year)**

**A.** The Chaplain is expected to do advance planning and coordination to minimize any negative impact of annual active duty upon the schedule of Hope.

**B.** Hope will pay for substitute pulpit coverage for one Sunday to cover the Chaplain's active duty training. Additional missed Sundays will be covered by the Chaplain.

**C.** Federal law prohibits requiring a Reservist to use vacation time for the performance of mandated Reserve military duty. If the Chaplain wishes to do so, he should consult with his Board of Elders for support.

**D.** The Chaplain will be granted a leave of absence without pay for the mandated period of active duty under this section. The pay forfeited shall not exceed the compensation paid by the military for the period of active duty. For the purpose of this Section, "pay" shall be defined to include the budget items of Salary and Housing calculated on a pro-rata basis.

**E.** The Chaplain shall provide the Hope Church Council with any Active Duty orders received.

## **III. Non-Active Duty Training (as needed)**

**A.** The Chaplain should exercise care and negotiate advance arrangements with Hope related to travel time for non-active duty training.

**B.** As this training is sporadic and unpredictable, Hope and the Chaplain will agree on any necessary pastoral substitutions during the Chaplain's absence.

**C.** The Chaplain will continue to receive compensation and benefits during non-active duty training, provided the length of that training is less than two weeks.

Compensation for non-active duty training lasting two weeks or longer will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis with the Hope council.

#### **IV. Mobilization**

This contingency plan covers the action to be taken by both the Chaplain regarding his preparation for active duty and by Hope regarding their efforts to continue the pastoral ministry at Hope and to provide assistance to the Chaplain's family in the event of the Chaplain's mobilization.

**A. The following actions are required for the Chaplain:**

- 1. Upon notification, the Chaplain shall immediately notify leaders of Hope, the District President, and the Director of the LC-MS Ministry to the Armed Forces so that pastoral coverage arrangements can be made. As time permits, he should assist in making these arrangements.**
- 2. He will review this document with the church leadership and District representative on its contents and agreements.**
- 3. He will immediately request in writing a leave of absence for the duration of his orders, without pay or allowance, to begin when his military pay starts.**
- 4. He will make time to spend with his family to complete all last minute personal arrangements and maintain close contact with congregational leaders as circumstances develop.**
- 5. During mobilization he will stay in contact with Hope leadership as well as the District and the Director of the LC-MS Ministry to the Armed Forces to share information.**
- 6. At the twelve month point of deployment, the Chaplain and the Hope council will re-evaluate the Chaplain's call to Hope. If the Chaplain's duty is expected to be long, the parties may agree to a peaceful release of the Chaplain's call to Hope and allow Hope to make appropriate plans for continued pastoral care.**
- 7. When the Chaplain returns from Active Duty, Hope will make appropriate plans to ease his transition back into civilian life, such as additional paid time off to spend with his family and incremental duties at Hope.**



**B. The following actions are required of the Leadership of Hope:**

1. The Leadership of Hope will review this document with the Chaplain and contact the appropriate District and Synod representatives.
2. They will arrange to provide assistance and support to the Chaplain and his family as needed.
3. Through the Hope Board of Elders, they will direct the completion or modification of arrangements to cover the pastoral needs of the congregations during the period of mobilization.
4. Hope will ensure that the Chaplain retains the same level of benefits during deployment which he presently enjoys. We follow the policies of Concordia Plan Services and USSERA.

**V. Other**

Copies of this document shall be sent to the District President and the Director of the LC-MS Ministry to the Armed Forces.

This agreement is to be reviewed bi-annually and may be revised at any time upon consent of the parties.

By \_\_\_\_\_ Mark Moreno \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ March 3, 2011 \_\_\_\_\_

Mark Moreno, Pastor

Hope Lutheran Church

by \_\_\_\_\_ Scott Minster \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ March 3, 2011 \_\_\_\_\_

Scott Minster, President of the Congregation

*3 March, 2011*

APPENDIX C

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH MISSOURI SYNOD MINISTRY TO THE ARMED FORCES

CHAPLAIN GUIDELINES

# Chaplain Guidelines

The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod

July 1999

**Revised:**

**September 1999**

*Clarification of WBP, p. 40, Appendix J*

**September 2001**

*New Cover Letter by Rev. Dr. Gerald B. Kieschnick*

**July 2002**

*MAF Committee composition and tenure (pp. 15,18,19)*

*"Assistant Director" to "Associate Director" (pp. 15, 19, 20, 22)*

*"Champus" to "Tricare" (p.60)*

**October 2004**

*Structure change for Reserve participation (p. 50, par. C)*

*"Guidelines" (p. 55, par. VI)*

**September 2007**

*Nomenclature and content added under the following subjects: BOP, Chaplain Candidate program, RMP.*

*Revision of following sections: V, B, par. 6; VI, F, par. 5 & 6*

## **PREFACE**

These Guidelines have been prepared by the Ministry to the Armed Forces Committee, Board for Mission Services, The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. They are for chaplains in military and related ministries, directors of religious education serving the Armed Forces, VA, BOP and CAP chaplains, contact pastors providing ministry to Armed Forces personnel in the United States and field service pastors at overseas Lutheran civilian congregations primarily serving military personnel and their family members. The Guidelines are written principally for military chaplains who make up a preponderance of LCMS personnel serving under the auspices of the Ministry to the Armed Forces. Where there are significant differences in related ministries, they are addressed. These Guidelines are in conformity with

the doctrine and practice of the Synod; it is the Committee's intention that they will be of assistance to those ministering in the Armed Forces, the Department of Veterans Affairs, BOP chaplains and Civil Air Patrol. Should you discover areas that need further clarification, contact the Director, Ministry to the Armed Forces:

Director, Ministry to the Armed Forces  
LCMS World Mission  
International Center  
1333 S. Kirkwood Road  
St. Louis, MO 63122-7295  
1-(800) 433-3954, ext. 1337  
e-mail: lcmschaps@lcms.org

### ***INTRODUCTION***

In the polity of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, the Ministry to the Armed Forces became a responsibility of the Board for Mission Services (BFMS) at the 1981 convention of the Synod. It is appropriate; therefore, that Armed Forces chaplains and directors of religious education (DRE) as well as chaplains with the Department of Veterans Affairs, BOP chaplains and Civil Air Patrol, are considered missionaries whenever they are serving in military or related ministries. Those serving in these ministries are not to proselytize, but the people who hear them proclaim the Gospel, who experience their love for Christ, and who are with them as they teach God's Word may want to identify with our church body. There are many marvelous opportunities to minister to the unchurched in these ministries. Chaplains are and should be instruments in nourishing those who are members of the Body of Christ and in winning souls for God's kingdom.

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**All Appendices are now stand-alone Word Documents  
and can be found under "Chaplain Resources" at:  
[www.lcmsworldmission.org/armedforces](http://www.lcmsworldmission.org/armedforces)**

Here is the list of Appendix documents from these guidelines now posted at our website:

1. Guidelines for Congregations with Reserve Chaplains
2. Administrative Policy—CPS  
For Reserve Chaplains called to Active Duty, July 2006
3. Sample MOB agreements
4. AP for Employer Granted LOA from CPS
5. Criteria for Awarding the Bronze St. Martin of Tours medal
6. Criteria for Awarding the Silver St. Martin of Tours medal
7. Statement of Eligibility for Retirement Benefits.

**ALL QUARTERLY AND ANNUAL REPORTS PLUS PASTORAL ACTS FORMS  
ARE LOCATED AT THE SAME WEBSITE UNDER  
"RESOURCES FOR CHAPLAINS."**

***I. THE NEED FOR CHAPLAINS***

**A. The Rationale for the Chaplaincy.**

The principal reason for having chaplains in the Armed Forces is to proclaim the Gospel, administer the Sacraments, and provide the spiritual ministrations service personnel, veterans and inmates need.

Luther's doctrine of the two kingdoms provides all the rationale that is needed for having a military chaplaincy. The State, Luther's kingdom of the left hand, operates under the structure of Law. It has been given *political* authority "to maintain order, to further justice, to secure the rights of its citizenry, to uphold as well as to extend the conditions of freedom, and to improve general welfare."<sup>53</sup> To do this, the military is as necessary as police. The Church on earth, Luther's kingdom of the right hand, has been given *spiritual* authority. It administers the Gospel to win and nourish souls for eternity. The Church proclaims eternal peace. On the other hand, the State works for peace and justice on earth but may have to enter armed conflict to achieve or maintain it. The two kingdoms should not be confused. Article XXVIII of the Augsburg Confession summarizes it succinctly: "The power of the church and the civil power must not be confused." At the same time, however, church and state should work in concert.

Christians can serve in the military with good conscience. John the Baptist's advice to soldiers (Luke 3: 14), as well as Paul's and Peter's exhortations to Christians (Romans 13: 1-4 and 1 Peter 2: 13-14), clearly show this. Furthermore, Luther's famous treatise "On Whether Soldiers, Too, Can Be Saved" makes it clear that being a soldier is an honorable and noble undertaking. On the other hand, it also substantiates conscientious objection if the state is obviously wrong. (Peter: "We ought to obey God rather than men." Acts 5: 29).

