

# USS ANTIETAM EVENING PRAYERS

LCDR D. Ryan Williams, CHC, USN

6 May 2018 – May 2020



## May 2018

### 4 May 2018 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. As most of you know I'm new to the Antietam and feel grateful to be here. If you're like me, you've had times where you've started something new or engaged in a new activity for the first time. Some of our shipmates are going underway for the very first time. Maybe there are those trying for new qualifications, developing a new workout routine, building a new relationship, or even trying pumpkin pie for the very first time. Doing new things can be exciting but also scary-exciting because of the potential possibilities for growth and fulfillment--scary because of the unknown. So my prayer tonight is for newness. God, tonight as we come close to the end of our first day underway many of us are experiencing new things. But perhaps there are others who feel like things have gotten old--like the regular grind and routine has taken a toll. Heavenly Father, I pray you would fill us all with a sense of new opportunity, new purpose, new resolve and new hope. As we start out this new adventure together as a crew, I ask your blessing of protection, safety and peace to be with us all and with those we love back home. I pray in your holy name, AMEN. GOOD NIGHT!

### 5 May 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Recently we were reminded of the importance of using hearing protection in certain areas of the ship. If you're like me it takes vigilance and situational awareness to know when to put the hearing pro in. And we do it to protect our hearing--to make sure we can maintain the ability to use our ears! Listening is one of the most important aspects to communication. If you're currently or ever been in a relationship--maybe a marriage or a strong friendship, you're aware of how important it is to listen and not just talk. Listening seems to open up channels to understanding, and can even be the means to solving problems. There must be a reason we have two ears and just one mouth! So, tonight my prayer is for listening. Heavenly Father, as we come to the close of another day I thank you for our ears--for the ability we have--if we so choose--to listen and seek understanding. Thank you for the reminders around us to protect our hearing, to guard that gift that gives us insight into the world around us. I pray that you would bless each within the sound of my voice with a greater capacity to hear, to listen, to learn and to understand. Finally, thank you God for taking time to listen to us and may those who reach out to you in need feel heard and received. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

### 6 May 2018 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Today we fought a war on dirt. Certainly, just like in combat, there were pockets of the enemy that were more pronounced, and harder to clear away--even with the powerful hoses spraying the glorious fresh water. As we cleaned, I couldn't help but think about how much I prefer cleanliness over clutter in my own life. If you're like me, it's really easy to get bogged down with the day to day grind and without even realizing we may develop some dirty or cluttered spots in our lives. Maybe there's a habit or behavior we've developed over time that isn't serving us very well, and it could use a good spray-down. Maybe there are some brassy areas of our lives that could just use a nice polish. So, tonight my prayer is for cleanliness. Heavenly Father, as important as it is to take time to clean our ship and clean our

spaces, it is perhaps just as important to take inventory of our own lives and see if there are areas that could use some attention. God, of course none of us are perfectly clean--in fact, we all need a nice spray down from time to time. I pray that you would help us see where we need cleaning, and help us become clean and free from the dirt that brings us down. I pray that through that cleansing we can feel relief and peace. In your holy name I pray, AMEN. Good night!

#### 7 May 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. Over the past couple of days I have been in various locations on the ship when I heard the OOD make a preparatory announcement to ready the crew for evasive maneuvers. Like you I adjusted my stance or posture--leaning forward or backward, or on some occasions holding onto something firm in the immediate vicinity. I looked around and was fascinated another time when I saw an entire group of Sailors leaning in a nearly synchronized fashion back and forth to maintain a vertical position. Life on a ship and perhaps life in general seems to require a constant balancing of both our weight and priorities. What weight ought to be given to which activities to find a happy equilibrium? We all know it's not fun to lose our balance when the ship rolls--and it can even be dangerous. Perhaps finding balance in life is just as vital. Leaning only one direction on a ship can be disastrous, and unidirectional leaning in life is equally ill advised. So, my prayer tonight is for balance. Dear God, as we juggle the minutiae of each day we sometimes feel ourselves outrunning our own pace. Or conversely maybe we sense an inner despondency that seems to hold us back from truly excelling. No matter what imbalance we sense, I pray tonight that we may each cultivate a desire for re-calibration; a desire to restore or maintain balance within ourselves. Would you please help us know which way to lean and how far to do so, and may we CHOOSE to lean in the right direction at the right time. I pray in your holy Name AMEN.

#### 8 May 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. Over the past few days I have noticed how from time to time we have various systems casualties, where one system inexplicably fails to communicate with another. No matter what type of system casualty it is, there seems to be some sort of communications fallout. I have observed very smart Sailors and technicians trouble shooting, running tests and trying to isolate problems to fix various issues to restore communication systems. It seems that whenever there's a communication problem, every effort is expended to find resolution. Maybe troubleshooting communication problems with systems is not so much different from troubleshooting communication with fellow humans. Perhaps we struggle communicating with others, or maybe you feel you've reached your limit with another and sense a communication system's casualty. So, my prayer tonight is for good communication troubleshooting. Heavenly Father, as we go through a given day underway, there are definite challenges with communication--both with our shipmates and with our families and loved ones at home. Perhaps God there have been or currently are communication systems casualties in our own lives--some of which may seem nearly insurmountable. I pray that you would bless each who senses a casualty with patience, understanding, listening, and insight--observing our relationships with care and expert troubleshooting technique to find and isolate problems that can help restore communication again. Please guide and sustain us in this endeavor I pray in your holy Name AMEN.

## 9 May 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, CHAPS here. Today I was reminded of a very important principle: if at first you don't succeed try, try, try again. If you're like me though, you know it's not easy to try again--and it's especially not easy to do a third or fourth time! Have you ever practiced and studied, prepared and rehearsed for a sports game, musical performance, a board, or maybe even a Naval TOWEX exercise, only to miss the opportunity to execute what you practiced or to come shy of the standard in some way? It can surely be frustrating, depressing, or deflating--making it just that much harder to try again. Today Antietam stood in defiance of these doubts, which may have attempted to TUG many of us into the negative. But rather than BE TUGGED we PULLED OUR OWN in a successful nearly all-hands evolution of TRY, TRY, TRY AGAIN. So, tonight my prayer is for persistence. Heavenly Father, surely there are times in each of our lives when we attempt to accomplish some difficult task--a challenging conversation, development of a new habit, a test of knowledge, or maybe a re-connection with a distant relation. God, most of us know what it feels like to fail in something--it can hurt and often tug us down into a place of defeat or confusion. So I pray tonight that each of us might be filled with renewed hope and drive to try again in those areas of our lives that seem to TUG at us. Give us courage, resolve and willpower to persevere and to try, try, and try again. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

## 10 May 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. Today was full of unpredictables. Many things were out of our control--events or evolutions we thought would happen were changed or disappeared from the agenda. There were great adjustments made across the entire command to adapt to new challenges and obstacles. No matter how hard we plan in life, life actually happens and things either stay where we thought they would, or they change. I'm sure we all know how it feels to cling to an expectation only to see it vanish? And we probably conversely know the feeling of seeing an expectation come to fruition. So, is there a way to navigate the two--to find an inner peace and strength, and perhaps a non-attachment to expectation's ego? As I watched the anchor detail today it struck me that therein lies the answer. Pull the anchor. Perhaps peace in the storms of unpredictability can be found in letting go of the bedrock of expectations we so desperately want to cling onto. Pulling the anchor isn't a giving up, but a freedom of navigation through the unpredictabilities life throws at us. So, my prayer tonight is for letting go. Heavenly Father, while there are many things in life we want to hold onto, perhaps there are some elements we need to just let go of. God, it's not easy to let go of certain expectations, and maybe sometimes it feels like giving up in a way. But I pray that as we assess our lives and notice anchors that need to be pulled that we can begin to experience the peace and freedom that comes from letting go. And finally God, I pray for the entire crew, for their health and wellbeing, that we may be strengthened to navigate whatever comes our way. In your holy name I pray, Amen.

