

THE ARMY CHAPLAIN'S CREED

I am an Army chaplain.

I am a religious leader and a member of a team.

I serve the Soldiers of the United States and live the SACRED Values.

I will always place religious freedom first.

I will always care for the living. I will always care for the wounded.

I will always honor the fallen.

I will never disrespect another's faith group.

I am spiritually and pastorally sound, and proficient in officer and chaplain tasks and skills.

I will always maintain faith, practice, and my beliefs.

I am a messenger and a professional.

I stand ready to minister, care, and provide for the service members of the United States of America in any context.

I am guardian of religious freedom and the virtuous way of life.

I am an ARMY chaplain.



SCAN TO VIEW
DIGITAL PROGRAM

U.S. ARMY CHAPLAIN CORPS

250th Anniversary

MONUMENT
DEDICATION



CAMP SHELBY, MS

29 JULY 2025

10:00 A.M.

HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY CHAPLAIN CORPS

Pro Deo et Patria, “For God and Country,” is the motto of the United States Army Chaplain Corps. It reflects the dual calling at the heart of a chaplain’s ministry: to serve God by serving Soldiers.

General George Washington recognized the vital need for chaplains who could be a source of hope and resilience for his fledgling army. He urged the Continental Congress to appoint one chaplain for every regiment and, on 29 July 1775, the Chaplain Corps was officially authorized. It stands today as one of the Army’s oldest and smallest branches.

Since its founding, Army chaplains have stood shoulder to shoulder with Soldiers on the front lines of every conflict in which America has fought. More than 400 chaplains have given their lives in combat, the most recent being CH(CPT) Dale Goetz, who was killed by an improvised explosive device in Kandahar Province, Afghanistan, on 30 August 2010. Five chaplains have received the Medal of Honor for extraordinary heroism, the latest being CH(CPT) Emil Kapaun, posthumously awarded in 2013 for his selfless service during the Korean War.

Army chaplains safeguard the free exercise of religion in a pluralistic environment that reflects the diversity of America’s Soldiers. Though originally only Christian clergy served, the first Jewish chaplain was commissioned in 1862, the first Muslim chaplain in 1993, the first Buddhist chaplain in 2009, and the first Hindu chaplain in 2011. Today, over 1,300 active-duty chaplains and 1,200 Reserve component chaplains minister to Soldiers from more than 120 different faith groups and denominations. Over the past 250 years, more than 25,000 clergy have worn the Army uniform in service to God and Country.

In 1909, the Army created the role of chaplain assistants, now known as Religious Affairs Specialists, forming what is today the Unit Ministry Team. These enlisted professionals enable chaplains to fulfill their mission: to Nurture the Living, Care for the Wounded, and Honor the Fallen.

“FOR GOD AND COUNTRY” HONORING 250 YEARS OF SERVICE

In celebration of the 250th anniversary of the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps, a new monument has been installed at Camp Shelby to honor the countless chaplains and religious affairs personnel who have served there over the years. This meaningful tribute is situated near Camp Shelby’s historic Greer Chapel, complementing a row of monuments that lead to the Mississippi Armed Forces Museum.

The monument’s installation was made possible through funding from the National Guard Bureau, as part of a program supporting religious initiatives across all fifty-four states and territories.

This monument is one of the few—if not the only one—of its kind in the nation. It is a lasting tribute to the thousands of chaplains who have provided spiritual guidance and support since the founding of the United States. Wherever Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines have gone, chaplains have been by their side, offering a sense of transcendence, purpose, and moral clarity—elements that contribute to strength and resiliency on and off the battlefield.

Dedicated to honoring the spiritual foundations upon which this nation was built, this monument serves as a powerful reminder to all who pass by. May it forever echo the enduring commitment of those who serve “For God and Country.”



SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

Prelude

Welcome

National Anthem
41st Army Band

Invocation
CH(LTC) John Branning

Chaplain Corps History
CH(LTC) Jason Bird

Host Remarks
MG John Rhodes

State Chaplain Remarks
CH(COL) Cregg Puckett

Monument Unveiling

Benediction
CH(LTC) David Morris

Reception
to Follow