



WELS Ministry to the Military

"...his faithfulness will be your shield"
Psalm 91:4



WELS Military Services helps our members in the armed forces to be more spiritually alert and resilient. Many of our resources are available online at wels.net/military.



European civilian chaplain

Rev. Robert Weiss serves as WELS' European Civilian Chaplain near Frankfurt, Germany. The primary focus of Weiss' work in Europe is to provide pastoral care to both military and civilians living in Europe.

At Easter and in the fall, Weiss holds retreats in various locations across Germany to provide opportunities for members to gather as a group for worship, Bible study, and fellowship. He also maintains a connection with our sister synod in Germany, the Evangelisch-Lutherische Freikirche (ELFK). This connection with the ELFK allows him to provide more worship and fellowship opportunities for WELS members in Europe by connecting them to ministries of the ELFK. To further serve families, he also teaches an online Catechism class, allowing youth to receive instruction in Luther's Small Catechism no matter where they live and continue their spiritual growth during their time in Europe.

Living overseas as part of the military or as a civilian can be a challenge. The comforting message of Jesus' love and forgiveness is a constant source of strength for us all.

National chaplain to the military

The WELS full-time National Civilian Chaplain, Rev. Paul Horn, works out of San Diego, Calif. Horn maintains relationships with lead military chaplains of each branch, ensuring that we can minister to our members serving in the armed forces.

Horn also helps WELS members with religious accommodation needs and counsels those who wrestle with issues related to military service. Additionally, he trains active duty and veterans as religious lay leaders to serve the spiritual needs of our WELS members during deployments. The chaplain's weekly video devotion is e-mailed to all service members who have supplied their contact information through the online referral form found at wels.net/military.

Horn works with 120 WELS Military Contact Pastors (MCP)—parish pastors who live near and can serve military installations in the United States. His work includes welcoming and orienting new MPCs, serving as a resource for our MPCs, and providing training at our MCP workshops.

An estimated 1,500 WELS members actively serve in the military and need spiritual support that is Biblically sound, Christ-centered, and addresses the unique challenges they and their families experience. The WELS Ministry to the Military is committed to making God's Word and Sacrament available to our military members and their families.

God’s Word to Our Air Force Basic Trainees

By David Kasischke, Staff Minister at Our Savior Lutheran Church, San Antonio, Texas

God always manages to bring people together at the right time and place to remind us that we are all members of his family. I am a second-career staff minister, with a first career as a civil servant in the U.S. Defense Department. That has allowed me to preside over regular worship services in the Gateway Chapel building at Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA) Lackland.

Why is that a big deal? Well, EVERYONE who enlists in the U.S. Air Force goes through basic training at JBSA Lackland. So, my group each month is potentially anyone who is an Air Force basic trainee.

Also, the Defense Department has designated WELS as a “distinctive religious group” because of our Scriptural stand on Holy Communion. That allows us to hold our own worship service separate from the generic “Protestant” service conducted by the military chaplains’ offices.

I lead a worship service on the 3rd Sunday of every month for WELS members, but also for any other trainee who may be interested. Young men and women of all religious backgrounds and no religious background come and hear God’s Word and see his blessings. I am also able to bring the peace that the Lord’s Supper brings to our WELS members during this often-difficult time of their lives.



I leave time afterward for Q and A, when non-WELS attendees can find out why we do what we do in worship. These young people ask deep, thoughtful, respectful questions about things they may have never heard before. And our WELS members receive the means of grace in Word and Sacrament.

Does the Word find good soil in these people? My prayer is that the Holy Spirit opens the hearts of those who don’t believe and continues to feed the faith of those who do.

What can you do? Pray for these young people who have volunteered to serve in the Air Force. And if you know of someone who has enlisted in the military, use the “refer” option on wels.net/military! It really does help us to connect with our WELS members in the armed forces.

Three ways to support WELS ministry to the military

Pray

Please join us as we continue to pray for our military, and for the spiritual welfare of those who serve.

Serve

Help anyone serving in the military stay connected to God’s Word by connecting them to our resources at wels.net/military.

Give

Most of the financial support for our work comes from individuals and groups.

- To provide additional gifts for Christ’s work through the Military Services Committee:

WELS, Attn. Gift Processing
N16W23377 Stone Ridge Drive
Waukesha, WI 53188

(Make checks payable to WELS and list Military Services in the memo line).

- Donate online at wels.net/SupportMilitaryMinistry
- Contact WELS Ministry of Christian Giving at 800-827-5482 for assistance.