## 20 May 2018 Evening Prayer

Good Evening Antietam, it's good to be back with you again for another Evening Prayer. As we departed the pier this afternoon I noticed a hawk gliding on a draft of wind created by our ship's movement. I watched as the hawk made slight adjustments with its tail and wing position to

more effectively benefit from the currents. As I looked at the hawk I wondered, why is the hawk doing this--what is the purpose? What's there to gain? My only conclusion was that the hawk must be doing it for the sheer pleasure of it. Maybe the hawk had a hard day and was taking ten minutes to just rest and recuperate. Perhaps there's a lesson to be learned here as we start this underway. While it is of vital importance that we responsibly take care of our duties and tasks in fulfilling the mission, like the hawk it is just as important we find adequate glide time in our busy schedules. This will provide us fuel for the soul and strengthen our resolve to do our best. So, tonight my prayer is for rest. Heavenly Father, as we get underway to go fulfill our mission I pray for each of us that in the midst of our many very important responsibilities we might also be able to find time to regenerate, recuperate and recharge our batteries on a regular basis. Even if it's just for 10 minutes, God would you magnify that rest time and bless your Sailors with rejuvenation and renewed capacity and desire to move forward in our cause. Finally, I ask a blessing on all of our friends and family, wherever they may be this night. I pray in your holy name, AMEN. Good night!

#### 21 May 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. Like most of you, I was very impressed by the Replenishment at Sea today with the USNS Cesar Chavez. The communication, coordination and actual physical connection between ships--facilitated by our amazing Sailors were spectacular to observe. Perhaps what is most impressive is that all of this was conducted while in motion on the open seas! From the pilot house to aft steering, from the engineering spaces to the line handlers heaving heavy rope lines in, this evolution took a lot of coordination and preparation. All of this reminds me that in many ways we are all underway, and to perpetuate forward momentum we all will need replenishment from time to time. My sense is there may be some among us who could use some underway replenishment from their shipmates. So, tonight my prayer is for replenishment. Heavenly Father, as we move underway through our lives, both figuratively and on our ship--would you please open our eyes to those who may be lacking in stores or fuel. There may be some amongst us who need replenishment and support. May we be line handlers, or signalmen, or even supportive bystanders to help a struggling shipmate until they feel replenished. God, finally please replenish each of us with energy, strength, and hope as we continue our underway patrol. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 22 May 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. This morning during cleaning stations I couldn't help but notice the beautifully polished Antietam mural hanging in the quarterdeck. Everyday Sailors polish that mural to perfection, making it shine and sparkle. Seeing how shiny and well-polished that mural is has made me want to read the mural from time to time. I love some of the lines of prose on the mural--it states that though there was no clear victor in the battle that 17th day of September, 1862, the battle changed the course of the war for good. Interesting that a situation where no one actually won had such a profound effect on history. It actually reminds me how important the small and simple day to day acts we engage in--even if we see no immediate result--over time will have profound effect. Whether it's cleaning stations, phase aircraft maintenance, PQS training, doing the 200 mile challenge, learning a new job under instruction, or fighting a battle in the middle of a prolonged Civil War campaign, these positive

actions weave a fabric of progress and purpose throughout a lifetime. So, my prayer tonight is for consistency. Heavenly Father, sometimes when we are in the middle of cleaning or training, or learning a new skill it can be hard to see the big picture. It can be easy to get bogged down in our progress. I pray that you would strengthen each one of us in the seemingly mundane but important day to day tasks. Help us to catch a vision for what can be created as we are consistent with the small incremental acts that fill our day. God, thank you for hearing this prayer, which I offer in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 23 May 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. Today I learned one very important lesson from two different areas on the ship. The first is ship's laundry. Day in and day out those Sailors clean and dry the very clothes on most of our backs--all behind the scenes. Many of the coveralls they press with giant presses that sometimes have a mind of their own. Despite the unpredictability of the machines, these Sailors take obvious pride in what they do. The second area I spent some time at was at the deep sink in the scullery. Again, though no one was watching I noticed precision scrubbing and maximum effort expended to get the pans sparkling clean and prepared to cook the very next meal. I'm reminded that no matter what we are tasked to do the gold standard we can judge our efforts by is whether we did our personal best and took pride in the product we create--no matter what that product is. So, tonight I pray for personal introspection and insight. Heavenly Father, as we pause now for a brief moment of reflection, I pray that each of us might take a second of introspection--to consider, no matter where we are currently tasked to serve, are we being true to ourselves and giving our best effort--not necessarily to be seen by a superior but to just be true to our own best self. God, in many ways, most of us fall short of this and need your strength and support to do better. I pray that you would provide that to each member of our crew, and also please continue to watch over us and our loved ones at home with safety and peace. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 24 May 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, it's an honor to be here again for another evening prayer. Over the past few days you may have heard the announcement that steering was lost in the pilot house and the aft steering should be manned. I'll tell you what, I'm grateful for redundancy! Over the past month I have learned of the power of redundancy when it comes to other systems such as the Aztac, or the 400 Hz, or the engines for that matter! One thing I'm learning fairly quickly is Redundancy is one very important key to success on a warship. Could there be an application in our lives too? Absolutely! Redundancy implies preparation for the unforeseen, and this pretty much encompasses life as most of us experience it. Surely we can each recall the ups and downs of whatever family life we came from or currently experience. There are countless unforeseen turns of events and forks in the road. We need redundancy in our lives. So, tonight my prayer is for....redundancy. Heavenly Father, as we travel the twists and turns of life we are so often faced with setbacks, challenges or even losses of steering in our own pilot house. I pray you would help us identify redundancy to give us stability, strength, and steadiness to the chaos life presents. Maybe this redundancy is a set of values, principles or even guidance from a trusted mentor. God, help us to find it, plan for it and readily use it to stabilize and normalize our lives,

and I also pray for all those working on any casualties at this time that you would guide their minds and hands to repair what's broken. I pray in your holy name, AMEN!

#### 25 May 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain Williams. Today we celebrated April and May birthdays--whether you had a birthday those months or not, we all have a birthday and know what it feels like to be getting older. Some of us know this more than others! As I was going about the ship today I witnessed and spoke with many of you who were performing upkeep on our ship, which will also be one year older next month. There was sanding and chipping of paint, responding to fires and floods, lubrication of friction points, painting, knee-knocker shining, trouble shooting of various other systems--and while doing that we also conducted FON rehearsals. Things can't just stand still while we do upkeep--it seems upkeep is something that is done while time keeps ticking! Each of us also needs upkeep as we move through our days, weeks, months, and years. Life won't just stop and wait for us to do upkeep--it is something we've got to do while traveling life's path. So tonight I will pray for upkeep. Dear God, as we travel the paths of our lives, getting older and growing in experience, we also feel the effects of gravity and life with its great ups and downs, its twists and turns. I pray for your presence and insight that we can find ways to assist in the upkeep of our bodies, our minds, and our spirits while still maintaining a forward-looking perspective on our life mission and ambitions. Bless the Antietam crew Heavenly Father with healthy upkeep, in their own lives and with their important relationships back home and elsewhere. Finally, I pray that you would help keep US up in purpose, will and hope. I pray in your holy name. Amen. Good night.

