



DEPLOYMENT PACK



Helping to equip you spiritually for deployment

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WHAT'S A DEPLOYMENT PACK?



Deployments can be difficult. Away from family, friends and church, it can often feel isolating as a Christian and the change in routine can disrupt habits of quiet times etc.

This pack aims to supply you with some ideas for maintaining your faith throughout the deployment. Not everything will work for everyone, but please feel free to try things and amend them to make them work for you.

Know that during this time we will be praying for you, for those who are missing you whilst you are away and for your witness to colleagues as well. May God equip you throughout this time and draw close to you through His strength, peace and love.

WHAT IS THE AFCU?



The AFCU's mission is to enable, equip and encourage Christian members of the Armed Forces through discipleship, fellowship and prayer.

We are an interdenominational, tri-service fellowship of Christians who wish to grow in their faith and share it with those with whom they serve. It seeks to encourage and build up Christians in the Armed Forces in their faith and to support evangelism.

If you are not already a member why not sign up today? It's completely free and opens up all we have to offer.

Find out more at afcu.org.uk



10 TIPS FROM THE BISH

(A NAVY CHAPLAIN!)

● Prayer

Before you go, ensure you are linked up with a prayer supporter, either through your Church or the AFCU or both. When you are away and have comms try and update them as appropriate within SC. Obviously, if in doubt, don't share too much.

● Spiritual growth

Try and be proactive about your spiritual growth while away. You will probably have more time but less connectivity. Choose a few books to read, take a decent printed Bible and even some printed study notes or a commentary, like a couple from the Tom Wright 'For Everyone' series. Taking and keeping at least one good Christian book in your battle bag is always a good idea (even in home waters) for action stations or other BAM style transits.

● Chaplains

Link in with the base Chaplaincy before you go, find out if there is going to be a Bish on-board for some or all of the deployment. If so, contact them and support them during the deployment, you don't know how encouraging that is to us!

● For the Navy

If there isn't going to be a Bish for some or all of the deployment consider offering yourself as Church Officer. If you do this Chaplaincy will give you all the resources you need for a basic Sunday Service. Try and download a few songs (My Lighthouse, 10,000 reasons, Bless the Lord etc) that people will have sung at RAL or BRNC. RAL, BRNC or CTCRM

● Bible study

You might want to think about other Bible study resources like those in this pack. You could even download the Alpha Express videos to a laptop as an option. More suggestions on page 15.

● Witness

Be as open about your faith as you feel able. If you are confident it will encourage others to be also.

● Church

When you are alongside try and get to Church. The Middle East has some massive Churches and the Bish should organise visits. If not, it's worth a try yourself. It is the Captain's responsibility to offer spiritual support to the Ship's Company and as a starting point there should be a list of previous church visits on the ship's port guide. For those not in the Navy it's good to explore what options there are where you are based.

● Routine

Do the basics well, even when your routines get messed up. Try and read the Bible and pray every day, even if it's for 5 minutes and attend Church/Daily Prayer if you can.

● Opportunity

If you have intermittent connectivity try and download online stuff like a week of Lectio 365 or the Alpha Bible in year as connectivity allows.

● Remember

Remember God is with you; He has called you into this place so He will protect you and provide for you. The battle is His, and the power comes from the Holy Spirit not in our own strength.

PREPARATION

Before you go



- We all know that preparation makes any task more successful. Here are some things to help you prepare spiritually for your deployment.
- Accept your appointment with a positive attitude knowing that you are representing God and will have a fantastic opportunity on deployment to bless others.
- Remember God's promise to you in Joshua 1:9 **Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid, do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.**
- Try to make links with the Padre on the deployment and let them know you are coming.
- If there is no Padre, look for local churches in the area and drop them an email to introduce yourself and say you are coming. Other members may have suggestions so you could try asking on the WhatsApp Community too.
- Link in with AFCU and sign up for prayer support. There is more on this on page 10.
- Talk to your local church about your deployment and explain any support that family members (particularly partners or children) might need whilst you are away.
- Handover responsibilities at church and fellowships at home or on base to enable these to run in your absence.
- Make a prayer list to help you to pray whilst away
- Plan ahead and pack your spiritual kit bag (see page 8)

SPIRITUAL KITBAG

Deployments can be hard on your faith. Routines are changed, you are without your usual support networks and there may be few or no other Christians around you. It's useful to spend some time thinking about what might help you to stay connected to God throughout your time away and how to do that, especially if you will be somewhere with little or no connectivity. We have a list of resource suggestions on the next page and a suggested packing list here for you.