A chaplain serves both as a member of the Armed Forces under the authority of the state and as a pastor under the authority of the church body to which he belongs.

Lutheran theology of the chaplaincy says that chaplains are operating in the structure of the state, under authority of the Law, to help maintain justice and freedom in God's creation. The chaplain should obey the rightful laws and orders given him. In his role as a pastor, he is a leaven who administers the Gospel and serves the people entrusted to his care with the kind

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<sup>53</sup> Scharlemann, Martin A. "A Theology of the Military Chaplaincy" (paper, March 1974), 4.

of love Christ exemplified. This is the Scriptural basis for the civic and spiritual functions of the chaplaincy.

## **B. The Need is Determined by Government Requirements.**

Military chaplains serve in an increasingly pluralistic environment reflecting the composition of our nation. Clergy willing to work in this environment, particularly those with a missionary heart and a willingness to sacrifice themselves for others, will always be needed by the Armed Forces to provide pastoral care, spiritual leadership, and religious support for the military community.

The specific number of chaplains required in the Armed Forces is reflected in recruitment goals that change from time to time according to need. This should not deter any qualified pastor from considering and applying for service in the military chaplaincy. It is significant to note that Lutheran chaplains historically have been sought after because of the excellent service they have rendered in the dual functions as staff officer and pastor.

The Department of Veterans Affairs appoints chaplains on the basis of the number of beds in a medical center and on the number of outpatients served. Normally, entry into the VA chaplaincy is gained by building relationships with the chief of chaplain service at the local VA medical center.

The Federal Bureau of Prisons appoints chaplains who are endorsed to provide spiritual and pastoral care to men and women incarcerated in our federal prison settings throughout the United States. BOP chaplains working on the Warden's staff must be able to work in a highly secure and tightly regulated environment and insure religious programs and coverage for nearly 20 major faith groupings within the prison population.

Civil Air Patrol (CAP) units are located in or near every major city in the United States. The CAP is a volunteer organization established by acts of Congress as the civilian auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force. Chaplain vacancies can be found by calling the CAP unit listed in the telephone directory. There are no paid positions in this all-volunteer organization dedicated to furthering the cause of aviation/aerospace and providing emergency services to the community. This ministry offers a challenging opportunity - especially that of serving the youth of the community.

Directors of religious education or religious education coordinators support the chaplaincy in the administration of religious education ministries on Army, Navy, and Air Force installations. Directors of religious education are employed under the rules and requirements for general schedule (GS) employees as Education Specialists/Excepted Service with the job title of Director of Religious Education. Chaplains in all military services may, from time to time, contract individuals as religious education coordinators to lead and coordinate specific religious programs or activities.

### **C. The LCMS Historical Position on the Military Chaplaincy.**

Historically, The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod has held the Armed Forces chaplaincy in high esteem. Since World War I our church has felt a strong need to support Armed Forces personnel. In 1917 it created the Army and Navy Board, primarily for the purpose of coordinating ministry to soldiers and sailors by pastors near Armed Forces installations. In 1931 our Synodical convention asked district mission boards to endorse pastors for military service. When it became apparent that a central authority was needed, the Synod, at its 1935 convention, established the Army and Navy Commission. The creation of that first commission led to the development of successive synodical entities to coordinate our ministry to the Armed Forces. The name was changed to the Armed Services Commission in 1948, and to the Armed Forces Commission in 1965. When the Synod was restructured in 1981, the Standing Committee, Ministry to the Armed Forces of the Board for Mission Services (BFMS) assumed this important responsibility. Renamed the Ministry to the Armed Forces Committee in 1998, the MAFC through its Director provides information concerning the challenges and opportunities in military and related ministries to seminarians and pastors who express an interest in these areas of ministry. Those who exhibit a continuing interest may eventually be issued a call for full-time service. The called pastor then prayerfully decides where he can most effectively serve our Lord and His people.

## ***II. APPLICATION PROCEDURES***

Before a pastor can be appointed in the military or related federal chaplaincies, the applicable U.S. government agency requires an ecclesiastical endorsement from the applicant's church body. The first step is the submittal of an "Application for Ecclesiastical Endorsement," which can be obtained from the Director, Ministry to the Armed Forces (see sample at Appendix A). When the endorsement has been granted, the applicant will be given guidance to contact the appropriate federal agency, which will in turn provide definitive instructions relative to the process leading to a chaplaincy appointment. A pastor applying for active duty military service or full-time VA, or BOP chaplaincy should keep the matter confidential so that it will not impinge negatively on his present ministry, in that there is no assurance an appointment will be forthcoming.

## ***III. ECCLESIASTICAL ENDORSEMENTS AND APPROVALS***

### **A. Definitions.**

1. Ecclesiastical Endorsement: An official statement of the church body indicating the ordained minister is on the clergy roster and in good standing in the church and has been especially chosen to represent that church body in a military or related ministry.
2. Ecclesiastical Approval: An official statement of the church body indicating that the person is a bona fide seminarian and candidate for ordination who is authorized by the church body to participate in a military chaplain candidacy program while at the seminary.

## **B. General.**

An ecclesiastical endorsement is needed for an initial appointment as a chaplain and at other stages during his service. For the Armed Forces, separate endorsements are required to enter the Reserve components or for going on extended active duty (EAD). An endorsement also is needed for selection for continuing on active duty on an indefinite basis. Similarly, an endorsement is required for serving as an intermittent/contract, part-time, or full-time VA chaplain, BOP chaplain, and Civil Air Patrol chaplain. An endorsement for Directors of Religious Education is processed similarly and retained in the official files of the Director, Ministry to the Armed Forces. The endorsement assures that the individual is an ordained clergyman or certified DRE who is on the official roster of the LCMS and conveys that the individual is qualified morally, intellectually, emotionally, and doctrinally to represent the church body to the military. It further shows that the person has been *specifically* selected to represent the Synod. The initial endorsement is signed only after a personal interview and the members of the MAFC have approved the application. The endorsement is periodically reviewed. Acceptance of the endorsement obligates the chaplain or DRE to represent our church body with integrity and to meet other requirements, such as submitting reports and attending meetings sponsored by the MAFC. The MAFC may withdraw the endorsement for cause in exceptional cases.

## **C. History.**

The first American to receive an endorsement as a military chaplain was a Lutheran pastor in the Revolutionary War by the name of Christian Streit. He received a letter from Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, the "Father of American Lutheranism," certifying him to the Army and vouching for his effectiveness. Rev. Muhlenberg signed the letter as the Senior Minister and President of the German Lutheran Ministerium in the State of Pennsylvania. "This letter constituted the first denominational endorsement known to have been given a clergyman in his process of changing from civilian to military status!"<sup>54</sup> It wasn't until the twentieth century that this would be required for all U.S. military chaplains.

The first LCMS pastor to receive an endorsement as a military chaplain was Friedrich Wilhelm Richmann. In March 1862, he received a call to serve in the Civil War as Chaplain to the 58th Regiment of the Ohio Volunteers of the U.S. Army. He was personally endorsed by C.F.W. Walther, the first President of our Synod.

## **D. Requirements.**

### **1. Department of Defense (DOD).**

The RMP (Religious Ministry Professional, i.e. ("pastor/chaplain")) going into the Armed Forces chaplaincy must meet the basic requirements of the Department of Defense, which

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<sup>54</sup> Thompson, Parker C. A From Its European Antecedents to 1791, A The United States Army Chaplaincy, Vol. 1, Office of the Chief of Chaplains, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1978, p. 130.



includes an ecclesiastical endorsement. DOD Form 2088 certifies that the person is a professionally qualified member of their particular faith group from a fully qualified Religious Organization as defined in DOD instruction 1304.28, dated 11 June, 2004. According to DOD 1304.28, all RMPs must be willing to function in a pluralistic environment, support the free exercise of religion by all members of the Military Services and have at least 2 years of religious leadership experience.

The RMP must be educationally qualified for appointment as a chaplain. This includes a baccalaureate degree of not less than 120 semester (180 quarter) hours and a post-baccalaureate graduate degree in theological or related studies of no less than 72 semester (108 quarter) hours. Both degrees must be from qualified educational institutions as listed in the current edition of the American Council on Education (ACE). The chaplain must also meet the particular requirements of the three services as they determine their own special needs. These include having a favorable National Agency Check for security, meeting physical standards, and falling within the age criteria.

2. The Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Department of Veterans Affairs requires an endorsement before a pastor can be appointed a Veterans Affairs (VA) chaplain. The endorsement form is very similar to that of DoD. The educational requirements are the same as that of an Armed Forces chaplain; however, there are no age, physical, or security criteria. A VA chaplain is under Civil Service and is hired on an excepted appointment basis under Title 5; however, the prospective chaplain must compete with other applicants. Prior military service, participation in the Reserve components, or special training in pastoral counseling can weigh heavily. Former military members who qualify under the Veterans Preference Act may receive additional points, according to law, which will strengthen their appointment possibility.

3. The BOP accession requirements are similar to military chaplaincy and VA requirements for theological training, i.e., M. Div. or equivalent, at least two years' pastoral experience and ecclesiastical endorsement. Application must be made prior to the applicant's 37<sup>th</sup> birthday, and retirement is mandatory at age 57. Legal and financial history will be reviewed; a physical exam and personnel interview are required to determine suitability.