#### 26 May 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. In the short amount of time I've been privileged to be a part of this command I have noticed how committed many of you are studying for and earning your warfare pins. It's inspiring to see how much you prepare and rehearse for tests and boards. It seems nearly every day someone is doing a murder board or actual board to progress toward earning their pin. It takes lots of study and preparation but it also requires the candidate to be calm and collected. Being calm under pressure seems to be the result of a prepared and readied mind and a focused purpose. Tonight as we approach the eve of our primary mission that brings us to this point I would like to pray for each of us to be calm and collected as we execute. Heavenly Father, each sailor within the sound of my voice has worked to prepare themselves to face the unknowns that lie ahead. As we prepare to do the mission we've been tasked to perform, I pray for your calming presence to rest upon each member of our crew. Bless the teams with collected, concise and effective communication, with safety and sound decision making. God, would you please protect us AND the Higgins as we conduct our operation--guide those making difficult decisions and help us to function as the team that we are. Be with us now in your power, strength and courage I pray in your holy name. Amen.

#### 27 May 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Have you ever paused to just think about what motivates you to not only do what you do but to just live and move and breath? As we've been

traveling alongside our Chinese shadows these past few days I've thought about their motives and our motives for pursuing a certain specific track. I have been so impressed with the efforts we have made to stay on our track, despite Chinese hailing, escorting and fly bys. It seems staying on track really is linked very closely with our motives. If I know why I exist and what I want to pursue it will be a lot easier to stay on track. Very similarly, we know why we are out here, so we stay on our track. So my prayer tonight is for strength to stay on track. Heavenly Father, I wish to express gratitude to you for our safety and protection this day. There were times when staying on track was not necessarily easy! Thank you for your calming support and presence through it all. God, I pray for your presence and guidance in each of our lives that we may all be able to sense a clear pathway we ought to take, through the unforeseen events of life, help us to stay on track, to make safe passage and to realize the great potential each of us has for good in this world. Bless and watch over the crew, our families and may we be strengthened to track healthily along our path I pray in your holy name. Amen.

#### 28 May 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Thank you CTT2 Blatchford for your readings and invitation to do the MURPH challenge, both of which hopefully helped many of us solemnize and recall the significance of what Memorial Day stands for. Most of you within the sound of my voice are working on something right now that requires memorization--qualification tests, boards, GMAT, GRE, line handling procedures, or various other UI assignments. I'm sure you'd concur that it's a lot easier to forget than to remember. Remembering requires effort and purposeful focus, while forgetting is passive and requires no effort. So, tonight let us pause to remember those who have given themselves, those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice. The poet Abram Joseph Ryan wrote: "Yes, give me a land with a grave in each spot, and names in the graves that shall not be forgot; Yes, give me the land of the wreck and the tomb; There is grandeur in graves--there is glory in gloom; For out of the gloom future brightness is born; As after the night domes the sunrise of morn; And the Graves of the dead with the grass overgrown May yet form the footstool of liberty's throne, and each single wreck in the war path of might Shall yet be a dock in the temple of right." Shipmates will you please join me in a moment of silence to reverence those who have fallen, followed by playing of TAPS.

#### 29 May 2018 Evening Prayer

Happy Tuesday evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. If you're like me you enjoy using the sinks, the heads, the showers, clean dishes, the laundry facilities etc. Unfortunately, it is human nature for us not to notice these benefits or even be grateful for them until they are gone for a time. Thanks to the HTs, MR1, the DC shop and others whenever there is a clogged artery in the ship, they send relief and much needed help. you've probably noticed them traversing the ship with various devices and contraptions made to fit into obscure and tight spaces, or maybe you noticed them drilling into pipes revealing relics from bygone years from seafaring past--truly, without their help we would be literally stuck. Please, if you see one of them, show them some love. So, my prayer tonight is for any who feel stuck in any way. Let's pray: Heavenly Father, surely there are some amongst us who feel stuck in certain ways--maybe we are stuck in a career path we don't want, perhaps a troubled relationship, perhaps we feel stuck in an unwanted or unwelcome routine, or maybe we feel the burden of excessive debt. Some may be stuck in an



extremely difficult business transaction, or possibly in between a rock and a hard place in our marriage. Father, you know each one of us and our varying levels of stuckness--would you please help guide us to relief and peace, and help us become free from our stuck-ness? Please bless us with insight, with discernment and free us from the burdens we so often become weighed down with. Thank you for ever being ready to rescue us God, I pray in your healing name, AMEN.

### 30 May 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam and happy hump day. Chaps here. Today during the ITT drill I was amazed at the amount of radio traffic passed over the 1MC, radios and various other means. I noticed that as one Sailor delivered information to another, the receiver responded by repeating back what they heard, to confirm receipt of the information. There were some times when the one on the receiving end didn't respond, so the caller had to send again, until the receiver confirmed they received the message. This process of giving and receiving in communications happens all over the ship, 24/7. It got me thinking about the importance of acknowledgement. Acknowledgment seems to convey to another that what they have to say is important and it was received. I have seen acknowledgment in action in the helmsman - CON and OOD relationship. Improper acknowledgment could mean the difference between safe passage and peril. Acknowledgment is also important in human interaction in general. How we acknowledge another human being indicates how we value them and their persona. This doesn't always mean agreeing with another, but it does mean trying to understand where they're coming from. I'd like to pray tonight for an increased ability to acknowledge the existence of those around us. God, as we push over the apex of this week we pause to thank you for the opportunity to work with others. Sometimes it's chaotic, frustrating or hurried, other times it's slow, methodical and even enjoyable, but however it is, I pray we might all have an increased ability to acknowledge those around us. Help us--in spite of the unforeseen office rain clouds or gun misfires, or equipment casualties, to dig down deep to acknowledge the existence of others. And in that acknowledgment may we feel acknowledged by you, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

### 31 May 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. Recently I've seen Sailors pulling up old non-skid and replacing it, chipping old patches of rust, sanding down chipped paint, and even using Gojo to wipe paint off the skin. To remove these different items requires dedicated effort and focus, and it also requires some sort of chemical or tool to assist with removal of the unwanted object. I'm grateful for these chemicals and tools that can help renovate and restore things that get dirty or damaged over time. This process of restoration--whether it's a new coat of paint on the ship's rail or Gojo on the elbow to remove that same paint--it is miraculous in a way. Of course, restoration in these areas is important, but perhaps even more profound is how restoration works in our own lives. No-one lives a mistake-free life; it's impossible for us mortals. But regardless of how today or an hour ago, or even 10 minutes ago went, we can enjoy restoration. Maybe instead of Gojo, we apply forgiveness to ourselves or another. Forgiveness isn't a free pass, but a hope-filled opportunity for restoration and choosing to try again. There's hope in that. So, tonight I pray we might all benefit from the power of restoration. Let us pray, Heavenly Father, as we go through our days we make mistakes from time to time. Rightly, we hold

ourselves accountable, for it is we who make decisions and choices that impact ourselves and others. God, I pray though that after those rust and peeling paint life moments, we might find hope in allowing restoration's miracle to take effect in our lives. I pray that with tomorrow's sunrise--or tonight's moonrise for day sleepers--many within the sound of my voice may experience restoration and the hope you offer through a renewed perspective. I also pray for those who get too few hours of sleep that the short amount they do get might be restorative to body and mind. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

## JUNE 2018

### 1 June 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is your chaplain here with another evening prayer. Happy Phalanx Friday. Most of you probably heard or felt the rapture of today's Phalanx CIWS shoot. It's quite a remarkable sound and sight to witness. Some of you may know this weapon system is a rapid fire, computer-controlled, radar-guided gun which is used to deter close-in threats which may have pierced other lines of defense. Its ability to carry out functions usually performed by multiple systems is spectacular. It's really an all-in-one kind of package! One fascinating thing to me about this weapon is its name Phalanx. I took a gander on the meaning of phalanx and discovered its original meaning referred to a body of heavily armed infantry in Ancient Greece formed in close deep ranks and files. I can definitely see where the CIWS got its name. Phalanx can also simply refer to an organized body of people. It seems there's a lesson to be learned here--it appears the effectiveness of the phalanx CIWS is due to its organized body of rounds--around 1-200 in just a second or two--which provide extremely effective deterrence to close-in threats. Perhaps functioning as a team is no different--working with others in organized, supportive and openly communicative professional relationships can be a powerful defense to any threat we may face. I'd like to pray tonight for our organized body of people--our team. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, thank you for each Sailor aboard this ship. Each is a member of this organized team and plays an important role. I thank you for their sacrifices, for their willingness to wake up day or night and go to another watch station or respond to another flight quarters, check the air compressor gage reading once more, or twist in one more screw on the helo frame, or type one more instruction, or review one more eval. God, bless our team with strength, energy and a sense of purpose in what we do. May they feel your love and support I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

