

From 2nd District Chaplain Jim Fast

The Preamble to the Constitution of THE AMERICAN LEGION begins with the statement; For God and Country we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:

“FOR GOD AND COUNTRY ...” Like our nation’s founding fathers, the veterans who founded The American Legion acknowledged God as the source of all our rights and freedoms. Apart from God, our history as a people has no meaning. In this faith our institutions were created, our laws enacted, and our liberties secured. To safeguard our sovereignty and our prosperity, that same belief must direct our political, social and economic paths today.

Conceding the erosion of moral and spiritual values in recent years, and recognizing our dependence upon God, The American Legion reaffirms its commitment to bring all Americans closer to their Creator and remind them of His proper place at the center of the nation’s life.

“Service to God and Country” – it’s an American Legion program, yes, but the saying describes just as well our members’ attitude and way of life. Nondenominational and nonsectarian, the Legion’s support for religion in the public square is basic Americanism. Rather than acting independently of religious groups, the Legion desires to cooperate with and join them in reminding the American people with one voice that God is the author and architect of our beloved “land of the free.” Without God, there is no Americanism.

Because the Legion embraces all religions, faiths and denominations within its ranks, you as a chaplain are asked to care for everyone – those who have a spiritual affiliation and those who don’t. In some cases, you may be the only minister a veteran will ever know. (American Legion Chaplain Manual)

As your District Chaplain, I am prepared to meet the directives of the American Legion pertaining to the duties of Chaplain. I have a different perspective than some, as I have been an ordained minister for 19 years and have performed all the duties of the Church. So, I offer my experience to all the 2nd District Chaplains for any questions that may arise as to your duties.

In the coming months, we will take a closer look at the duties of the Post Chaplain.