

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN CHAPLAIN'S GUIDE 2025-2026

INTRODUCTION

It is the belief of our organization that God should be at the helm and guide us in our work helping our Veterans, their families, our community, and each other. We want to preserve our freedom to worship as we feel is right and not take that right away from others. You will find the office of the Chaplain to be rewarding as long as you do not promote any one religion.

PURPOSE: Express by word and action, our founding principle of service to God and Country. To encourage all Units to celebrate diversity among people and faiths. To provide spiritual and emotional guidance when needed or requested, always showing dignity and respect for the occasion.

PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES:

It should be the objective of the Chaplain to:

1. Pray for our members and leaders that they will do the job being asked of them this coming year.
2. Guide members through prayers that are appropriate for the situation.
3. Act as the spiritual ambassador of the organization.

Through bulletins and other means of communication, the Chaplain should:

- a. Provide and promote the emotional and spiritual support needed for the Legion Family by sending e-mails, cards, and prayers to members throughout the coming year.
- b. Educate members on the diversity of all faiths and cultures.
- c. Reconnect with the master of might and promote our founding fathers' desire to create one nation under God.
- d. Be responsible for all invocations, benedictions, and memorial services for deceased members at official meetings.
- e. Recommend educational materials that promote a spirit of unity and love.
- f. Provide fellowship and spiritual events to help the Unit grow spiritually throughout the year.

ALL PRAYERS AND DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS MUST BE NON-DENOMINATIONAL.

(Source: Guidelines for National Chaplain)

NON-DENOMINATIONAL

NON-DENOMINATIONAL MEANS" NOT RESTRICTED TO OR ASSOCIATED WITH A RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION."

(Source: www.answers.com/topic/nondenominational)

RESOURCES:

1. Unit Guidebook
2. Guidelines for National Chaplain of the American Legion Auxiliary.
3. National Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules of the American Legion Auxiliary.
4. Chaplain's Prayer Book of the American Legion Auxiliary can be printed from the website or purchased from American Legion Flag & Emblem Sales.
5. For additional information, go to www.legion-aux.org under Chaplain.

DUTIES OF THE CHAPLAIN ARE:

1. Opening and closing prayers at meetings.
2. Reporting on any members who are ill or who have passed away.
3. Signing and sending cards to members or a member's family, such as sympathy, get well etc.
4. Draping the Charter and/or performing a memorial service.
5. Assisting with Funeral Services if requested.
6. Encouraging members to attend churches of their choice.
7. Visiting members and Veterans in nursing homes or hospitals.
8. Keeping in contact with all Gold Star Mothers and remember them on holidays.
9. Sending cards to members and Veterans on special holidays and occasions.
10. Helping your local community by volunteering.
11. Make a Prayer Book for your Unit or District. Have members send you a prayer or devotional thought to include in the book.
12. SENDING at least ONE Prayer or Devotional thought to the Department Chaplain, Dawn Gilbert, for Department President, Dawn Gramza's prayer book. With your permission, I will send it on to the National Chaplain for our National President's prayer book.

District Chaplains: If you are holding a Memorial Service and wish a list of deceased members please contact the Department Secretary. You can also contact the Units in your District to supply you with this list.

Unit Chaplains: **NOTIFICATION OF DECEASED MEMBERS** must be made by your Membership Chairman by completing the "Member Data Form" and sending it to the Department. Notification should be sent to the Department Chaplain to include deceased member on the website in the memorial garden, use the form located at this link: [Deceased Member Report Form](#) or email Department Chaplain at dawngilbert21@aol.com including the deceased members name, date of passing, unit number, and district number or you may mail to me at:

Dawn Gilbert
11667 Coster Rd SW
Fife Lake, MI 49633
dawngilbert21@aol.com
231.944.8099

DEPARTMENT AWARDS

LEONA PITMAN CITATION:

To the Unit that has the most outstanding report for the year.

THE ENDA SCHUITEMA CITATION:

To the Unit submitting the best "Book of Prayers and Devotional Thoughts".

THE ENDA CLARAHAN CITATION:

To the District submitting the best "Book of Prayers and Devotional Thoughts".

ALYS HUNT CITATION:

To the Junior submitting the best "Book of Prayers and Devotional Thoughts".

SERVICE TO GOD AND COUNTRY PROGRAM:

To the Unit Chaplain for promoting the best Service to God and Country program. A separate form must be completed and sent to the District Chaplain for judging.