4. The Civil Air Patrol.

Endorsements in the civilian auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force are handled the same as those of DOD. There are no age, physical, or security criteria.

5. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

An endorsement must be approved by the MAF committee. A pastor must have at least two years of parish experience, plus vicarage, before being endorsed for the chaplaincy, active or reserve duty, and full time VA and BOP. Although DOD does not require an endorsement for directors of religious education, The Lutheran Church- Missouri Synod does require such

if a DRE desires to keep his or her official church body status while serving under the jurisdiction of the Armed Forces.

#### **E. Processing Procedures.**

After the completed "Application for Ecclesiastical Endorsement" has been received by the Director, Ministry to the Armed Forces, evaluation forms are sent to the respective District President, the Circuit Counselor, and the three pastors listed as professional references on the application (Appendix B). When the forms are returned, they are circulated by the Director among the three members of the MAF committee. In addition, for those pastors seeking active or reserve duty, the results of an interview of both the applicant and his wife, as applicable, are also included. The interview, as determined by the MAF committee, may be conducted by the Director or Assistant Director, Ministry to the Armed Forces, by a member of the MAF committee, by the entire MAF in session or, in exceptional circumstances, by an experienced LCMS chaplain.

Submitted evaluations are confidential. The MAF committee makes the decision relative to the endorsement. Applicants will be notified whether or not they have been approved. An applicant who is not endorsed is free to re-submit an application after one year. Applicants should know that the MAF normally approves those who are effective parish pastors and have found the parish ministry highly rewarding. The military chaplaincy demands all of the skills required in a parish, in a unique environment under unusual pressures. LCMS chaplains must be able to work cooperatively with clergy of other faith groups, respecting the integrity of their positions without compromising the Synod's doctrinal position. They must be spiritually mature, prudent leaders who can work effectively in an arena sometimes hostile to Christianity (Matthew 10: 16). Chaplains must provide proper pastoral care to those for whom they are responsible. When the applicant receives his endorsement, he will be given instructions on how to follow through with the appropriate government agency, which will lead to his appointment.

Ecclesiastical endorsements are signed by the recognized endorsing agent for the church body the chaplain represents. The endorsing agent for the LCMS is the Director, Ministry to the Armed Forces. Endorsements for the three military services, VA, BOP and the Civil Air Patrol, are sent to the appropriate service Chief of Chaplains or to the CAP National Air Chaplain. Endorsements are also required for all Reserve components and the National Guard.

If a military applicant does not complete his government processing, including acceptance of the commission and taking the Oath of Office within one year from the date of the ecclesiastical endorsement, the endorsement will be withdrawn 60 days after written notice has been sent from the Director, Ministry to the Armed Forces.

#### ***IV. MILITARY ACTIVE DUTY/FULL-TIME VA CALL***

##### **A. General.**

The chaplain applicant, the congregation, the District President, the MAF committee, the BFMS and the appropriate government agency are all involved in bringing a Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod clergyman into the active-duty military or full-time VA chaplaincy.

##### **B. Military.**

When a military service approves a pastor for active duty, the notification normally will come to the Director. He in turn will notify the applicant, who will consider the message as a prelude to a formal call. At this point the applicant is free to decline. If he responds positively, the applicable government agency is contacted and orders are issued. When the formal call is issued to the pastor, both the congregational chairman and District President are notified. Once orders are issued, the pastor reports for active duty as specified.

##### **C. Commissioning Service.**

The *Handbook* of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod directs that the President of the District in which the called chaplain resides shall authorize a commissioning service upon the acceptance of the call. The Director, Ministry to the Armed Forces, requests the District President and the called chaplain mutually to determine the time and place of the service.

##### **D. Full-Time VA/BOP**

A call is extended to the pastor after he has been notified by the Department of Veterans Affairs that he has been selected. It is incumbent on the pastor to notify the Director, Ministry to the Armed Forces, so that the call can be issued and the commissioning service carried out as in IV. C. above.

#### ***V. RELATIONSHIPS***

##### **A. Relationship with Synodical Support Structure.**

###### **1. Board for Mission Services.**

Ministry to the Armed Forces is a function of the LCMS Board for Mission Services (BFMS), also known as LCMS World Mission. The Synod's Handbook requires the Board

to "provide a ministry for all the Synod's military personnel, dependents of military personnel overseas, civilians and their dependents overseas, and patients of veterans hospitals; function as a recruitment, liaison, and endorsement agency with the various governmental units involved in the Armed Forces and Veterans Administration and between these units and the Synod's chaplains and directors of religious education."\* The ministry is under the purview of the Executive Director, Board for Mission Services.

*\*2007 Handbook of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, p. 168, par. 3.8.8.2.2. (d) and (e).*

## 2. The Ministry to the Armed Forces Committee.

The Ministry to the Armed Forces Committee (MAF) is appointed by the Board for Mission Services (BFMS). It provides advice, expertise, and counsel in the annual preparation and evaluation of policies, goals, objectives, programs, and strategies as they pertain to ministry to the Armed Forces. The BFMS has also delegated to the MAF the responsibility of serving as the endorsing agency for The Lutheran Church- Missouri Synod for the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and Civil Air Patrol chaplaincies and for directors of religious education for the military; reviewing and approving applications for ecclesiastical endorsement to serve in the chaplaincies of these federal agencies; issuing calls to those approved for active duty in the military or full time in the VA and BOP and recognizing the faithful service of those whom it has endorsed with appropriate awards. The Committee consists of one LCMS military layman, normally a senior ranking officer, and two LCMS clergy with extensive military chaplain experience. Members may be from the current or former active duty or Reserve component rosters of the U.S. Armed Forces. The Committee meets at least twice a year. All actions of the Committee are forwarded to the Board for Mission Services for information or action as required.

## 3. The Director and Associate Director, Ministry to the Armed Forces.

The Director and Associate Director of Ministry to the Armed Forces (MAF) are members of the staff of the Board for Mission Services (BFMS). The Executive Director of the BFMS supervises the Director of MAF and the Director of MAF, in turn, supervises the Associate Director and all MAF support personnel. The Director supervises the services of all LCMS active duty, Reserve component, Department of Veterans Affairs chaplains, BOP and CAP chaplains as well as all LCMS directors of religious education in the Army, Navy, Air Force, in coordination with their District Presidents. The Director is responsible for the spiritual care of members of the The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in the military including the family members, DOD civilians overseas, and patients in VA medical centers in accordance with the objectives, policies and resolutions of the BFMS.

He publicizes the challenges and opportunities for ministry by chaplains and directors of religious education within the military, the Department of Veterans Affairs, BOP and the Civil Air Patrol. On behalf of the Synod and representing the MAF, he conveys to proper government officials the official endorsement of our church body for clergymen to serve in the particular ministry for which they are endorsed. He gives ecclesiastical approval to the

applicable Chief of Chaplains for seminarians who desire to enter the Armed Forces seminarian programs. He is the shepherd of the Synod's chaplains and their families and provides pastoral care by correspondence and staff visits. The Director plans and provides Lutheran Chaplain Professional Development Training Seminars in accordance with the policies established by the Board. He reviews chaplain reports, compiles statistics as required by various departments of the Synod, writes and sends a quarterly newsletter to all LCMS chaplains (including retirees) and District Presidents, and corresponds with chaplains as necessary.

The Associate Director administers all clerical and budgetary matters for the department, monitoring expenditures and coordinating the financial matters with the Manager of Budget and Finance, BFMS. He manages the Ministry-by-Mail program and all archival and military pastoral act records. He oversees the maintenance and periodic publishing and distribution of a list of active duty chaplains and their current assignments as well as contact pastors near Armed Forces installations as a guide for Lutheran service personnel. The Associate Director is the primary support person for VA and BOP chaplains and oversight of their ministry.

4. Responsibility of Chaplains and DREs to LCMS Supporting Structure.

a. General. The MAF committee endorses military, VA BOP, CAP chaplains and DREs whom it feels will represent our church body with integrity, in a pluralistic environment, without alienating those of another faith. The endorsed person is expected to follow the practices and guidelines of the Synod and maintain communication with the Director, Ministry to the Armed Forces, and the individual chaplain's District President.

b. Quarterly Reports. Active duty, VA chaplains, BOP, DREs and all MOBed Reserve chaplains are required to submit quarterly reports to the Director, to enable him to give a comprehensive picture of the ministry to the Synod. (Go to: [www.lcmsworldmission.org/armedforces](http://www.lcmsworldmission.org/armedforces)) Quarterly reports are due: 31 March, 30 June, 30 September and 31 December. The reports also facilitate communication between the all chaplains and DREs with the Director. A copy of the report should be sent to the chaplain's District President.

c. Annual Reports. All Reserve Component and Civil Air Patrol chaplains are required to submit annual reports (Go to: same website above.). Annual reports are due by 31 January. A copy should be sent to the chaplain's District President.

d. Pastoral Act Reports. Reports of pastoral acts (baptisms, confirmations, marriages) (See website above) are to be submitted to the Ministry to the Armed Forces office upon completion of the act. A copy of the report is to be forwarded to the home congregation of the individual involved. If the individual does not have a home congregation, the pastoral act report form is sent, via the Ministry to the Armed Forces office, to the civilian congregation designated by the Committee to be the repository for military pastoral acts records.

e. **Lutheran Chaplain Professional Development Training Seminars.** Because active duty chaplains normally are unable to attend their district conventions or conferences, MAF sponsors their attendance at Lutheran Chaplain Professional Development Training Seminars. These seminars are designed to help chaplains remain current in theological education and ensure close identification with the national church body's aims and goals for ministry. Active duty chaplains and all MOBEd Reserve chaplains are required to attend the seminar nearest their installations. If military or other contingencies prevent attendance, the Director is to be notified.