### 2 June 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Have you noticed how much of our lives are governed by time? We are reminded of it with tonight's time change. We are reminded of it each morning when we reach for a new POD which tells us when and where we need to be. We are reminded with the 4 noon-time bells. Food service crew members celebrate--and rightly so--at the strike of 0830, 1230 and 1700. Time is a most interesting medium--in this world of so many inequalities and disparities, time remains a commodity perfectly and equally distributed to all of the human race. Perhaps the only exception to that rule is when we travel through time changes like tonight and some get a shortened watch of three hours instead of four. Regardless, time is a neutral medium--it's a platform upon which we can make choices based on the parameters and guidance

offered within our current context. Time is a gift which affords us an ever-present opportunity to either stagnate or grow--no matter what situation we find ourselves in. Tonight I'd like to pray for wisdom in the use of this gift. Let us pray, Heavenly Father, as we prepare for a time change we are reminded of how precious this commodity is. A gift and an opportunity for all to use in the best way we see fit. I pray you would guide us to know best how to use the time we've been allotted. Help us to assess honestly how we currently use our time and consider ways to use our time wisely. Help strengthen anyone who is experiencing a difficult time, a time of grief, pain or loss. Please also strengthen, bless and sustain our family and loved ones during our time apart. Thank you for the gift of time, I pray in your holy name. Amen.

### 3 June 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. I'm always impressed with the level of coordination, communication and collaboration that takes place on our ship on a day-to-day basis. Today I witnessed this during the VERTREP as I watched Sailors conduct hand signals to the helos, attach a pendent to the helo while it hovered just feet above their head, and the many Sailors who passed boxes of food, parts, and mail down the chain to their various destinations. I witnessed this on the CONREP line as we heaved a rope and listened for various commands to pull, hold fast, run up to the front of the line or run back to assist the fuel line connection. Meanwhile there were precision  
(I scrapped this one and went down a different strain)

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. Today I was so impressed with the amazing work by our Sailors during the vertrep and the UNREP. It took many hands to ensure the onloaded goods and fuel were delivered safely. Speaking of safety, before each UNREP evolution there is an UNREP brief delivered during OPS INTEL meeting. At one point during the brief the warning is given to be aware of the Venturi effect. While underway, a typical ship's hull causes the water to flow at different velocities due to the hull's curvature. At the bow and stern water pressure is increased, while midship the pressure is decreased causing suction. When two ships come side by side during an UNREP, this Venturi effect is increased and more complicated because of the competing pressures of both ships. Additionally, increased speed and decreased distance between ships also increases the effect. Great care must be taken not to point the bow in toward the supply ship or the pressure will suck the two ships together. I'm struck by how vitally important it is to stay the course--despite the immense pressure from the UNREP ship to close the gap. Perhaps there's metaphorical wisdom here in this principle. Despite the Venturi tugs and pulls in our own lives that try to suck us under or pressure us off our path, if we set our course and stay on track we will be safe. Tonight I'd like to pray for determination to stay the course. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, there are powerful forces constantly tugging at each one of us as we travel the course of our lives. God, sometimes we feel pressured by some around us to make destructive choices, or do things not in alignment with our sincerely held values. I pray for each within the sound of my voice that they might have strength and determination to stay true to themselves; to be victorious in living lives of integrity; to stay the course. God, bless each member of our Antietam family with strength and fortitude to keep on the right track. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

### 4 June 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Today we witnessed some of the first classes working as FSAs for the day--they were wiping tables on the mess decks, serving meatloaf, scrubbing dishes in the scullery, stocking trays, cups and silverware, and taking jabs from some of the younger Sailors--all in good fun of course. Surely for most of them it probably brought back vivid recollections of previous FSA duties in years past. As I watched them do their duties I was reminded of a very important principle of leadership, and just life in general--that is humility. Humility is that quality of recognizing--while we are surely all equipped with incredible insight and capabilities on our own--we are nevertheless weaker individually than collectively. Humbling ourselves means to look beyond our own qualities and recognize or build qualities in others. And it means finding true joy in seeing others succeed. It may mean being open to learning from those lower in rank or listening to the recommendation of a colleague. It may mean admitting we are at fault or maybe engaging in an activity we somehow deem "below us" in some way. Speaking of below, The word comes from the Greek Humous, meaning earth or an earthy state. To be humble means to be close down to the earth. Perhaps there's something to be said for a down-to-earth leadership style! So tonight I'd like to pray for increased humility. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, it is not easy to lower ourselves, or to ask questions of others when we don't know an answer, or to seek guidance for a difficult scenario--and yet, it is necessary for our growth. God, I pray as we choose to lower the walls of resistance and allow humility to have full sway in our hearts that you would lead us by the hand to do great things in this world. Help us to find those scullery and table wiping moments, those service before self moments where we can lift others by being down to earth. God, be with us and support us in this endeavor I pray in your holy name. AMEN>

(5-10 June GUAM MALABAR)

11 June 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. As we are all aware, today we left Guam. During the past week or so I'm sure there are things that stand out to each of you--both high and low points of our port visit. So, there is one experience I had that taught me a very important lesson. It happened while running back from San Luis Beach one morning. Perhaps you had a similar experience running on Naval Base Guam. I was running along enjoying the growing light of the morning sun when all of a sudden I heard a metallic bird tweeting sound and felt a swoosh of wind on the back of my neck. I spun around to see two medium to small black birds flying past, only to circle around for another pass at my head! That would carry on for the next 1.5 miles until I arrived safely at the gate. The birds would not let off--I air punched them, flashed my phone flashlight at them and I'm ashamed to say, yelled at them. They only intensified their attack. I thought about finding cover but just ran faster. In retrospect I realize that the more I fought them the more intense their assault. There's a lesson here.

(Here I abandoned this one and chose a different path)

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here with you again. As we are now back underway I am aware that many seized the opportunity for some liberty while in Guam--away from the ship. No matter how long you were away from the ship, there is inevitably some level of re-

