



DIOCESE OF TRURO
DISCOVERING GOD'S KINGDOM
GROWING THE CHURCH

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ

The world is a more dangerous place than it has been for some time, with a growing number of conflicts and threats of conflict, including those that involve the United Kingdom. In this context, and with Remembrance Sunday drawing close, we are writing to you as the Bishop to the Armed Forces and the Archdeacons for the Royal Navy, Army and RAF.

We want to thank you for any support that you are already offering to the military community, and to encourage you to take this engagement seriously as part of the ongoing mission and ministry of the church in your area.

There are 172,000 people currently serving in the regular and reserve forces. In addition, there are 1.9 million veterans in the UK and nearly 2 million households with at least one person who has served or is serving in the Forces. More than 4 million people, including approximately 125,000 children, therefore have a direct connection to the Armed Forces. If you serve in a diocese with a significant military presence, this figure is likely to be proportionally even higher.

Soldiers, sailors and aviators are very likely to have worked closely with an Armed Forces Chaplain and may well have benefited from the ministry of their Padre (also known as 'the Bish' in the Navy). They may therefore be open to further engagement with faith and the life of the church, and you are well placed to connect with them.

There is a particular opportunity to make those connections on and around Remembrance Sunday, and we encourage you to see this as an opportunity for more significant and broader engagement.

With that in mind, we offer three simple ways to show military personnel and their families that the church cares about them, and that we want to offer a warm welcome in the name of Jesus Christ.

1. Make contact with your local Armed Forces chaplain. They will be pleased to meet, to share their experience and to offer ideas on ministry with Service Personnel. They may also be able to show you round a military base, and to give you an insight into life in the Forces. Many will also welcome an invitation to your Deanery Chapter, either to speak or as a regular member.
2. Set up a prayer station in your church where prayers can be shared for those serving in the forces and for their families. This could include some of the [Church of England prayers for the Armed Forces](#).
3. Ask your local Primary school if they have a *Little Troopers* group. Children of Armed Forces personnel are likely to live with repeated disruption in their lives, which can make schooling and friendships difficult. Little Troopers is a national charity that helps schools support service children, including by running regular after school clubs. Schools can use Pupil Premium funding for these groups and there is more information available at www.littletroopers.net

The Diocese of Salisbury are developing an Armed Forces friendly church network, which will support parishes to be welcoming spaces for military personnel and their families. There will be more information about this in the next months, including on how to join the network, and we hope this will be a significant way for parishes to show their care for the military.

Chaplains serving in locations near you would be delighted to hear from you, to be invited to share something of their ministry and to discuss ways in which the local church can support Armed Forces personnel and their families. They will also be able to help with resources for Remembrance Sunday, and some may be available to preach.

With our sincere thanks for your ministry.

God bless



Rt Rev Hugh Nelson, Bishop to the Armed Forces

and on behalf of

Ven Andrew Hillier, Chaplain of the Fleet and Archdeacon for the Navy

Ven Stephen Dunwoody, Archdeacon for the Army

Ven Dr Giles Legood, Chaplain-in-Chief and Archdeacon for the RAF

A prayer for those deployed on active service

Almighty God,
stretch forth your mighty arm
to strengthen and protect the armed forces:
grant that meeting danger with courage
and all occasions with discipline and loyalty,
they may truly serve the cause of justice and peace;
to the honour of your holy name,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.