An annual Department of Veterans Affairs Chaplain Seminar is held for all full-time and selected part-time VA chaplains for the same reasons. Over time, all part-time VA chaplains will have an opportunity to attend. VA chaplains invited are expected to attend unless there are extenuating circumstances. Again, the Director should be informed if the chaplain is unable to attend.

f. **Reporting of Newsworthy Activities.** Chaplains have some of the most challenging and unique ministries in the Synod. Those ministries should be publicized throughout our church body and our nation. Chaplains are encouraged to submit articles and photographs illustrating their ministry to the Ministry to the Armed Forces office for possible publication.

g. **Support visits from the Director/Associate Director.** The BFMS requires the Director as the church body's endorsing agent or the Associate Director, representing the MAF, to visit active-duty and full-time VA and BOP chaplains. Ideally, active duty chaplains can expect a visit during a given tour at an installation. The purpose of the visit is to affirm the ministry of the chaplain, give pastoral support as it is needed, and to demonstrate our church's affirmation of the government's legitimate role in protecting and preserving our freedoms. Normally the Director/Associate Director will strive to see the supervisory chaplain and appropriate commanding officers, BOP supervisors and, in the case of VA chaplains, the Medical Center Director or Associate Director. When the visit is confirmed, the person being visited should determine if a briefing is advisable, who should be seen for courtesy calls, orientation, etc., and the itinerary. Any necessary logistical arrangements should also be made. Overseas, endorsing agents travel under official DOD recognition as GS-16 equivalents and normally receive protocol treatment. It is always prudent to notify the senior supervisory chaplain and the installation/ship commanding officer, VA or BOP Center Director of the endorsing agent's visit. Reserve component, part-time VA, and Civil Air Patrol chaplains will also be visited as schedules permit. Reserve component chaplains are encouraged to explore the possibility of a visit during Active Duty for Training periods. Normally, the Director is invited, along with other endorsing agents, to attend service-sponsored chaplain conferences and to meet with the LCMS chaplains present.

## **B. Relationships with Those Whom the Chaplain Serves.**

1. **Military Personnel.** The vast majority of the people whom the chaplain serves are enlisted personnel. The military chaplain is a pastor to them, a pastor in uniform. The uniform is a necessary ingredient of his ministry. He must be able to identify with the people he serves. In identifying with them, he, like Paul, should strive to be "all things to all men, that (he) might . . . save some" (1 Corinthians 9: 22). There are times when he participates in physical training with them, deploys with them, and comes under the same enemy fire. While he identifies with them, he should never lose his sense of ministry.

2. **Command.** The military chaplain is also a pastor to his fellow officers. Most officers can be given command. Command is the authority that an individual in the military service lawfully exercises over subordinates by virtue of rank or assignment. The chaplain does not exercise command. Technically, neither is he responsible for the religious and moral welfare of those in the command. In the U.S. Armed Forces, this responsibility belongs to the commanding officer. The commander, however, discharges this responsibility through the chaplain as a member of his/her staff. Authority is delegated to the chaplain to make decisions in specific areas. His primary responsibility is to plan and carry out the religious program. The commander also will expect the chaplain to be an individual of convictions, theologically and otherwise -- giving his honest input in a forthright, logical, and tactful manner.

Much of the chaplain's relationship with his commander is in his capacity as a staff officer. As a staff officer, especially a senior one, the chaplain also may be involved in supporting and directing ministries of many other chaplains. As long as a LCMS chaplain is not directed to do anything contrary to the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, he is expected to follow orders/guidance from those who have legitimate authority.

3. **Patients and Staff in Hospitals.** Ministry in the medical centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs is devoted principally to patients and staff. VA chaplains have the challenge and opportunity to be a pastor to these people. Physicians, nurses, and other professionals on the hospital healing team need the chaplain's ministry as they experience the daily hurt of seeing patients suffer or die. Military chaplains also are frequently assigned to military hospital ministries.

4. **Family Members.** There are some assignments in the military where a chaplain's ministry will be at a chapel that has comprehensive programs for all members of the family. Even chaplains in troop units or on a ship have family ministries. Counseling military personnel and spouses, as well as corresponding with family members, demands a considerable portion of a chaplain's time. For VA and military hospital chaplains, there are many opportunities to minister to family members whose loved ones have debilitating diseases or who have died.

5. **BOP Prison Ministry.** The mission of the Religious Services Department of the BOP is "to accommodate the free exercise of religion" for all federal inmates and help them "pursue individual religious beliefs and practices in accordance with the law." BOP chaplains serve a very diverse religious community and must be able to work as a part of a team directed by the Warden to meet the main religious needs of inmates "through worship, spiritual direction, support and crisis intervention.

6. **Supervisory and Other Chaplains.** Historically, LCMS chaplains have been very effective in working with clergy of other faiths in the military and in the Department of Veterans Affairs. All federal agencies have regulations or directives that prohibit chaplains from being forced to do anything contrary to the tenets of their faith. This would include being required to join in religious services with clergy of other faiths or giving communion in

other than a Lutheran worship service. Chaplains are responsible to their commanders to see that the religious needs of all personnel within the command are met and to facilitate the denominational worship needs they are unable to meet. To do this, it is necessary that a LCMS chaplain build a good working relationship with chaplains of other faiths. The chaplaincy has a time-honored and unofficial slogan, "Cooperation without Compromise."

Theological differences are accepted in the chaplaincy, but arrogance and uncooperativeness are unacceptable. The commanding officer and his/her staff chaplain need team players; the LCMS chaplain will want to earn a place on that team by being loyal, creative, supportive, productive, enthusiastic, and willing to perform assigned tasks as professionally as possible. If demands are made that run contrary to the Synod's doctrinal position, an open discussion will often solve the problem. If the issue cannot be resolved locally, the chaplain should contact the Director, Ministry to the Armed Forces, for guidance.

7. Lutheran Personnel. LCMS chaplains have a special responsibility for the spiritual welfare of Lutheran personnel. Our chaplains are responsible for a Lutheran witness and presence wherever they are assigned. Whenever possible, the witness involves conducting Lutheran worship services, providing confirmation instruction for youth and adults, special Lutheran retreats, fellowship, etc. It is incumbent upon our chaplains to strongly encourage Lutheran personnel to identify with local congregations and yet offer a Lutheran ministry to those who prefer to worship on the military installation.

### **C. Ecclesiastical Relationships -District/Circuit/ Congregational.**

#### **1. Reserve Component, Civil Air Patrol, and part-time VA Chaplains.**

These clergymen have calls to LCMS civilian congregations or other legitimate ministries. Because of this, they have a primary responsibility to the calling agency. The vast majority of these chaplains serve congregations. When ministering in the chaplaincy, they become extensions of their congregation's outreach. They are missionaries to those who wear or have worn our nation's uniform. There must be a good relationship between the chaplain and his congregation as it pertains to his ministry in the chaplaincy. To foster this relationship, the LCMS established *Guidelines for Congregations and Their Reserve Component Chaplains* (Go to: Document 1 at [www.lcmsworldmission.org/armedforces](http://www.lcmsworldmission.org/armedforces) under "Resources for Chaplains). The intent of the guidelines is to establish procedures so that neither the pastor's responsibility as a chaplain nor his primary mission to his congregation will be inhibited or deterred. Ministry to the Armed Forces notifies the District President yearly of all Reserve component, CAP and part-time VA chaplains in his District. These chaplains are encouraged to use the special skills they have acquired in their military or hospital training to further ministry at the congregation, circuit and district level.

#### **2. Active Duty Military, Full-time VA and BOP Chaplains.**

Polity of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod requires a chaplain in these ministries to hold clergy membership in a LCMS District and in a LCMS congregation. Full-time VA and BOP chaplains should hold their clergy membership in the District in which they minister.



