

Moment for Mission: Disciples Home Missions Chaplains

By Alexis Waggoner, Air Force Reserve Chaplain at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware



As a female military chaplain ordained in a liberal mainline church, I inhabit spaces where I am frequently aware of my uniqueness. It's not uncommon for someone to tell me, "I didn't know you could be a woman and be a chaplain," or for me to be a part of conversations with other chaplains or servicemembers where assumptions are made that everyone subscribes to the same conservative beliefs. In spite of the fact that military Chaplains are called to serve all, the Chaplain corps in my experience is home to exclusionary and narrow-minded beliefs.



Ironically, almost one-third of servicemembers identify as either agnostic, atheist, or having no religious preference. These people still have spiritual needs, but so many of my colleagues are unaware of, or ill-equipped to address them. Staying in the Chaplain corps as a progressive female minister is challenging, but I am so grateful to be a Disciple, where I can proudly say I am the only chaplain on my base whose denomination ordains women, recognizes the full humanity of our LGBTQI siblings, and has an expansive theology of abundance.

This is often lonely work, but I believe that being a voice of love and open-mindedness matters and I am happy to do work that leads to breaking boundaries and dismantling stereotypes.

Alexis is one of many Chaplains endorsed and served by Disciples Home Missions. Your gifts to the Easter offering support DHM, which makes Alexis' ministry possible.