adjustment necessary to being underway again. For some it comes in the form of re-applying sea sickness patches, for others it may be adjusting to a new watch or work center routine. Or maybe it's doing cleaning stations again. One thing I've noticed though is that on a ship there are lots of ladders--more than on land for sure. Ladders on the ship provide us with the means for getting to a different deck, but they also afford us something else--they give us the opportunity to be kind. Have you ever come to the top of the ladder to go down and someone was just about to come up--or maybe vice versa--what happens in that moment? Do you go or wait? Do you notice when another is coming in the opposite direction? While being on liberty is good for the soul, being in those ladder decision moments is a great opportunity for practicing selflessness and kindness, and that is also good for the soul. I've witnessed it many times--one person kindly deferring to another. Tonight I'd like to pray for strength to be kind in the ladder moments of our day. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, we are presented almost hourly with opportunities to help, lift, strengthen and support those around us. The opposite is also the case. While we often can't control our various ladder moments, would you please strengthen us to know how to respond kindly when presented with such occasions. Certainly being kind doesn't mean being a push-over, but being kind does take awareness and a willingness to see things through the perspective of the other. God, bless us to see others, and especially with the ability and perspective to be kind in life's many ladder well moments, I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 12 June 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. I'm sure most of us remember playing hide and go seek when we were kids--or maybe we play it now from time to time with our own kids or nieces and nephews. Do you remember if you preferred to be the hider or the seeker? It seems like there are pros and cons to both. Here on the ship I've experienced lots of seeking--both in my own line of work, but also observed in what many of you do. Today for instance, maybe some of you were involved in seeking to find another vessel, or perhaps trying to find a shipmate, or find an article of clothing lost in the laundry, or maybe trying to find a couple extra minutes of rest, or trying to seek more knowledge in PQS studies. Hiding is also a thing--maybe you've wanted to just hide for a moment from responsibility--just go behind a door and cry or relax for a few minutes, or go run on the treadmill for 20 minutes, or maybe you have been unintentionally hiding back in an obscure workspace doing your job and just wishing someone would come find you to say hi or check up on you. Certainly in today's exercises there has been lots of hiding and seeking. So, tonight I'd like to pray for help in seeking those hidden things in our lives. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, most of us travel through life with a learned understanding of our deficiencies. We sense keenly our need for greater knowledge and understanding of life's complexities. God, I pray for each Antietam Sailor tonight that they might be strengthened and guided--even directed through spiritual means--in their seeking for knowledge, understanding and truth. Bless those who seek greater ability to retain knowledge as they study their PQS. Bless those who seek restful sleep that they might have rest. And bless all who seek healthy goals with power to accomplish them. Finally God, I seek this of you and pray this in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 13 June 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. I know many who are involved in any way with flight quarters appreciate the lead-time warning on the 1MC stating that the ship intends to set flight quarters at a certain time. I personally appreciate the 1MC announcements in the morning giving heads up regarding daily events. It is human nature to want to plan ahead and get a snapshot of the future so we can be ready to respond accordingly. For example, while QM1 Davis did know it was inevitable, and he was prepared for the possibility, it was still some pretty exciting and surprising news when he learned his wife gave birth yesterday at 1025 to a handsome baby boy Jeremiah Malik, weighing in at 7 lb 7 oz! Then there are the other announcements we here about engineering or combat systems casualties--which set certain responsive patterns into play. I'm grateful for those who know how to respond to these different calls to action--even without any lead time--because they are ready to respond and issue comforting words such as "secure from flight quarters," or "your baby has 10 fingers, 10 toes and is doing well," or "secure from engineering casualty." So, tonight I pray in gratitude for all of you and others who respond. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, I pause here for a moment to thank you for all those who respond to challenging invitations; those who care for our newborns; those who respond to helo operations; those who respond three times a day to our insistent need for nourishment; those who respond to higher taskings to fulfill our missions; those who practice drill scenarios to know how to respond in real-time. God, would you strengthen each of us with insight and wisdom to know how best to respond so that we can do our part to make this world a better place. Thank you for responding to us and our needs and those of our loved ones as we are apart. And May we all consider how we might be more responsive I pray now in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 14 June 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Today there were several of you involved in the NSFS 5 inch gun shoot--there was a lot of coordinating and communication that went into firing both mounts at a target several miles away, a tiny hole-pocked island whose sole existence appears to be a sitting object for target practice. As I watched the guns fire successively and felt my body resonate from the blast I thought how important accurate targeting is for such an evolution. With all of that water and just a small island to hit, dialing in on the correct target becomes pretty important. There is certainly a metaphor here with our lives. What is the target we are shooting for? I want to invite each of us to consider where our target is, or maybe we are trying to locate it still. That's OK! You can't aim at a target if you don't find it, and you can't find it if you don't look.... Aligning ourselves and our behaviors with what we most value--our targets--will bring fulfillment and a sense of purpose in life--even more satisfaction than watching a 5 inch round impact an island--which, by the way, is pretty cool! Surely we may not hit the target the first time--we may have to raise or lower our trajectory but we can try again and again and we will eventually hit it. Tonight I'd like to pray for help in finding and aiming at the target. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, for many of us our targets--our life ambitions and goals seem clear and we see the path before us. For others the target seems elusive, distant or maybe even appears as a mirage on the horizon. God, I pray for guidance no matter where we fall on the spectrum--guidance and insight to recognize what matters most and strength to align with those targets and the tenacity to do what it takes to hit them. As we fall from time to time please lift and support us, and energize our abilities. I pray in your holy name, AMEN!

## 15 June 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Do you remember being in elementary school and attending your school's field day? That was not a day for cleaning your berthing, but it was a day where you went out and did lots of sporting activities. My youngest daughter recently participated in her school's field day and the event she competed in was the tug o war! She was really excited to tell me that her team won because they pulled the other team over the line in the grass. Today I learned about another tug of war--the Phone and Distance line. This is an epic tug of war between 10 Sailors and a refueling ship--sounds doomed from the start right? Well, in a traditional tug of war contest those 10 Sailors would be severely disadvantaged. But this is a non-traditional tug o war because the object is not to pull the tanker over an imaginary line, but rather to keep the rope at an appropriate level of slack so as to alert the bridge to the distance between ships. This evolution requires give and take to succeed--only pulling on the PND line will result in much more than tired muscles and blisters, but possible catastrophe. Life presents us with many tanker, or Rappahannock moments and it is imperative that we be prepared to give and take on a situational basis. Knowing when to talk and when to listen in a relationship for example, or deciding to say a kind word instead of snap when feeling angry, or giving honest feedback instead of fluff--or giving up a self-destructive vice now in order to take back more autonomy in our lives. So, my prayer tonight is to recognize when to give and when to take. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, each of us is faced with Rappahannock moments--moments where we get tied up in life's tug o war. Such is the nature of life. I pray we all may have discernment and determination to know and pursue the right response in these moments. Help us please to know when to pull, when to give slack, when to give and when to take. God, and in it all I pray for safety and protection from harm during these tugs of war--for us and our loved ones. I pray in your holy Name, AMEN.

## 16 June 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. Today is Saturday, and most of us have eaten dinner or are just finishing up at this point. From many of my conversations with Sailors on board I hear that Saturday pizza, wings, poppers, and mozzarella sticks is one of your favorite meals. Some of us are more of the pizza type, while others are more wing people. I myself am more of a pizza guy--so I got thinking, what is it that makes a good pizza? For me I think it's the contrast between a crispy crust, the gooey cheese, the seasoned sauce, and the flavorful toppings. The contrast between these different pizza essentials makes the pizza eating experience absolutely worth the calorie intake every Saturday night. Perhaps life is actually a lot like a good pizza--a day, week, or year filled with important and creative contrasting elements that bring out the flavors in our existence. Most people like a pizza that's more than just a blob of un-salted dough--surely life is no different. Proactively looking for ways to creatively craft our daily activities while underway can be a challenge, but so is making the ultimate Saturday night pizza. So, tonight I pray for ways to identify contrasts in our lives. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, tonight as we finish up dinner I pray for each of us to notice important ways to incorporate contrast into our lives. Thank you for another evening, and a new day tomorrow to pay attention to what contrasting elements in our lives can bring flavor, satisfaction, connection and even rejuvenation. Please give us vision to see these contrasts and sense a deeper purpose in their meaning. God, while contrasts may at first appear as opposing elements, I pray we may

recognize the fluid harmony and even reason behind the contrasts in our lives. Bless our crew and families I pray in your holy Name AMEN.

