



DISTRICT MEMORIAL SERVICE TEMPLATE

MUSICAL PRELUDE: PLAYED BY _____

DISTRICT COMMANDER: THE SESSION IS CALLED TO ORDER - PREFERABLY BY VERBAL REQUEST. (NO GAVEL)

OPENING REMARKS: DISTRICT COMMANDER: _____

WELCOME ALL MEMBERS OF THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS AND ITS AUXILIARY, HONORED GUESTS, AND ALL WHO GAVE OF THEIR TIME TO SHOW RESPECT FOR THOSE BRAVE AMERICANS THAT HAVE GONE BEFORE US.

POW/MIA Candle Lighting Ceremony (*Reading by* _____)

DISTRICT COMMANDER: Will all please join me in singing, "GOD BLESS AMERICA?"

DISTRICT COMMANDER: "THE INVOCATION" WILL NOW BE GIVEN BY CHAPLAIN _____

DISTRICT COMMANDER: "PLEASE JOIN ME IN THE 'PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG' "ONE", I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO-----WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL." "TWO"

DISTRICT COMMANDER: "YOU'LL NEVER WALK ALONE" WILL NOW BE SUNG BY:

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS MEMORIAL RITUAL

DISTRICT COMMANDER: "COMRADES, AUXILIARY AND FRIENDS, WE HAVE MET AT THIS TIME TO COMMEMORATE OUR COMRADES OF THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES WHO HAVE ANSWERED THE LAST CALL.

THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS RITUAL PROVIDES THAT THE AUDIENCE SHALL REFRAIN FROM APPLAUDING. PLEASE SILENCE ALL PHONES. THE OFFICER OF THE DAY WILL SEE THAT THERE ARE NO DISTURBANCES DURING THE CEREMONY.

DISTRICT COMMANDER: "I REQUEST THAT THE DISTRICT CHAPLAIN PRESIDE."

CHAPLAIN: COMRADE DISTRICT COMMANDER, I AM AT YOUR SERVICE AND SHALL ENDEAVOR TO PERFORM THIS SOLEMN DUTY IN THE SPIRIT OF FAITH, HOPE, AND CHARITY.

COMRADE DISTRICT COMMANDER, TO WHOM SHOULD THE TRUE SOLDIER LOOK FOR HELP IN THE BATTLE OF LIFE?

DISTRICT COMMANDER: "OUR HELP IS IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, WHO MADE HEAVEN AND EARTH.

CHAPLAIN: COMRADE SR. VICE COMMANDER, WHAT ASSURANCE HAVE WE OF A PROLONGED STAY AMONG THE SCENES AND ACTIVITIES OF EARTH?

SR. VICE-COMMANDER: "FOR WE ARE STRANGERS BEFORE THEE, AND SOJOURNERS, AS WERE ALL OUR FATHERS; OUR DAYS ON EARTH ARE AS A SHADOW, AND THERE IS NONE ABIDING."

CHAPLAIN: COMRADE JR. VICE COMMANDER, HAVE YOU A MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCE FOR THOSE BEREAVED?

JR. VICE-COMMANDER: "I HAVE. THE BOOK OF LIFE TELLS US THAT "LIKE AS A FATHER PITIES HIS CHILDREN, SO THE LORD PITIES THEM THAT FEAR HIM. FOR HE KNOWS OUR NAME: HE REMEMBERS THAT WE ARE DUST."

CHAPLAIN: WHAT MESSAGE HAS THE CHAPLAIN OF THE AUXILIARY?

AUXILIARY CHAPLAIN: I HAVE A MESSAGE OF HOPE THAT SHOULD INSPIRE OUR COMRADES AT THIS SOLEMN MOMENT AND THROUGH ALL LIFE. THE MESSAGE IS FROM THE CAPTAIN OF OUR SALVATION. HE SAYS: "I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE; HE THAT BELIEVES IN ME, THOUGH HE WERE DEAD, YET SHALL HE LIVE; AND WHOSOEVER LIVES AND BELIEVES IN ME SHALL NEVER DIE."

CHAPLAIN: COMRADES, WE ARE THANKFUL FOR THESE INSPIRING THOUGHTS. LET US LEARN THE LESSON OF THE HOUR WHICH IS THAT WE, TOO, ARE NEARING THE END OF LIFE'S PILGRIMAGE AND SOONER OR LATER THESE SERVICES MAY BE HELD IN OUR MEMORY. LET US SO LIVE THAT WHEN OUR SUMMONS COMES, WE MAY DEPART WITH A GOOD CONSCIENCE, IN THE COMFORT OF A SINCERE RELIGION, BELIEF IN GOD, AND PERFECT CHARITY TOWARD ALL MANKIND. LET US PRAY.