RULES FOR LEONA PITMAN CITATION:

The Leona Pitman Citation is awarded to the Unit Chaplain who:

- Promotes the most inspiring program.
- Influences Junior and Senior members to attend the church of their choice.
- Visits the sick and troubled, attending funeral services of deceased members.
- Holds a Memorial Service for deceased members.

The answers provided on the Chaplain's Annual Report Forms are the basis for the judging of these awards. The Annual Report Forms are to be sent to the District Chaplain by March 31, 2026. The District Chaplain will judge these reports and forward the Name of Unit/District entry for the awards on a green sheet along with the Annual Report Form they filled out to the Department Chaplain by April 15, 2026. ALL BOOKS THAT HAVE BEEN REPORTED TO THE DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN BY THE DISTRICT CHAPLAIN SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE DISPLAY AREA BY NOON ON THURSDAY, THE FIRST DAY OF THE CONVENTION, FOR JUDGING.

SERVICE TO GOD AND COUNTRY PROGRAM

A special entry form will be mailed with the Annual Report Forms to be filled out by the Unit Chaplain. The questions will cover the following points of the program:

A. SERVICE TO GOD

1. Prayers at Unit meetings and functions.
2. "Back to God" movement encourages members to attend Worship Services, daily family prayer, and religious education classes for children.
3. Invite local religious leaders to speak at Unit meetings or functions.
4. Place a sign at Post to encourage regular worship.
5. Flags or other materials presented to local churches.
6. Distribute "Grace Before Meals" cards to restaurants.
7. Visit shut-in members.
8. Report at Unit meetings on ill and hospitalized members.
9. Send cheer or condolence cards to members and their families.
10. Drape the Charter for the deceased member.
11. Hold a memorial Service for all deceased members in May.

B. SERVICE TO COUNTRY

1. Participate in services on Memorial Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, etc.
2. Hold a special "Four Chaplains" program at a Unit meeting, public area, or in a church.
3. Encourage a spirit of brotherhood and service to God and Country in a community effort.
4. Work with local agencies on juvenile delinquency.
5. Raise the level of physical fitness of your community.
6. Any other type of community effort to better our community and country.
7. Promote youth programs such as Girl Scouts, 4-H, Junior Auxiliary, Special Olympics, and any other programs that your local community may have.

All entries are to be sent to the District Chaplain by **March 31 2026**. They will be judged at the District level and only the winner shall be submitted to the Department Chaplain by **April 15, 2026** with the green verification sheet attached, filled out and signed.

The Service to God and Country Citation will be awarded to the Unit Chaplain whose activities for the year cover the greatest number of points in the Service to God and Country Program.

ALL ENTRIES MUST HAVE SENT IN THEIR ANNUAL REPORT FORM TO QUALIFY FOR JUDGING.

RULES FOR THE BOOK OF PRAYERS AND DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS FOR SENIORS

Edna Schuitema Citation (Unit)

Edna Clarahan Citation (District)

A. FORMAT OF BOOK:

1. COVER

- a. White, 3 ring 9.5" x 11.5" binder/notebook
- b. Must show the 2.5" American Legion Auxiliary Emblem
- c. Cover may be illustrated (decorated)

2. PAGES:

- a. 8.5"x11" pages
- b. Typed or printed--- double spaced
- c. If desired illustrations may be used

B. CONTENTS:

1. TITLE PAGE: (VERY FIRST PAGE)

- a. Must show 1.25" or 2.5" American Legion Auxiliary Emblem at the top
- b. Dedication—"To or in Memory of
- c. Address, name, Unit Number or District Number and size of Unit/District.
- d. Name of Chaplain preparing the book.
- e. Name of the Unit/District President.
- f. Date (current year)

2. SECTION 1

- a. Title —PRAYERS
- b. CONTENTS:
 1. Prayers that are original or your favorite.
 2. Original prayers—must be signed by author.
 3. Favorite prayers must show:
 - a. The name of the author, and
 - b. The name of the person submitting it.
 4. Length of entry---1 page

3. SECTION 2

- a. Title----Devotional Thoughts
- b. CONTENTS:
 1. Verses, poems, quotations, favorite scriptures
 - a. Must include:
 - a. Name of author
 - b. The name of the person submitting it
 2. Favorite Scriptures
 - a. Must include:
 - a. The source, Book of the Bible, Chapter, Verse and
 - b. The name of the person submitting it
 - c. Length of entry--- 1 page

4. LAST PAGE OF ENTIRE BOOK

- a. Must list the name and number of Unit/District
 - b. Must list the names of all members participating during the current year.
-