#### 17 June 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. Today I spent a few minutes observing both the passive and active ASW sonar work being done in the CIC. I was very struck at how attentive the sonar techs were and how much detail they could catch because of their trained ear. I found it interesting that both passive and active efforts were required in effective ASW. Being Father's Day, I had that on my mind as well--and There seems to be a wonderful metaphor in this for what it means to be a good father--but not only a good father, but perhaps also just a good friend. A father or a friend who is more like the passive Tow de Ray--listening and perceiving data and information--extending themselves out beyond themselves like the Tow de Ray tail extends from the ship. Every once in a while A father or friend is also like the sonar signal--sending out words of guidance or counsel and hoping for a response. Perhaps we can be that passive and active friend, father or mother in ways that matter most to those around us--listening and reaching out at times to those around us or back home. So, tonight I'd like to pray in gratitude for fathers, friends and others who both sense and reach for our benefit. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, tonight as we wrap up another Father's Day I am aware there are many of us who have fathers and some who have father figures or good friends who have sensed and listened to our needs and reached out to us. Thank you for them and their passive and active qualities. I also pray that we might learn from them--that we too can passively sense--be aware of and see others' needs--and actively reach out--to lift and support others here on ship and back home. God, give us strength to do so is my prayer, in your holy name. AMEN.

#### 18 June 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Have you ever had so much back pain that you finally bit the bullet and went to the chiropractor? And when you laid down on the table the chiropractor told you that you were really out of alignment, so next she or he took your head in their hands and snap, crackle pop you were back in alignment. This morning as we were hiding out just a few hundred yards from a beautiful palm tree covered tropical island rock I was standing on the flight deck watching some of our Air det crew turn into chiropractors with warlord! They did a process called straightening, in which they used a cable to provide lateral tension on the bird while they used the Rapid Securing Device or RSD to nearly pull the tail off the end of the flight deck--in a precision chiropractor movement the helo then twisted it's trajectory and was immediately aligned with the track--now it could safely be escorted on the RSD back into the hangar. I see a great metaphor in this straightening process. I wonder if each of us has a track--it's a combination of our potential, plus our values, plus our work efforts. I've seen some of you trying to straighten to your own tracks by pursuing your best selves, by trying to find balance in your day, and by trying to live responsibly and with honor. My prayer tonight is for strength to straighten ourselves onto our life's track. Let us pray: God, it's pretty easy to get off track...and maybe there are some of us who feel off track in some way. I pray you would give us strength, determination and an ability to trust our teammates to give us feedback when we've departed the track. God I also pray at this time for any of our equipment--to include our GTMs---



that may need to straighten up and come back on track. Bless the crew who service and run our equipment and bless us all with safety I pray in your holy name. AMEN.

#### 19 June 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Have you ever felt so tired that you fell asleep standing up, or maybe you were sitting in a meeting and just could not keep your eyes open--it just took all the will power you could muster to just keep your eyelids from drooping. I know there have been a few times recently that I've felt that way--when our bodies are running off of less power than normal, we can sure feel it! I was reminded of this when I visited radar 2 today and learned about the hard work being done in there to try and fix the power supply for one of the Final Power Amplifiers. I learned that these amplifiers are what directs power to the arrays, which provide defense and in some cases offense for incoming signals trying to interfere with our system. I discovered that it is imperative that our FPA modules function effectively and with full power so as to give us maximum protection from the enemy. As I mentioned before, it is also vital that we find ways to amplify our own power--ways that can strengthen our mind, body and soul. Though we are all very busy, I wonder if there are ways to adjust our own power system so as to amplify our own capabilities. Tonight I would like to pray for an amplification of power to help us through our night and coming day. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we go throughout each day fulfilling the different tasks we're given we can often become tired or even overwhelmed with the great amount of work on our plates. God, I pray for all of our Sailors to be able to find time to examine our own sources of power; to determine how to amplify our own strength even in the midst of countless to-do lists and important tasks. Bless each with physical power, emotional power, mental power, and spiritual power--that we might be strong to meet the challenges that come into our path. Amplify our own abilities and powers I pray, in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 20 June 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Today is the second full day of the John Wick event. As I have seen Sailors stealthily sneaking around the ship with their weapons drawn I couldn't help but notice how ready and prepared several of you were for a potential attack. Some carry their weapons in their pockets, others pack in the small of their back inside their belts--ready to draw at a moment's notice. Pretty much everyone I've seen has a smile on their face while doing it--even when getting shot! What makes this activity so enjoyable? I've thought about this and maybe one of the reasons is because it is out of the typical routine. I've talked to some who have said they go out of their way to walk different routes so as not to be detected or ambushed by their potential malefactor. Sometimes it can be very healthy to mix our routines up and try new things. Perhaps the John Wick experience is a lesson in the importance of keeping a fresh perspective. You'll notice too that most of us tend to be even more alert and ready when we mix up our routine. Certainly routines can be nice, but I wonder if a little injected variety every once in a while would help some of us be more alert and more ready. Tonight I'd like to pray for opportunities for variety. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, as we continue our underway there certainly are times when it becomes easy to get so routinized that we lose perspective, vision, or even purpose. Though these routines are important for our survival, God I pray each of us might take time to lift our eyes and look for variety. As we interject variety into our routines, I pray we

may feel an increase in focus, alertness, and be more ready for whatever may come our way. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 21 June 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. As you all know there was a RAS today with the Ronald Reagan. As the line handlers heaved the fuel line across it became apparent that there were a series of knots keeping the line from coming all the way over. The line handlers were exhausted and very little progress could be made until the decision was ultimately made to retract the line a bit in order to de-tangle the line. It seemed no matter how hard the Sailors on the line pulled, no progress could be made until the line was properly de-tangled. Interestingly, this seems to be no different from various life scenarios most of us face. How many times do we try and force a situation--in-effectively pulling or tugging in the direction we want to go in, but making little to no progress? Surely there are some times when brute pulling or pushing force is what is needed to progress, but there are other times when backing off, re-assessing or re-contemplating a decision can pay huge dividends. Tonight I pray for all who may feel tied in a knot in any way. Let us pray. Dear God, as we travel through our days here underway and elsewhere, we are faced with countless experiences and decision points. Sometimes it seems we make the right choices and other times life can get pretty sticky. I pray for all who feel they may have gotten tied in a knot. Bless those who are currently trying to force certain situations to no avail--bless them with the ability to step back and re-collect their thoughts and aspirations. Thank you for the chance to try again in most areas in our lives--the chance to de-tangle ourselves, and I pray for the hope and help to continue to do so. In your holy name I pray. Amen.

#### 22 June 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain Williams here. On any given day if you just take a walk around the ship you will most assuredly run into various Sailors from the DCPO shop, or Engineering, DC-men, or others who are making their hourly checks or doing some sort of Preventative or corrective maintenance around the ship. These shipmates usually have a green bag of tools, or a clipboard with a tracker, or some sort of tool in their hands to help them with their work. This consistent and very important maintenance is what helps our ship keep running; what keeps us nice and cool, keeps our computers going, keeps us fed, and keeps us safe! Regular maintenance is also important in our lives--regular and consistent maintenance is vitally important to keeping ourselves physically, mentally, and spiritually afloat. Perhaps it would be helpful to set up some regular spot checks on our own lives? Regularly assessing the meters and temperatures of our own hearts, minds, attitudes and behaviors could provide us the insight we need to find real happiness in our life journey. Or if you're interested you can come tonight at 1900 in the classroom to maintain your marriage. So, tonight I'd like to pray for maintenance. Let us pray: God, tonight as we near the end of another day, I pray for each of us as we pause and reflect on our own lives--would you please guide us in the areas we need to maintain. Bless us as we strive to maintain our physical and mental health. Please fill us with hope and boost our spirits for a new day tomorrow. Thank you for our relationships and friendships here and at home, and I pray you would give us ideas and guidance on how to maintain those. Finally, bless us with energy to maintain and strength for our crew I pray in your holy name. Amen!

