



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.



## FEB Chaplain's Corner

February comes to us a little quieter than the rush of the holidays, but it carries its own kind of weight. It's a month that invites us to slow down, check on one another, and remember that even the shortest days can hold deep meaning when we walk them together.

For many, February brings thoughts of love and companionship. For others, it can stir memories, losses, and long nights that feel heavier than most folks realize. As chaplains, we know that hearts don't all heal on the same timetable, and grief doesn't follow the calendar. This is a month to lead gently, listen closely, and offer presence more than answers.

One important opportunity I want to share with you is our Chaplain Zoom class on Suicide Prevention, scheduled for Thursday, February 19th. This training is not about checklists or canned responses. It is about awareness, compassion, and learning how to recognize when someone may be carrying more than they can bear alone. I encourage every chaplain who is able to attend to do so. You never know when the knowledge you gain may help save a life—or simply help someone feel seen and heard in a dark moment.

February is also Black History Month, a time to honor resilience, service, and sacrifice that have strengthened our nation and our veteran community. It is a good reminder that listening to one another's stories—especially those that have gone unheard—can be a sacred act of respect and healing.

We also observe Presidents Day this month, a moment to reflect on leadership, service, and responsibility. True leadership, as we know, is not found in titles alone but in the willingness to serve others with humility and care—something chaplains live out every day.

As you go about your duties this month, I ask you to do one simple thing: check on your people. Make the call. Send the card. Sit down for the extra cup of coffee. Sometimes the smallest acts of kindness are the very things that keep someone going one more day.

Thank you for all you do, often quietly and without recognition. Your presence matters more than you may ever know. Let us continue to look out for one another, carry each other's burdens when we can, and never forget that no one walks this road alone.

Until next time, may you find strength for today and hope for tomorrow.

*With blessings,*

*Darren Atkins*

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2025-2026