When a chaplain executing military orders moves into a District or moves out of a District, he is required to notify the Circuit Counselor and the District President. Ministry to the Armed Forces notifies each District President at least yearly of all active duty military chaplains who hold clergy membership in his District and those who may be residing in his geographical area of responsibility. Chaplains are expected to be as active in the District as possible. They may be able to serve as resource leaders, sharing the expertise they acquired in their unique ministries. Hosting a circuit conference or other clergy gathering in an Armed Forces or VA facility is an excellent way for chaplains to build relationships with their civilian counterparts and to share the ministries of the Armed Forces and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

### 3. Contact Pastors.

District Presidents have appointed a LCMS contact pastor for every military installation in the United States with the exception of a few bases where there are no congregations nearby. A roster of these pastors and their addresses is sent periodically to all of those on the Synod's Ministry-by-Mail list. When there is no Lutheran military chaplain on an Armed Forces installation, the contact pastor has the responsibility and opportunity to provide Lutheran pastoral coverage as required. The contact pastor may be asked to conduct a Lutheran worship service on the base, give confirmation instruction, provide emergency pastoral care, etc. Normally, such ministry has the indirect result of adding members to the congregation. The contact pastor should visit the installation staff chaplain and offer his services as needed. It is important that chaplains and contact pastors have harmonious relationships with the aim of serving Lutheran military personnel and family members to the best of their collective abilities.

## ***VI. THE MINISTRY OF WORD AND SACRAMENT***

### **A. The Chaplain's Calling.**

The vocation of the chaplaincy is first and last an extension of the call to the pastoral office in a setting other than a local congregation. The Lutheran pastor now serves as chaplain to members of a unique institution, i.e., one of the Armed Services,<sup>55</sup> VA Hospital, BOP or CAP. Wherever a duty assignment takes a LCMS chaplain, he is a Lutheran missionary; he ministers in this missionary environment by the same authority of Christ as when he was serving as a parish pastor. At ordination and installation, the Lutheran pastor/chaplain pledged his voluntary allegiance to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. Throughout his tenure as a chaplain, his ministry remains bound to the same vow and commitment. No matter how geographically distant the chaplain, his District President continues to supervise,

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<sup>55</sup> All military members belong to one of the five Armed Services: United States Army, United States Navy, United States Marine Corps, United States Air Force, and United States Coast Guard. All of the Services have Reserve Components. Chaplains belong to one of three Services (USA, USN, USAF). All chaplains frequently serve members of the other Services and the Navy routinely assigns its chaplains to the USMC and USCG.

support, and counsel him. In fact, the District President's ministry is especially important to the chaplain since he is now serving in a difficult and challenging environment.

## **B. The Chaplain's Constituency for Ministry.**

1. The ministry of the chaplain is the same ministry of Word and Sacrament as defined by the Book of Concord and applied by the LCMS Constitution and Handbook. While the congregational structure is the usual context for the Church's ministry until Christ's return, the chaplaincy is not a calling to serve this kind of voluntary congregation with its common and shared faith identity. The chaplain's constituency is a military community, ever changing in its composition, but established by the nation for its common defense. That community is comprised of men and women for whom Christ died. While many in that community may be Christian, a great number of them are not; the Lutheran chaplain is called to be a missionary among them.

2. The Armed Services train for war with lethal weapons of destruction. Training is arduous, often dangerous, and occasionally even fatal. Sometimes our nation sends its young men and women to war or in harm's way. Even when there is no declared war, deadly disasters may occur involving the services of hospital chaplains or the CAP.

The Lutheran pastor will find that Baptism, the Gospel, Absolution, and the Eucharist are especially welcomed in these unique settings. Many generations of Lutheran chaplains have proven the truth of Lutheran convictions about the Means of Grace. In the end, we have nothing to bring these communities except Him, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

3. Few conditions are more common to the modern military than constant mobility. Hospitals also separate people from their normal communities. In the military, our youth are taken away from all they grew up with; parents, family, church, neighborhood. While they have "struck out on their own," they are not alone. It is the purpose of each service to forge its members into cohesive teams that will represent our national interests and, when necessary, fight effectively to win the nation's wars. Military men and women usually remain isolated from their roots as they develop new relationships within new communities. The military community temporarily replaces the former civilian community.

4. All service members will belong to a war-fighting team, a military unit.<sup>56</sup> When not deployed with their unit, service members live on or near a military installation.<sup>57</sup>
5. Families of service members likewise belong to that military installation. The full American diversity of people characterizes all such military units and installations.

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<sup>56</sup> These units are variously named by the services and are ships of the Navy and Coast Guard. Assignment to a military unit is usually accompanied by pride in the unit's identity, mission, and historical lineage.

<sup>57</sup> Various named by the services, e.g., post, base, station, military installations provide every kind of family support found in civilian communities (medical, shopping, off-duty activities, etc.). When dictated by security considerations, access is carefully controlled.

### **C. Communities of Faith.**

The military services recognize that their members have been taken from their roots, including their religious roots and the congregations which did so much to form them into adults. To offer continued opportunity for religious expression, the services have had military chaplaincies from our country's beginning. Lutheran service members may not always be able to find a Lutheran congregation but they are encouraged to seek out one of the many Lutheran worshiping communities around the world. They exist because of command support and assigned Lutheran chaplains who are there and are able to lead them. Unfortunately, there are not enough Lutheran chaplains to be assigned everywhere. The LCMS has a long history of cooperation with other Lutherans in providing Lutheran worship services in the military and is widely respected for maintaining confessional integrity in our exercise of religious freedom.

The LCMS chaplain will find himself called by military assignment to ensure the religious needs of all are met while providing ministry for a variety of Christian communities within his unit or installation. No two assignments will be the same; one method of ministry may be effective once but not necessarily again in a different assignment. During a single assignment the people served will come and go. It is not unusual for a chaplain departing an assignment to notice that his community of faith has changed 100 percent since his arrival. At times of deployment, the chaplain's community of faith will remain intact only for the duration of the campaign, exercise, or deployment. Especially in times of arduous duty, stress, or combat itself, faithful Christian service members will seek the support of a chaplain and the Christian community of faith.

### **D. The Supervision of Ministry.**

LCMS chaplains remain accountable to their District Presidents (just as all chaplains remain accountable to their structures of ecclesiastical endorsement). District Presidents maintain their concern for and interest in the total welfare of their chaplains, as they do for all their pastors. They are available for counsel as the chaplain weighs pastoral judgments about ministry in his branch of service.

The Synod's Director, Ministry to the Armed Forces, is called because of his depth of experience in ministry to military communities. He is always available to support chaplains wherever they are stationed or serving.

The LCMS is one of nearly 250 denominations currently serving military personnel. At larger units or installations, senior chaplains offer many religious expressions as part of a command's religious program. Mutual respect between chaplains and a willingness to cooperate, without compromising their own convictions, enable such a diverse program to work. LCMS chaplains cooperate and coordinate appropriately with other chaplains as part of what is their normal ministry environment.

Historically LCMS chaplains with a strong sense of vocation have excelled in working with others and at accepting assignments and taskings from supervisory chaplains regardless of their faith group background. Military chaplaincy is a very different vocation from a civilian congregational pastorate because a Lutheran chaplain will never find that his work is among a majority of Lutherans. By assignment he is called to ensure the religious needs of all those of his unit, ship or installation are met.

Lutherans are encouraged by their confession and acknowledgment of "the whole Christian Church on earth" (Luther's *Small Catechism*). LCMS chaplains can find much to share with other Lutherans. While recognizing and taking seriously doctrinal differences with other Christian church bodies, they can praise God with non-LCMS Christians. Lutheran chaplains who are appointed by their services to supervise other chaplains can draw insight from and acclaim the truth of Luther's profound phrase as they evaluate the strength of non-Lutheran ministries. Likewise, the Lutheran chaplain has enormous opportunity to become close to unbaptized and lapsed Christians. His ministry is an opportunity for planting the seed of the Gospel which, by the working of the Spirit, will bear fruit according to God's promises (Isaiah 55:10,11; Mark 4:1-20).

#### **E. The Church's Mission.**

The chaplaincy is a vital part of the church's mission. It allows LCMS pastors to provide the finest possible ministry to military personnel and especially to Lutheran service members and their families, reaching out to all service members and their families with an evangelical Lutheran Christian ministry.

#### **F. Norms for the Ministry of Chaplains.**

1. **Emphasis.** The ministry of chaplains shall be concerned primarily with a spiritual ministry, with major emphasis upon the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments, and on personal contact and counseling.
2. **Lutheran Ministry.** Lutheran chaplains will normally conduct a Lutheran worship service with the Lord's Supper every Sunday. Law and Gospel are preached and the liturgy conducted so that Baptism, repentance, the church's creedal faith and the Real Presence are faithfully presented to the worshipers. When more than one Lutheran is assigned at an installation, coordinating authority for the Lutheran worshipping community normally falls to the senior Lutheran chaplain.
3. **The Lord's Supper.** LCMS chaplains are to administer the Lord's Supper in accordance with the Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions and the practices of our church body. A chaplain's primary concern is for the spiritual well being of those to whom he gives the Supper. The pastoral intent is to assist the communicants to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord for forgiveness and not for judgment (1 Corinthians 11:27-29). To that end, the practice of private confession and personal absolution is encouraged. Because of the exceptional situations in the military environment, it is customary practice for a Lutheran

chaplain to provide pastoral oversight for all Lutherans in his command and, thus, to admit all Lutherans to the Lord's Table who come to Lutheran services. The decision to admit is always up to the chaplain involved and is based on communing those who are baptized and instructed in the faith, aware of their sin and the need for repentance, believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and accept the Lutheran doctrine of the Real Presence and of the Lord's Supper as a Means of Grace. Such procedure is consistent with responsible pastoral care.

