

Alumni Spotlight: Earl E. Weigelt (DMin '05)



Current Title & Military Branch: State Chaplain, (COL) Maine Army National Guard

Family: Wife: Carol; Children: Kenton and daughter-in-law Jaclyn; Grandchildren: Rowan (3), Kallen (2)

Favorite professors: Dr. Haddon Robinson

Favorite class: The Preacher and the Message

Favorite memory: Dr. Haddon's message "Lessons from Agur" and other outstandingly anointed messages with the class that made you feel like you were the only one in the audience!

What have you been doing since you left Gordon-Conwell and what are you doing now?

One week after graduation in May 2005, I left for Fort Jackson to begin thirteen weeks of Chaplain Officer Basic Course. Since 2006 I have been a full-time support Chaplain for the Maine Army National Guard, except for a deployment to Kandahar, Afghanistan in 2009-2010. I am currently a full-time support Chaplain in the senior (joint) role as State Chaplain.

What do you love about your work as a military chaplain?

I love connecting with Service Members, their families, and veterans, "bringing God to Soldiers and Soldiers to God."

What are the particular challenges of serving as a military chaplain in general and/or in your specific context?

Compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, and moral injury are real. Self-care, balance, and mindfulness ("be here now—with God") are the best tried and true remedies.

Pictured Right: Chaplain Earl Weigelt prays over the group prior to the start of the 2023 Ruck to Remember for Suicide Prevention Month



How has God woven together your Gordon-Conwell education with other life events to bring you to where you are now? How did you come to be doing your current work?

From childhood I embraced a warrior ethos, due to how I was raised and probably my DNA. While pastoring, I also became part of the law enforcement community, first as a patrolman and then as an LE Chaplain as well. After 9/11, I'd started looking for ways to bring what I had to the fight—starting in law enforcement, then with direct commissioning in the National Guard as a Chaplain. Gordon-Conwell's DMin program coincided marvelously and gave me conceptual depth and honed skills that I use every day.

What has been Gordon-Conwell's biggest impact/influence on the work you do now or the way you do your work?

What I was immersed in from Dr. Haddon, Dr. Fee, and Dr. Stuart soaked into my marrow and shows as I share the Word in many different ways with soldiers, families, and veterans. My counseling, teaching, and preaching absolutely bear their expository mark.

What piece of advice would you give to young alumni who are considering serving as a military chaplain?

Pursue military ministry *only* if you can confess a call specifically to it!