HEAVENLY FATHER, WE ARE GATHERED HERE TO COMMEMORATE THOSE AMONG YOUR SERVANTS WHO HAVE BEEN CALLED TO YOUR BOSOM IN THE LAND OF LIGHT. WE PRAY THAT YOUR MERCY AND JUSTICE HAVE MADE RIGHT THEIR HUMAN FAILINGS AND FAULTS. WE PRAY THAT WHATEVER JUSTICE WAS DENIED THEM IN THIS VALE OF TEARS HAS BEEN GRANTED THEM A HUNDRED-FOLD. WE PRAY THAT WHATEVER COMFORTS THEY WERE DENIED IN THIS LIFE, WHATEVER EVIL THEY ENDURED, MAY NOW LEAD TO THEIR EVERLASTING HAPPINESS. WE ARE THANKFUL FOR THEIR COMPANIONSHIP AND ASSOCIATION IN THIS LIFE. BY THEIR EFFORTS WE ARE ASSURED SECURITY AND STRENGTH. BECAUSE THEY SERVED WELL, WE ARE PROUD TO CALL THEM OUR OWN. WE ASK THAT, FOLLOWING IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS, WE MAY CONTINUE IN YOUR SERVICE UNTIL YOUR SUMMONS COMES. THEN, IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT WE HAVE STRIVED TO OBSERVE YOUR COUNCILS AND PRECEPTS. MAY WE BE JUDGED WORTHY TO BE UNITED WITH THEM AND WITH YOU FOREVER IN HEAVEN. AMEN.

CHAPLAIN: COMRADES, IN COMMEMORATING THE VIRTUES OF OUR DEPARTED HEROES WHO SERVED THEIR COUNTRY IN TIME OF NEED WE NOW OFFER OUR SYMBOLIC TRIBUTES.

CHAPLAIN: I PLACE UPON OUR SACRED SHRINE THIS RED FLOWER, WHICH SYMBOLIZES THE ZEAL OF OUR DEPARTED COMRADES.

CHAPLAIN: COMRADE PAST DISTRICT COMMANDER, WHAT TRIBUTE HAVE YOU TO OFFER?

JR. PAST COMMANDER: THIS WHITE FLOWER I PLACE AS A TOKEN OF THE PURITY OF AFFECTION WE HAVE FOR OUR DEPARTED COMRADES.

CHAPLAIN: COMRADE DISTRICT COMMANDER, HAVE YOU A TRIBUTE TO OFFER UPON THIS SACRED SHRINE?

DISTRICT COMMANDER: THE BLUE OF OUR NATIONAL STANDARD SYMBOLIZES TRUTH AND FIDELITY. THEREFORE, I PLACE THIS BLUE FLOWER FROM NATURE'S BOSOM AS A TOKEN OF OUR SINCERE RESPECT FOR ALL DEPARTED COMRADES.

CHAPLAIN: AUXILIARY PRESIDENT, WILL YOU OFFER A TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF OUR DEPARTED COMRADES?

PRESIDENT OF AUXILIARY: I PLACE UPON OUR SACRED SHRINE THIS WREATH AS A SYMBOL OF ETERNITY. ITS COLOR SPEAKS OF LIFE EVERLASTING. THUS, DO WE SAY THAT THE DEEDS OF OUR SOLDIERS, SAILORS, AIRMEN AND MARINES, ON LAND ON SEA, AND IN THE AIR, ARE IMMORTALIZED IN THE HEARTS OF A GRATEFUL PEOPLE.

CHAPLAIN: THE POST COMMANDERS AND PRESIDENTS OF DISTRICT NUMBER _____ DEPARTMENT OF _____ VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA WILL NOW PAY THEIR RESPECTS ON BEHALF OF ALL OF US TO THOSE COMRADES, BROTHERS AND SISTERS WE HAVE LOST THIS PAST YEAR. (FLOWERS FROM EACH POST ARE NOW PLACED ON THE MEMORIAL. THE DISTRICT CHAPLAIN AND AUXILIARY CHAPLAIN READ THE NAMES OF THE DECEASED IN TANDEM AFTER THE POST NAME IS CALLED. WHEN THE POST'S NAME IS CALLED THE COMMANDER AND PRESIDENT OF THE AUXILIARY APPROACH THE MEMORIAL, PLACE THEIR FLOWERS, AND TAKE ONE STEP BACK AND PERFORM A SILENT SALUTE).

PROGRAM CONTINUES FOLLOWING FLOWER PLACEMENT

CHAPLAIN: "SLEEP SOLDIER BOY" WILL NOW BE SUNG BY _____

DISTRICT COMMANDER: (INTRODUCES GUEST SPEAKER)
_____ WILL NOW GIVE THE MEMORIAL ADDRESS.

DISTRICT COMMANDER: "THE ANCHOR HOLDS" WILL NOW BE SUNG BY:

DISTRICT COMMANDER: CHAPLAIN _____ WILL GIVE THE BENEDICTION.

DISTRICT COMMANDER: EXTINGUISHING OF THE POW/MIA CANDLE

DISTRICT COMMANDER: WILL ALL RISE FOR THE PLAYING OF TAPS?
(PLAYED BY _____) "PRESENT ARMS" AFTER TAPS
"ORDER ARMS"

DISTRICT COMMANDER: THIS CONCLUDES OUR CEREMONY FOR TODAY.