4. **Co-located Civilian Congregations.** LCMS service members and their families may be referred to LCMS civilian congregations when feasible. Chaplains will fully cooperate with co-located Lutheran congregations. Retired service members should be encouraged to join and participate in local Lutheran congregations.
6. **General Christian/Protestant Worship.** Lutheran chaplains are "Missionaries to the Military" and should seek out every opportunity to preach the Gospel within their Command. This includes leading the General Protestant worship service whenever possible. In the complex and diverse world they are called to serve, LCMS chaplains will design services and sermons that are worshipful and edifying for this broader audience, faithfully proclaiming the Law and Gospel according to their confessional vows.
6. **Inter-Christian Rites and Ceremonies.** LCMS chaplains are expected to represent our church body's confessional position and practices. They will not participate in inter-Christian/Faith worship rites nor will they participate in military ceremonies in which their presence would be unfaithful to the tenets of their faith. In facing difficult cases, a LCMS chaplain should seek counsel from senior LCMS chaplains, the Director, Ministry to the Armed Forces, or his District President.
7. **Holy Baptism.** LCMS chaplains will baptize according to customary Lutheran practice, always attempting to attach the baptized to the life of a specific Lutheran congregation. As circumstances of pastoral care warrant, they can also support the broader Christian family by providing Holy Baptism to families who believe in and seek baptism as a Means of Grace. Lutheran chaplains will provide a congregational life which nurtures the baptized, children and adults, to become disciples of the living Lord.
8. **Confirmation.** LCMS chaplains will provide confirmation instruction for adults and children when practical. The chaplain will attempt to attach the confirmed to the life of a specific congregation. If this is not possible, the individual will become a member of the civilian congregation designated by the MAF to be the repository for military pastoral acts records.
9. **Marriage.** A marriage ceremony is not necessarily a religious service; it can be conducted by a civil official. When a Lutheran clergyman officiates, it becomes a worship service in which the couple asks God's blessings on the union and provides the chaplain an opportunity for Christian witness. Lutheran chaplains are authorized to solemnize the marriage of any couple that would be eligible in a civilian church. Similarly, Lutheran chaplains are expected to conduct an active pre-marital instruction program prior to the

marriage ceremony. Chaplains will want to counsel with the couple and be assured that there is no Scriptural or other impediment to the marriage before agreeing to solemnize the marriage at a worship service. If there is a problem and it remains unresolved, Armed Services regulations support the chaplain's right to refuse to conduct the service. Chaplains are further cautioned to check the local legal requirements of the state, country, etc., in which the ceremony is to be performed. In many cases, clergy need to be registered with the local authorities prior to the signing of marriage documents. In some countries, only the civil ceremony and not the religious rite is recognized as establishing a legal marriage.

10. Prayers. Frequently the chaplain will be asked to give prayers for particular occasions such as military reviews, "hails and farewells," "dining-ins," recognition luncheons, evening prayer at taps aboard ship, etc. All of these can be occasions for good ministry. A prayer of thanks to God for those who have contributed to our nation and the military community may be in order as well as petitions to Him for peace, justice, protection, good leadership, etc. Some may request prayer from a chaplain for occasions when it would be inappropriate. If a prayer is in order, the chaplain should carefully word it to reflect the occasion and be brief. The chaplain should always pray with sensitivity to those present. However, a LCMS chaplain can and should pray as is indicated in Holy Scriptures which certainly includes praying in our Savior's name.

11. Religious Education. A significant part of the ministry of the chaplain and the director of religious education involves Bible classes, Christian doctrine/confirmation instruction for both youth and adults, pre-marriage courses, family life activities, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, etc. The military services often make these and other religious educational activities available on the installation. Some Lutheran worshiping groups have supported Lutheran Sunday Schools or nearby LCMS Christian day schools and high schools. Others have found it beneficial for Lutheran lay persons to serve as teachers in the installation-wide Sunday and Vacation Bible Schools.

## ***VII. CEREMONIES AND MILITARY FUNERALS***

### **A. Ceremonies, General.**

A ceremony is a patriotic or recognition event for a particular purpose; it is *not* a religious service and reflects no particular denominational doctrine or liturgy. A chaplain may be requested to participate along with others in conducting the ceremony. It is command oriented and often involves mandatory attendance of whole units. A ceremony may include the national anthem or other music, an invocation and/or appropriate Scripture reading, the Pledge of Allegiance, and remarks from a speaker. The military chaplain will be in uniform for such an event. Traditions of the service foster ceremonies at graduations, commissioning of ships, dedications of buildings, changes of command, etc.

### **B. Memorial Ceremonies.**

A memorial ceremony is an activity recognizing a deceased member or members of a particular organization, ship, war, etc. Normally a memorial ceremony includes music, an

invocation, appropriate Scripture reading, reading of the Service record, obituary and/or remarks (often from the commanding officer), prayer, a silent tribute, and taps. LCMS chaplains may conduct memorial ceremonies at a chapel, graveside or elsewhere, for deceased service members (active duty or retired). It is important to understand that this is a ceremony and not a religious service. The chaplain's presence represents the government, not the church, and carries no implication of fellowship.

### **C. Memorial Services.**

While the memorial ceremony is a patriotic event with the solemnity of remembering the fallen comrade(s) and has religious implications (*i.e.*, thanking God for the service of the deceased), the memorial service is a *religious* service guided by the rites of the chaplain's denomination. Attendance at a memorial service is voluntary. The chaplain has a responsibility to advise the commander on whether the memorial activity should be a ceremony or a service.

### **D. Military Funerals.**

A military funeral is a worship service at which the remains of the deceased are present and the customs of the Armed Services observed. When possible, LCMS chaplains should conduct such a service in accordance with "Burial of the Dead," Lutheran Worship Agenda. Rubrics state, "This service is intended for the burial of those who departed this life in the Christian faith."<sup>58</sup> The chaplain may have the commander or his representative read the service record and/or obituary.

### **E. Coordination of Military Details.**

A chaplain should thoroughly coordinate the details of any military ceremony/service or funeral with the appropriate military personnel who can give expert advice pertaining to the customs of the services which should be followed.

## ***VIII. CHAPLAIN CANDIDATE PROGRAM***

The Army, Air Force, and Navy have programs whereby seminary students can be commissioned as junior officers, attend the basic chaplain course of the appropriate service, and receive some on-the-job training at an Armed Forces installation. To enter the program, the candidate must have completed at least one grading period at the seminary. Applications should be made through the Division of Ministerial Formation and its designated representative at Concordia Seminary St. Louis and through the Supervisor of Military Chaplaincy programs at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. When the seminary notifies the Director, Ministry to the Armed Forces, of a student's approval to participate in the chaplain candidate program, and MAF receives the completed application from the chaplain candidate, the Director sends a letter of ecclesiastical approval to the appropriate branch of service. The MAF Director and/or Associate Director visit both seminaries

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<sup>6</sup> Lutheran Worship, Little Agenda, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO 1985, p. 64

periodically to give a briefing on the program and coordinate Chaplain Candidate orientation activities. The seminaries are responsible for ensuring that Chaplain Candidate applicants are academically qualified; MAF is responsible for ecclesiastical approval as well as guidance regarding chaplaincy careers and periodic training opportunities for chaplain candidates at both seminaries.

### ***IX. ST. MARTIN OF TOURS AWARDS***

The MAF awards the Bronze and Silver St. Martin of Tours medals to those who have met the established criteria in furthering ministry within the military, the Department of Veterans Affairs and Bureau of Prisons. The bronze medal is awarded for meritorious service, normally over a 20 year period (See Docs 5 & 6 [www.lcmsworldmission.org/armedforces](http://www.lcmsworldmission.org/armedforces) under "Resources for Chaplains"). The silver medal is awarded for exceptionally meritorious service. A suggested rite for presentation of the award that conforms with the *Lutheran Worship Agenda* is available from the Director, Ministry to the Armed Forces.

### ***X. CONCORDIA PLANS SERVICES***

The BFMS funds benefits for active duty military and full-time VA and BOP chaplains to ensure that their benefits are comparable to that of a civilian ministry or pastorate. Chaplains are not enrolled in the Concordia Health Plan because medical coverage is provided by the military, the VA or the BOP. The BFMS does not fund retirement in the Worker Benefit Plans because chaplains are eligible for retirement benefits either through military retirement or through the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS). In the event a chaplain returns to a civilian parish and is not eligible for any retirement benefits from his government employment, to include the Reserve components, the BFMS will reimburse Concordia Plans for those years during which the chaplain was not funded in Concordia Plans. The BFMS does fund Concordia Disability and Survivor Plan (CDSP) benefits for active duty military, VA and BOP chaplains. Military chaplains are eligible only for the Survivor Benefits portion. All benefits, to include reimbursement of the Concordia Retirement Plan, are funded on an established \$7,200 salary basis except for a VA chaplain's first two years of service. VA chaplains are funded in the CDSP for their first two years of employment in the VA at a salary level of \$27,000. After they have completed two years of service, their CDSP coverage is again funded on the \$7,200 level.