### 23 June 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Earlier this morning we held an ADMIN GQ. One of the main purposes of this exercise was to ensure we had the right Sailors in the correct watch stations based on a particular watchbill configuration and condition. One of the most important things about this evolution was to be in the right place at the right time. Whether it was repair locker 2, 5 or the Mess Decks it is vitally important to be where we need to be and to be there at the right time. All exercises aside, how can we know we're in the right place? Perhaps some of us have contemplated such questions as--is the Navy the right place for me? Or, is the relationship I'm currently pursuing the right place for me? Or maybe, is the current routine I'm maintaining the right place for me? It seems knowing we are in the right place is a uniquely personal experience. For many of us, being in the right place happens when our lived experience aligns flush with our value set. Being in the right place then feels right because our internal and external lives coincide and the good vibes happen. So, tonight I'd like to pray for guidance to be in the right place. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, this evening I pray for our crew--every single one of them God--that they might have discernment and guidance to know what the right place is for them. If the place they are currently in is not the right place, help them to begin to see a healthy path that will eventually align them with the truths and values they hold dear. I pray you would be a guiding light to each of us--to lead and companion us along the path to the right place. Thank you for watching over us in this endeavor, and would you please bless, keep and protect all tonight I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

### 24 June 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Recently I came across some sweaty, yet smiling Sailors cleaning the forward pump room. If you have ever looked down any of the pump room shafts you have likely been amazed at how far down they go--an almost endless chasm extending into the very depths of the ship's hull. I think it goes without saying, these pump room shaft-P-ways are not high traffic exposure areas and therefore, understandably don't get a lot of POD "best space" press. Nevertheless, they need to be--AND ARE--cleaned periodically by Sailors. One thing I have noticed as I make my rounds around the ship is there are lots of important things done daily and nightly that are not highly visible. Many very valuable events and actions occur far outside the limelight and often go unrecognized or even unnoticed. Thank you for your dedication and deliberate attention to these out of the way areas. When I think of doing things the right way and with the highest quality possible--even when nobody is there to notice--I think of integrity. What an important and valuable trait to possess. Tonight I'd like to pray for strength to live with integrity. Let us Pray. Heavenly Father, tonight as we start a new week and prepare for some much needed time in port in a few days, I pray that each of us might be strengthened with desire and fortitude to be true to ourselves, to have integrity. Help us to recognize the importance of doing what is right even when it's out of the limelight or may go unnoticed. Finally, please bless and strengthen all within the sound of my voice in their various responsibilities and tasks--whether seen or unseen--with a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

### 25 June 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. As most of you know, I am blessed with a family of 7, so naturally for years we have shopped at COSTCO to get the best bang for our buck, plus, there's that chocolate cake. Anyway, one time when we were checking out at the cash register the attendant commented, "wow, that's a lot of food!" I found myself getting defensive and wanted to say "hey back off, I have 7 mouths to feed ok?!" Today as many of us took part in the UNREP with the Walter S. Diehl I, along with other Sailors made that same comment from the heart of the onload working party, "wow, that's a lot of food!" The interesting thing I noticed though, is that while the endless milk boxes, 50-60 lb potato boxes, 50 lb mystery meat boxes, and wonderful canned tomato paste boxes, were heavy and it was hot and we were sore, there was a sense of camaraderie felt and experienced which revealed the truth that a happy person is a hard working person. It seems real fulfillment in life comes from being actively engaged in a good cause, and usually involves hard work. There is nothing quite as satisfying and self-assuring as working hard on a project and seeing it to completion. Hard work is one of the keys to a happy existence. So, tonight I'd like to pray that we might all find satisfaction in the hard work we are called upon to do. Let us pray: Dear God, today and everyday most of us are called upon to engage in hard work. Indeed Lord, sometimes our work seems overwhelming or overtaxing, and at times we may look at the load and comment, "wow, that's a lot of work!" In all of our work though God, I pray you would strengthen our backs, our knees, our feet in our boots, our minds, our typing fingers, our tag-out hands, our screen or horizon-focused eyes, and our radio-listening ears. And above all, as we work together, side by side may we feel more unified, connected, and fulfilled. Finally, there are a few of our shipmates leaving us from Manila--bless them with safety in travel, and may they feel our gratitude and appreciation for their efforts and work. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

(26-29 June MANILLA)

### 30 June 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain Williams here. Over the last couple days we have received several new Sailors into our Antietam family--hopefully you feel welcome and will soon be comfortable moving about the ship. As you know I am also fairly new to the command, and with that newness comes a really steep learning curve. One of the things I learned when I checked on board is that my role during Sea and Anchor detail is to escort the harbor pilot whenever we come into or leave a port. The first time I did this back in Yokosuka I led the very experienced and capable pilot in the wrong direction--aft instead of forward. The pilot gently said, "Chaps...I think it's this way". A kind way of saying, wrong way knucklehead! So, I'm happy to say that on today's Sea & Anchor I remembered how to get to the pilot house and delivered the pilot safely to his position. After all, the whole reason for a pilot is to have a guide present who knows the surroundings and can provide navigational insight and provide safe passage for our ship into and out of the harbor. Whether we are new to the command or we've been here for 3 years, we all need a mentor, a guide--a pilot of sorts--who can help us navigate through the waters of the Navy and life, for that matter. So, tonight I'd like to pray for all new and seasoned Sailors. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, thank you for the challenge of facing new things. It certainly is not easy being new--or even being seasoned for that matter, and at times may feel a bit overwhelming, tiring or even lonely. I pray that each of us--whatever stage we find ourselves in--may find a guide, a pilot--someone to help us navigate through rough or murky waters, someone who can see clearly

through the fog or other debris life presents us. God, also bless us to know if we should be that guide to another--if maybe we might be the one to provide direction or help to another. Please be with us all now I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

## JULY 2018

### 1 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaplain Williams here. Earlier I walked past the messline and noticed two kind sailors who were serving shipmates from heaping containers filled with pork and beef. I thought to myself, wow--look at how much we have! Such generosity! When I think about it, There are countless opportunities we encounter daily to be generous, to give of ourselves to others to help bless or lift. I can guarantee each one of us will have the opportunity right after I'm done with this prayer to be generous to another. So Tonight I'd like to share a prayer about generosity. Let us pray. Lord teach me to be generous, teach me to serve you as you deserve, to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for exceptional rest, to labor and not to ask for reward, except to know that I am doing your will. Amen. Goodnight.

### 2 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Over the past couple weeks there have been a few times I've gone to the ships store to purchase munchies and when I went to check out I discovered I didn't have enough funds on my Navy cash card to cover the cost for the items I had chosen. Perhaps this has happened to you as well--and we all know what to do--you go to the nearest Navy cash machine and reload your pin with funds so you can buy the needed goods. Going to the cash machine of course takes a little effort, and maybe even a short wait in a line if there are others with the same plan, but once at the machine--it's a very simple process transferring the funds. I've thought about this recently, I wonder if sometimes we feel like we step up to the register and realize we are out of funds in other ways--maybe it was a mistake on a briefing, or falling short in executing our part in an exercise or evolution, or maybe we said or did something--or failed to say or do something that impacted a shipmate in a negative way. Any number of actions or inactions throughout a given day can leave us feeling empty at the cash register. Well, thank goodness for the Navy cash machine, and thank goodness for new days and new opportunities! Tomorrow is a new day. We can find hope in recognizing the opportunity we have to recharge and renew ourselves again and again; we can pick our depleted selves up, recharge, and go back to the cash register fully equipped to purchase the goods. Tonight I'd like to pray for renewed opportunities. Let us pray, Heavenly Father, as we go throughout life we certainly fall short in many ways, which at times can leave us feeling depleted, empty or just angry. I pray now God that, while it is hard to come up short from time to time that you would open our minds to new opportunities--chances to learn from our past and create an even more meaningful future. Bless us Lord to see these opportunities and lay hold of them. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