C. RULES FOR JUDGING:

1. REQUIRED MATERIALS

- a. F O R M A T - - I O %
- b. T I T L E P A G E - - - 5 %
- c. L A S T P A G E - 5 %
- d. MEMBER PARTICIPATION -5%

2. CONTENTS (PRAYERS & DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS)

- a. O R I G I N A L I T Y - - - 2 5 %
- b. N E A T N E S S - - - 2 5 %
- c. A R R A N G E M E N T - 2 5 %

All entries must be sent to the District Chaplain by March 31, 2026. They will be judged at the district level, and only the winners will be submitted by green sheet to the Department Chaplain by April 15, 2026. ALL Entries MUST have sent in their Annual Report Form to Qualify.

RULES FOR THE BOOK OF PRAYERS AND DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS FOR JUNIORS

ALYS HUNT CITATION

A. FORMAT BOOK

1. COVER:
 - a. White 3 ring 9.5x11.5" notebook
 - b. Must show the 2.5" emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary.
 - c. Cover may be illustrated (decorated)
2. PAGES
 - a. 8.5"x11.5 pages
 - b. Typed or printed preferred—double spaced (may be done by senior or older junior member)
 - c. Illustrations may be used if desired

B. CONTENTS

1. TITLE PAGE (VERY FIRST PAGE)
 - a. Dedication – “To or in Memory of ”.
 - b. Name, Unit Number, or District Number, city and size of the Junior Auxiliary
 - c. Name of the Junior preparing the book
 - d. Date (current year)
2. SECTION 1:
 - a. TITLE—PRAYERS
 - b. AGE GROUPS
 1. Age 6-12, Prayers should be simple, original and easily understood by children, illustrations accepted. Limited to 50 words.
 2. Age 13-15, Prayers should be thoughtful, clear and meaningful to this age, illustrations are accepted. Limited to 75 words.
 3. Ages 16-18, Prayers should be original and humble in request and praise, illustrations are accepted. Limited to 100 words.
3. SECTION 2:
 - a. TITLE----DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS
 - b. AGE GROUPS— As closely related to those under Prayers as possible.
 - c. CONTENT:
 1. Verses, poems and quotations must include:
 - a. The name of the author, and
 - b. The name of the Junior submitting it, and
 - c. The reason for picking the selection
 2. Favorite scriptures must include:
 - a. The source – Book of the Bible, chapter, verse
 - b. The name of the Junior submitting it
 - c. Length of entry—not more than one half page.
4. LAST PAGE OF ENTIRE BOOK:
 - a. Must list the name and number of the Junior Auxiliary Unit.
 - b. Must list the names of all the Juniors participating during the current year.

C. RULES FOR JUDGING:

1. REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- a . F O R M A T - - - 1 0 %
- b . T I T L E - - - 5 %
- c . L A S T P A G E - 5 %
- d . M E M B E R S P A R T I C I P A T I O N - - 5 %

2. CONTENTS (PRAYERS & DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS)

- a . O R I G I N A L I T Y - - - 2 5 %
- b . N E A T N E S S - - - 2 5 %
- c . A R R A N G E M E N T - - - 2 5 %

All entries must be sent to **District Chaplain by March 31, 2026**. They will be judged at the District level and only the **winner green sheet will be submitted to the Department Chaplain by April 15, 2026. ALL ENTRIES MUST HAVE SENT IN THEIR ANNUAL REPORT FORM TO QUALIFY.**

MUSIC GUIDE

There are so many ways to include music in your meetings! Here are some ideas:

- Open and/or close your meetings with a song.
- Sing “Happy Birthday” to members!
- Include music in all ceremonies, use the National Anthem, Taps, etc.
- Sponsor a student in band, purchase books, sheet music or an instrument.
- Invite musical groups to perform at meetings or special events.
- Participate in a sing-a-long at a hospital or nursing home

Department Awards

Goldie Brooks Citation

To the Unit Chairman submitting the best monthly reports of the year regarding music activity.

Hildegard Korff Citation

To the District Chairman submitting the best monthly reports of the year regarding music activity.

Guidelines

There is room to be creative....narratives, scrapbooks, spreadsheets....use your imagination! It does have to be in some type of folder or binder. All entries are due to your **District Chairman by March 31, 2026**. District Chairman:

All entries must be judged and forwarded to Dawn Gilbert, with a completed verification sheet by **April 15th, 2026**. If you have questions, please contact me dawngilbert21@aol.com or call 231-944-8099. Leave a message and I will return your call as soon as I am able, since I do work.