Upon release from active duty, or full-time VA, and BOP service LCMS chaplains must notify MAF and Concordia Plans Services whether or not they are eligible to receive military or government retirement benefits (See Doc 7 at above website).

Reserve Component chaplains should review the applicable material on Concordia Plans Services in Doc 2 at [www.lcmsworldmission.org/armedforces](http://www.lcmsworldmission.org/armedforces)



## **Document 1**

### **Guidelines for Congregations with Reserve Chaplains**

#### **Preamble**

##### **I. History.**

Since World War I our church has felt a strong need to support Armed Forces personnel. In 1917 it created the Army and Navy Board, primarily for the purpose of coordinating ministry to soldiers and sailors by pastors near Armed Forces installations. In 1931 our Synodical convention asked district mission boards to endorse pastors for military service. When it became apparent that a central authority was needed, the Synod, at its 1935 convention, established the Army and Navy Commission. The creation of that first commission began the development of successive synodical entities to coordinate our ministry to the Armed Forces. The name was changed to the Armed Services Commission in 1948 and to the Armed Forces Commission in 1965. When the Synod was restructured in 1981, the Standing Committee, Ministry to the Armed Forces of the Board for Mission Services (BFMS) assumed this important responsibility. Renamed the Ministry to the Armed Forces Committee in 1998, the ministry of the MAFC includes support and supervision of the chaplains of our church who provide ministry to the Reserve components (Army, Navy, and Air Force Reserves, and Army and Air National Guardsmen). At its 1983 convention, the Synod resolved, "That we encourage congregations whose pastors are members of the military Reserve to facilitate their pastor's participation in and fulfillment of the requirements placed upon them as members of our nation's military forces" (Resolution 1-17).

##### **II. Rationale.**

**A.** Our church views the ministry to the Armed Forces as a direct response to the Great Commission of our Lord (Matthew 28: 18-20) and an extension of our congregation's mission outreach. This ministry is directed not only to members of the Lutheran Church and other Christians, but also to those who are uncharted. Ministry to the military is one of the ways the church is able to reach them. Such participation by congregation and pastor in the Reserve chaplaincy is also a tangible contribution of Christian citizenship that facilitates the exercise of the freedom of religious expression within the military.

**B** The Reserve service of our pastors also results in concrete benefits to the individual church and the Synod. Pastors selected for the chaplaincy are already recognized by the church-at-large as having strong spiritual and ministerial gifts. In addition, these ministers are trained and developed by the military, beyond what can be done at the seminary, in leadership, planning, organization, and administrative skills. These skills are of great value at local and national levels for equipping the church to maximize her response to ministry opportunities, as well as crisis and disaster situations. Congregations served by a Reserve component chaplain also derive direct benefits from his service through cyclical pastoral

revitalization, continued advanced training, and professional development, and the exchange of ideas with other clergy, which often results in new insights and/or programs for the home parish.

This ministry does, however, require a significant obligation from the chaplain, his family, and the church in the face of mobilization readiness. Military Reserve components exist to augment active duty forces on very short notice in the event of a national emergency. This obligation and the need for stability within the church demand that both the congregation and the pastor plan together to reap the benefits of an expanded ministry and prepare in advance to meet its potential obligations in an orderly fashion.

#### C. Structure for Reserve Participation.

The military Reserves were created by Congress to augment active duty forces on very short notice in the event of a national emergency. This need is met through mobilization readiness. In order to perform the specialized ministry of the chaplaincy, the military trains and equips the chaplain. He in turn agrees to keep himself ready for mobilization "call up" on short notice and to serve our nation's Armed Forces, in combat if necessary. As a "mobilization asset," at a time designated as an emergency by proper governmental authority, the Reserve component chaplain is legally required and conscience-bound to report for active duty.

Such "readiness" itself has direct benefits for the local church. As the pastor gains in leadership, planning, organizational, and administrative skills, Reserve participation requires that he maintain good physical conditioning and a mind set ready to respond to unusual or emergency situations. As the pastor's time in military service grows, it is to be expected that his increasing vision, abilities, and experience will make very positive contributions to the church's ministry and structure.

The military training of Reserve component chaplains is conducted through a combination of schooling and inactive duty and active duty training assignments that proceed through the years in a cyclical, fairly predictable order. The predictability of these duties and assignments allows for advanced planning. These regular absences provide for lay ministry opportunities within the congregation and are usually overseen by the Board of Elders or the Board of Lay Ministry. Due to its many benefits and specific obligations, the Reserve Component chaplain in consultation with his congregational leadership, is required to prepare a document of understanding, that is, a MOB agreement, that details the arrangements under which the pastor participates in the military Reserve chaplaincy. A sample "Reserve Chaplaincy Agreement and Contingency Planning Document" is outlined in Section VII below. It should be the pastor's responsibility to guide the development of this plan and see to its annual review.

Participation in the Reserve chaplaincy necessitates regular communications with and reporting as required to the Ministry to the Armed Forces Committee (MAFC), the military service involved, as well as the pastor's District President and Circuit Counselor.

D. The Chaplain. A Pastor in the Reserve component chaplaincy, like active duty chaplains, has been especially selected by our church as having the pastoral skills and

abilities to serve in the unique military environment. Because the pastor/chaplain can only serve in the military with the endorsement of the church (Synod), chaplains (active, Guard, or Reserve) at all times serve as representatives and missionaries of the church when in uniform. The pastor/chaplain has been especially trained by the military and has agreed to serve Armed Forces personnel in combat as needed. The pastor/chaplain must attend a variety of regularly scheduled training periods each year as well as periodic schools and conferences of longer duration. The guidelines which follow will attempt to address each of these requirements.

## Guidelines

### I. Basic Schooling.

A. Following endorsement by Synod and joining the Reserve component of choice, the pastor attends a basic chaplain school. Schools range in length from eight to twelve weeks, are often attended in segments, with class dates offered throughout the year. Sometimes this school can be completed in subsequent summers. The pastor should explore the options offered and in advance reach an agreement with the church as to the most desirable option available.

B. Federal law prohibits requiring a Reservist to use vacation time for the performance of mandated Reserve military duty. The congregation and pastor should agree in advance as to whether he will be granted a leave of absence without pay for the schooling period, during which time the congregation would pay for interim pastoral services, or whether he will be granted leave with pay, which would necessitate the pastor paying for interim coverage.

### II. Inactive Duty Training.

A. The regular time commitment is two days per month for "drill." Depending upon unit, assignment, and location, these days are usually performed together on one weekend. Exact arrangements vary widely depending on military branch, regional regulations, and unit structures. Some commands of the Reserves have regulations that allow the pastor of a Christian congregation to perform drill on a day other than Sunday.

B. Inactive duty training is often at a nearby Armed Forces facility, but can also be located at distances requiring travel time. Location is usually decided by the exact "billet," job, or position that the chaplain holds at a given time. The pastor should exercise care and negotiate advance agreements with his congregation related to travel time and drill days.

C. If the pastor holds a pay billet and is away for drill on a Sunday, it is generally expected that he will pay for the required pulpit coverage at his congregation. Advance agreement in detail on this matter is very important.

D. The ministry and needs of the congregation are to remain top priority in the life and planning of the drilling Reserve component chaplain/pastor.

### III. Active Duty for Training.

A. Active duty for training is a commitment of fourteen to seventeen days per year, performed within the fiscal year which runs from October 1 to the following September 30. Duty assignments and dates vary greatly with the needs of the service, but are usually published in advance and available throughout the year. The pastor is expected to do advance planning and coordination to minimize any negative impact of annual active duty upon the parish schedule.

B. Since federal law prohibits requiring a Reservist to use vacation time for the performance of mandated Reserve military duty, the church and pastor should agree in advance as to whether he will be granted a leave of absence without pay for the active duty period, during which time the congregation would pay for interim pastoral services, or whether he will be granted leave with pay, which would necessitate the pastor paying for interim coverage. Financial determinations are usually based on the particular circumstances of the pastor and congregation.

C. Advance detailed arrangements should be made by the pastor for coverage of routine parish responsibilities as well as emergency pastoral and contingency needs during active duty. It is strongly recommended that the arrangements be written and distributed to all concerned.

### IV. Additional days for military schooling, other temporary active duty, etc.

A. Whether the temporary active duty orders are "voluntary" or not, there are periods of time, including military schools, conferences, etc., when the pastor/chaplain will be expected to be on orders from the military. Taking such opportunities and the subsequent time away from the church should be arranged by mutual agreement.

B. When the salary is continued it is recommended that the pastor/chaplain make remuneration for pulpit supply and/or emergency pastoral coverage, for periods other than annual training (AT).

C. If the pastor/chaplain elects to use earned vacation for such training, the substitute pastor should be paid by the congregation. Advance arrangements should be made for pastoral coverage and, again, it is strongly recommended that the arrangements be written and distributed to all concerned.

### V. Mobilization - Nine (9) months or less. The following actions are recommended:

A. The calling entity should grant a leave of absence for the expected period of time contained in the call-up orders (it might be wise to have such a resolution in place in order to avoid the necessity of a special meeting; a provision that the Board of Elders or some other body be notified immediately should be part of that resolution).