- Your Bible. Consider a hard copy with study notes and cross-references. Reach out to AFCU or your Padre if you can't buy one.
- Download a playlist of your favourite Christian songs.
- Pick a few Christian books that you can take copies of or download. Audiobooks work well too. Aim for one a month. You can also read the same book as a family member at home which might give you topics to discuss on the phone or in letters.
- A notebook and pen can be good for journalling and writing thoughts about what you have read. Maybe find a journalling app for your phone or tablet.
- Bible studies - can be used individually or in small groups. many can be downloaded or copies packed to go.





ARRIVING ON DEPLOYMENT

Here are some useful things to remember as you arrive on deployment:

- 1 Stand firm from the start and let it be known you are a Christian, the sooner you do this the easier it is.
- 2 Find a quiet place for personal daily Bible reading and prayer.
- 3 Personalise your space with your favourite scriptures and pictures of loved ones.
- 4 Look actively for other Christians on the deployment.
- 5 Join whatever Christian fellowships may already be in place. If nothing is in place consider starting one, see page 11 for help if you need it.
- 6 Practice tact and diplomacy with living with others.
- 7 Be sure to make a complaint or speak to the Padre if those you share a space with indulge in anything you are not comfortable with e.g. pornography, excessive drinking, inappropriate behaviours.

PRAYER

FROM THE AFCU

Prayer Support Team

The AFCU has teams and individuals who pray regularly for our serving members. Each serving person is linked with a group so that no matter where you are posted or deployed you have people who know you and can be praying for you.

The PST consists of individuals and groups who commit to pray regularly in a focused, confidential way for serving members (this includes spouses of serving personnel). These dedicated and trustworthy people will commit to support you, by praying for the issues you tell them about. Most groups meet monthly to pray corporately and often intercede daily (individually) for a nominated serving link.

If you are not yet linked for prayer then we strongly recommend it. You can be linked for prayer through our website (afcu.org.uk/how-can-i-be-prayed-for/). As a serving link, you will need to provide regular prayer requests and send back any answers to prayer. Regular updates help those praying for you to be specific in their prayers and you will see more answers to prayer too.

LEADING A BIBLE STUDY

The following is a rough guide for things to consider to help you set up a Bible study. You can be flexible with which parts you feel you want to include/exclude and how you use these tips and tricks.

Why are you qualified?

- Something is better than nothing – you are not there to deliver the perfect sermon, you are there to facilitate discussions and learn and grow in your faith while deployed. Sharing this with others is key.
- God doesn't call the equipped, he equips the called – you can have confidence that the Holy Spirit will guide you through leading the Bible study

What do you need to consider for your audience

- What is their exposure to Christianity? Have they been a Christian for years and know scripture back to front or is this their first experience of church?
- You may be their first and only exposure to God, even a small interaction could change someone's life.
- Be sensitive to different world views. The military is made up of people from all walks of life so being open and sensitive to differing opinions is key!

What do they need on the deployment?

- What are you struggling with either personally, emotionally or in your faith? It is likely this is a common theme among your peers
- What is the mood of the deployment?
- What is the morale like?
- Could you address this in the Bible study?

How to find suitable scriptures?

- See the resources section of the deployment pack
- Emotional themes pointing you to specific Bible verses
- Is there a character or parable you have studied or know about that you feel is particularly important that you could discuss?

How to analyse scripture

- The main idea of the scripture
 - Read the scripture and understand the context
 - Ask open-ended questions about the scripture
 1. What does this tell you about God's character?
 2. Are there any parts of the scripture you don't agree with or struggle with and why?
 3. How does this theme or scripture apply to your life?
- Head Change
 - How has the scripture changed the way you think about God?
 - What mental change has reading this scripture had on you?
- Heart Change
 - How has this changed the way you feel about God/faitth/other people etc?
- A Deeper Dive
 - Read: consider a related scripture based on the theme you have discussed.
 - Pray: Ask God what He wants to say to you through this scripture.
 - Memorise: The key parts of the scripture that have most impacted you.

Resources

- Consider what you might need for each study and how to share it with people.
 - Do you need a screen for people to watch a video resource?
 - Are there printouts or books that are needed for people to follow?
- There are a wide variety of resources both online and as hard copies. See the resources section of this pack on page 15.

