



# DEC Chaplain's Corner



## Comrade Chaplains,

**A**s December settles across this great nation, I'm reminded of those quiet Kentucky evenings I grew up with — the kind where the first hint of winter rolled over the hills, woodsmoke curled from the chimneys, and families gathered close around a fire that warmed more than just the room. This season has a way of slowing us down, nudging us to look back with gratitude and forward with hope.

For many of our comrades, though, December isn't always easy. Empty chairs at the table, memories that tug at the heart, and the weight of holidays that don't feel quite the same — these are very real burdens. As chaplains, caregivers, and servants of our veteran community, this is our time to lean in, not pull away. One sincere phone call... one quick visit... one gentle prayer spoken from the heart can make all the difference for someone who's been carrying their load alone for too long.

Whether you're in a snow-covered northern town or down where the pines stay green all winter, remember that every veteran we serve is part of our extended family. And family looks after its own. Offer kindness without keeping count. Offer comfort without condition. Offer hope the same way the Good Lord offers it to us — freely and without reservation.

This month, let your presence be that soft light in someone's dark corner — like that single lantern I used to see glowing on porches back home, guiding neighbors in from the cold. May we be that steady glow for our veterans, their families, and each other.

As we close out the year, I pray that peace finds you, joy strengthens you, and love anchors you. May God bless our guardians on watch tonight, our Gold Star families, our caregivers, and all who stand the long winter posts so others may rest in safety.

From my Kentucky heart to yours — thank you for the work you do, the compassion you give, and the way you carry the spirit of service into every home, every hospital room, and every hurting soul.

*May the Lord keep you warm, keep you close, and keep you steady as we welcome a new year.*

*Darren Atkins*

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**VFW National Chaplain**  
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