B. The District President and Circuit Counselor should be notified immediately so that an interim pastor may be appointed to assist the congregation during the period of the pastor's absence. The interim pastor can then perform pastoral duties such as hospital calls, shut-in visits, evangelism contacts, weddings, etc., so that ministry to and with the people of God may continue. The District President, Circuit Counselor, interim pastor (or other appropriate persons) and Director, MAF, should be in close communication with each other, the pastor/chaplain, and the affected place of primary ministry in order to provide support, encouragement, understanding, and direction during this time.

C. The salary and car allowance (in the case of a "replacement allowance" special arrangements may need to be made) of the pastor/chaplain should cease at the time of reporting for active duty, and the interim pastor's remuneration should begin.

D. While on leave of absence, the pastor/chaplain's housing allotment should continue until the military housing allowance is activated (normally about 30 days). If the pastor/chaplain and family live in a parsonage the Basic Allowance for Quarters (BAQ), less the cost of family paid utilities, should be offered to the calling entity as rent for use of the parsonage.

E. Concordia Plan Services. (See also Document 2)

1. Since this is a "leave of absence," the calling entity should continue to provide Concordia Plan Services as if the pastor/chaplain was still active in that particular ministry.

2. Should the pastor/chaplain accept a call to active duty, the MAFC will assume responsibility from the time of the resignation for the benefits normally provided to active duty chaplains.

VI. Mobilization - More than nine (9) months. At "call up," when mobilization is begun, the duration of the emergency is usually uncertain and the emotional climate extremely volatile. It is, therefore, most important that a well thought out and carefully constructed contingency plan of action to be taken by both the pastor and congregation be in place. A sample outline is provided in Section VII below. It is strongly recommended that this document be reviewed and updated annually. As a minimum the following areas of concern should be addressed:

A. Actions by the Pastor.

1. He should immediately notify the Director, MAF, and the church leaders, the Circuit Counselor and the District President so that pastoral coverage arrangements can be made. As time permits he should assist in making these arrangements.

2. He should review the "Reserve Chaplaincy Agreement and Contingency Planning Document" (MOB Agreement) with the church leadership and also reprise the Circuit Counselor and District representative on its contents and agreements.

3. If there is a parsonage, the military housing allowance, less the cost of family paid utilities, should be paid monthly to the congregation as rent for the quarters.
4. He should make time to spend with his family, complete last minute personal arrangements (major needs should already be met in pre-mobilization preparedness planning), and maintain close contact with congregational leaders as circumstances develop.
5. During mobilization he should stay in contact with the congregation's leadership as well as that of the Circuit, District, and Synod, to share information as the situation clarifies.
6. Should active duty extend beyond nine months, it is recommended that he and his District President review his call to the local congregation. If there is a likelihood that the chaplaincy will be his full time call for an extended period of time, a peaceful release may be indicated. Such action provides the congregation the freedom to make more permanent arrangements to meet its pastoral care needs.

**B. Actions by the Congregation's Leadership.**

1. Review the "Reserve Chaplaincy Agreement and Contingency Planning Document" with the pastor and establish contact with the Circuit Counselor and appropriate District representative.
2. Provide assistance and support to the pastor and his family as needed.
3. Through the appropriate board or committee, direct the completion of arrangements to cover the pastoral needs of the parish during this period of mobilization.
4. If there is a parsonage, the pastor's family should remain in it until a new pastor is called. When military housing allowance is paid, that amount, less the cost of family paid utilities, should be received monthly by the church as rent.
5. The congregation should continue to pay all Concordia Plan Services during the leave of absence on the basis of the pastor's salary at the time of call up. If during or following mobilization, the pastor has been granted a peaceful release accepted by the church, the MAFC will assume responsibility for necessary Plan payments from the time of the release, as is done for other active duty chaplains.

**VII. Reserve Chaplaincy Agreement and Contingency Planning Document.** While the actual format may vary widely, at a minimum, the following areas should be specifically addressed:

- A. **Origin and Review Record.** Date the document was created; name of the approving board and date; date of last review.

B. Title. A clear statement that this is the document of (name of) church's contingency planning for pastoral ministry in the event of Pastor's (name) mobilization as a military chaplain.

C. Purpose. A summary statement that Pastor (name) is a member of the (service branch) Ready Reserve. As such, he must be prepared for recall to active duty in the event of war or national emergency. This document reflects previously agreed upon actions and contingency plans to be followed in the event of mobilization for the continuation of the pastoral ministry here and for the provision of assistance to the pastor's family.

D. Implementation. In the event of mobilization, the following actions will be undertaken as identified in the MOB agreement by the Pastor, the congregation and its leadership. (See Document 3 at LCMS Armed Forces website).

1. Important information list. The information that the pastor desires the church leadership to know so they are equipped to render assistance to his family, *e.g.*, location of safety deposit box, military documents, will, family phone numbers and important points of contact, emergency notification procedures, other helpful family information, etc.

E. Location of Document. A statement that indicates where copies of the Mobilization Plan are to be filed (list all places, files, persons, and offices that hold copies).

The pastor/chaplain and calling entity should put in writing their agreement pertaining to their responsibilities to each other as they relate to the Reserve component ministry. Copies should be given to the Circuit Counselor and the District President, and a copy of the MOB agreement to the Director, MAF for inclusion in the chaplain's record.

## **Document 6**

### **The Criteria for Awarding *The Bronze Medal of St. Martin of Tours***

I. The Bronze Medal of St. Martin of Tours is awarded for meritorious service in support of the program of the Board for Mission Services of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in its ministry to the Armed Forces. The Ministry to the Armed Forces Committee shall recommend qualified candidates to the Board for Mission Services for approval.

II. The requirement of meritorious service shall normally be:

A. When a clergyman of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod completes twenty (20) years of active duty as a chaplain in one of the Armed Services of the United States from the date of his commissioning; or

B. When a clergyman of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod completes any combination of twenty (20) years of service creditable toward military retirement as a chaplain on extended active duty or as a member of the Reserve forces in inactive duty status from the date of his commissioning; or

C. When a clergyman of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod completes any combination of twenty (20) years of service as a military chaplain on active or inactive duty in any of the branches Armed Forces; as a Veterans Affairs or BOP chaplain; as an employee and/or member of the Committee (not to be awarded while still a member of the Committee); or

D. When a clergyman of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod on active duty as a chaplain in the Armed Services is killed in action, dies of wounds or injuries received in connection with a military action or is declared by the service branch to which he belonged to be presumptively dead after having been reported missing in action.

III. In addition, the Committee may determine at any time that an officer of the church, active or retired, has for an extended period of time (normally not less than twenty [20] years) actively supported and furthered the program of the church's service to the military in such a way as to have rendered sufficiently meritorious service to warrant the award of the medal.

IV. When a clergyman of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod on extended active duty as a chaplain in the Armed Services dies as the result of causes other than battle-inflicted wounds, the Committee may determine that the quality of his service and the circumstances attending his death qualify him for the posthumous award of the medal.

V. In extraordinary cases, the Committee may determine that any person has rendered meritorious service to the program of the church's service to the military of such quality as to warrant the award of the medal.

VI. Awards of the medal shall normally be announced at the discretion of the Committee, and the medals themselves shall be conferred on that date or as soon thereafter as feasible in the name of the Ministry to the Armed Forces Committee.

VII. At the discretion of the recipient, the medal may be worn as a pectoral device with ecclesiastical vestments in divine service or with academic garb at academic functions.

VII. Replacement of lost or stolen medals shall be made at the expense of the recipient after he has submitted a statement to the Committee affirming the fact of the medal's loss or theft.



## **Document 7**

### **The Criteria for Awarding *The Silver Medal of St. Martin of Tours***

- I. The Silver Medal of St. Martin of Tours is awarded for exceptionally meritorious service in support of the program of the Board for Mission Services of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in its ministry to the Armed Forces. The Ministry to the Armed Forces Committee shall recommend qualified candidates to the Board for Mission Services for approval. The Service for which the medal is awarded must normally have been performed over a considerable span of time and must be notably superior in quality of devotion and dedication to the meritorious service for which the Bronze Medal of St. Martin of Tours is awarded.
- II. The criteria for the recipient is the same as that for the award of The Bronze Medal of St. Martin of Tours (Document 5 & 6).
- III. Not more than one Silver Medal of St. Martin of Tours will be awarded in a single year, and no obligation exists to award the medal every year.
- IV. The award of the medal will be announced on St. Martin's Day (November 11) and the medal will be conferred on that day, or as soon thereafter as feasible, in the name of the Committee, Ministry to the Armed Forces by the Executive Director, Board for Mission Services; by the Director, Ministry to the Armed Forces; by one or more members of the Committee; or by a person designated to act for the Committee.
- V. The Silver Medal of St. Martin of Tours will be awarded to any recipient only once, but the previous award of a Bronze Medal of St. Martin of Tours shall not bar an individual from consideration for the award of the Silver Medal.
- VI. The medal may be awarded posthumously.
- VII. An individual citation describing the basis of the award shall accompany each Silver Medal of St. Martin of Tours.
- VIII. At the discretion of the recipient, the medal may be worn as a pectoral device with ecclesiastical vestments at divine service or with academic garb at academic functions.

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