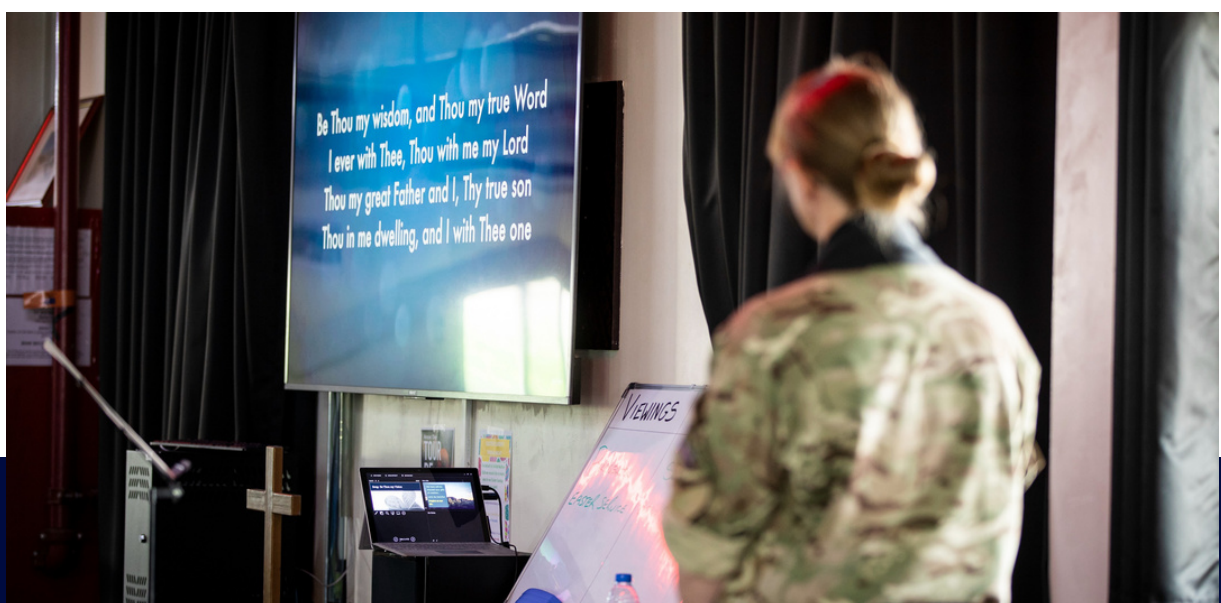
Notes and Tips

- You are there to facilitate teaching and discussion
- You don't need to know all the answers and you can help generate discussion to enable the group to find answers.
- Humble yourself to be able to say I don't know. You don't need to be able to answer all the questions yourself and saying you don't know is an important part. Just be honest.
- What frame of mind do you need to be in?
 - Be there as an open vessel.
 - It's useful to pray before leading a group.
 - Confess anything that might be getting between you and God
 - Ask Him to help you focus on Him.
- Challenge misconceptions about scripture – What do you do when someone asks a question about something they have heard and believe is in the Bible? Ask them to share so the group can discuss it and work out the answer together.

Logistics

- Turn up 15 mins early, set up tea and biscuits and distribute any physical resources you have.
- Making a welcoming, open and relaxed environment will help discussion.
- Allowing people to come and go, drop in or be in the same space is important.

Remember to pray before, during and after - let your PST know you are leading a group - and they can pray too!



RESOURCES

FROM THE AFCU

The AFCU has a selection of resources that we can offer you. Here is a list of some possible options but we love to help. Contact us in the office to find out how we can support you.



100 days: 100 Daily Bible readings for the Armed Forces



Faith on the Frontline



Coffee with God



Selection of Bible study resources



Selection of Christian books



RESOURCES ONLINE

There are many resources available online and some can be downloaded so they can be used even when you don't have connectivity. Here's some ideas to help you.

- ◆ Bible project - provides videos, podcasts, study notes and reading plans. Downloadable content is available. <https://bibleproject.com/>
- ◆ Character course: an online bible study where all elements can be downloaded. <https://www.thecharactercourse.com/>
- ◆ Confident faith: apologetics for everyone - a downloadable bible study. www.theocca.org/essentials/
- ◆ Lectio 365 - the daily devotional resource of the international 24-7 Prayer movement and particularly of its religious order the Order of the Mustard Seed. <https://www.24-7prayer.com/resource/lectio-365/>
- ◆ Prayermate - an app to help organise your prayer life with offline functionality too. Find out more [here](#)
- ◆ Rightnow media - an online resource for bible studies with videos and accompanying questions. Great for leading bible studies and can be downloaded too. <https://www.ucb.co.uk/rightnowmedia>
- ◆ The Chosen - a drama series of the bible. Available online and via an app - episodes on the app can be downloaded to watch offline. <https://watch.thechosen.tv/>
- ◆ Youversion bible - an app with many versions of the bible (can be downloaded) and reading plans available too. <https://www.youversion.com/>



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