### 3 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. As most of you know late last night there were some mysterious sounds coming from the aft end of the ship. As today unfolded, ingenious minds united, a go-pro painting pole was crafted, a lone Sailor descended a ladder off the port aft, and the go-pro rod was submerged. Ultimately, video and still shot footage revealed there was something attached to our port strut. It appeared to be some kind of baggage picked up along our trash and fishing-vessel riddled track since leaving Manila. We certainly didn't ask to bring this kluge along, but it was definitely the result of the nature and location of our transit. Like our ship, we too transit through all sorts of life waters, many of which are unavoidably fraught with obstacles both seen and unseen. Perhaps in our various personal transits we've collected some unnecessary and unwanted baggage--old habits, addictions, or just behavioral traits that drag us down or cause unwanted noise in our life. Maybe it's time to drop anchor, or pull into a rest stop somewhere and get some help removing the baggage. Detangling ourselves will certainly bring relief and welcome repose along the wavy journey of our lives. So, tonight I'd like to pray for help in getting detangled. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, today we are reminded how important it is to be free and unfettered from debris or material that would bog us down as a ship. God, likewise, it's important to take a look at our own lives--and I pray for your guidance and strength to identify unneeded baggage that may be holding us down or causing unnecessary noise in our lives. Father, would you then help us to remove that and find relief and peace again for our souls. I thank you for patiently supporting, sustaining, and delivering us, I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

4 July 2018 Evening Prayer (didn't give because we were doing sea and anchor)

Good evening Antietam, chaplain Williams here. Happy 4th of July! As you know, we're still working to get untangled from the fishing nets or other debris on our port strut. We had very capable divers come out today and it was determined further work would need to be done tomorrow to free ourselves from the entanglement. It seems fitting that on the day we celebrate our nation freeing herself from the bonds of Great Britain, we also wrestle and struggle for our freedom from fishing debris. But freedom has always come at a price, and maybe there are other struggles for freedom each of us are facing tonight. The old adage freedom isn't free is still in vogue--it hasn't changed a bit. It still takes hard work to achieve freedom. Our young nation fought and bled in our early years to achieve the freedoms we enjoy today--and likewise we also might need to fight and bleed to achieve our own personal freedoms. So, tonight I'd like to pray for freedom. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, we pause on this historic day and reflect on all who have sacrificed, bled, and died for the cause of freedom. Many of these heroes we don't know, but some we do. Father, thank you for the work put into making freedom a possibility for each of us. Now, at this time there are surely some within the sound of my voice who--whether as a result of their own choices or because of unfortunate circumstances, have lost their freedom. God, I pray you would show each of them the path back to freedom. Help them to see a way forward to become unfettered from any bonds that hold them down. Likewise, God I pray for the divers and any others that are working to free our ship from its hold-up. Finally, I pray you would shed your grace upon us, our families, and our nation, and crown our good with brother and sisterhood from sea to shining sea. Amen.

5 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain Williams here. Happy day after the 4th of July! The past couple of days we have worked hard to get untangled from the fishing nets or other debris. Thankfully we have had very capable divers come out for two days to free us from the entanglement. It seems fitting that on the day after we celebrate our nation freeing herself from the bonds of Great Britain, we also celebrate the wrestle and struggle from fishing debris we have just concluded. But freedom has always come at a price, and maybe there are other struggles for freedom each of us are facing tonight. The old adage freedom isn't free is still in vogue--it hasn't changed a bit. It still takes hard work to achieve freedom. Our young nation fought and bled in our early years to achieve the freedoms we enjoy today--and likewise we also might need to fight and bleed to achieve our own personal freedoms. So, tonight I'd like to pray for freedom. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, we pause on this historic day and reflect on all who have sacrificed, bled, and died for the cause of freedom. Many of these hero's we don't know, but some we do. Father, thank you for the work put into making freedom a possibility for each of us. Now, at this time there are surely some within the sound of my voice who--whether as a result of their own choices or because of unfortunate circumstances, have lost their freedom. God, I pray you would show each of them the path back to freedom. Help them to see a way forward to become unfettered from any bonds that hold them down. Likewise, God I pray in gratitude for the divers and others that worked to free our ship from its hold-up. And I pray for a continued on our ship, her shaft, and her engines, that she can get us to where we need to be. Finally, I pray you would shed your grace upon us, our families, and strengthen all those who have the watch tonight. I pray in your holy name. Amen

#### 7 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. We have been through a lot together these past few days--yesterday's version of today's POD said it all with the three letter acronym TBD. Of course we all know it is impossible to forecast the future with 100% accuracy--or sometimes even with 50% for that matter. It often feels like most aspects of our lives are TBD. In light of the TBD I'm also very grateful for those who use wisdom, experience, intelligent data, and informed intuition to lead us into the unknown. Tonight I'd like to pray for each of you--for our entire crew--as we enter into the unknown. Let us Pray. God, thank you so very much for your guidance and direction and enabling power in helping us get back out on our journey. While there are many unknowns, we are confident in your presence and support through it all. I pray at this time for each Sailor onboard Antietam, that you would strengthen them, encourage them, and nourish them with your hope and peace. Bless them with a sense of purpose in our mission ahead, and with a sense of calm in whatever storms lie before us. Bless our ship from bow to stern--that she will be strong and sturdy through the journey ahead. Bless those who have the watch with clarity of mind and physical endurance. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 8 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain Williams here. Today I was impressed with how much the ship was rolling when the seas seemed to be so calm. There were of course some steady, rolling sets of waves we were traveling through, and as it turns out I discovered, if we run parallel to the incoming wave we will likely find ourselves in the wave trough and we will roll pretty hard. According to some of the experts on watch today, we need to navigate the waves at an angle to

prop ourselves up on the tops of the wave instead of the trough. What a great metaphor for managing our day to day life as well. We all have those trough times--maybe moments of homesickness, challenges with work colleagues, struggles with our job, or maybe even questions about our very life purpose. Living in the trough is rough. Maybe there's a way to navigate a different way than just dwelling perpetually in the trough. Of course, we can't ignore the trough--it is there no matter what, and can be large or small depending on what life throws out. We can choose though, to take an angle through the troughs that set us up higher on the wave tops. Focusing on our strengths and capitalizing on our personal faith, or resiliency techniques such as breathing or stretching, or working out can lift and boost us, and reduce excessive rocking. Taking little regular moments to connect with loved ones back home to maintain relationships can take the edge off the trough-ness life presents. So, tonight I'd like to pray for help to ride the wave tops. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for another day of life we've all lived. Certainly there are both trough and wave tops moments that showed up today. I pray for all tonight to be able to hone in on life's wave tops, to see through our challenges and find strength in our own resources. God I pray you would fill us with hope and perspective in the journey, and give us the strength to persevere. IN your holy name I pray. Amen.

#### 9 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Today as I walked around the P-ways I noticed many of you polishing the knee knockers. Often times I've walked down a p-way and approached a hatch where one of you was sitting right at the opening of the hatch on the deck, deep in thought or musical reflection, polishing a knee knocker to perfection. There's really a sense of accomplishment and it is normal and right to take pride in a knee knocker that after getting polished can produce your reflection just like a mirror. I was thinking though how concentrated we can become in focusing on the knee knocker that we become almost unaware of other happenings on the ship. It is pretty easy to become all-consumed in the minute details of the knee-knocker's shine and forget or miss the bigger picture around us. While it is important to focus on the details in our lives, it can also be so helpful--and even liberating--to step back and see the big picture from time to time. Sometimes we get buried in certain personal challenges or pinpointed frustrations with work, colleagues, or a mistake we or another made--stepping back and seeing the big picture can help put everything into proper context and maybe even increase our hope in the future. Tonight I'd like to pray for ability to see the big picture. Heavenly Father, thank you for the details in our lives that make us who we are--thank you for allowing us to experience life with its ups and downs, as we learn and grow alone and together. God, it's hard sometimes to see our issues through a broader context and perspective! I pray you would open our eyes to see more clearly how our daily occurrences fit into the expanded picture of our lives. As we do so, would you fill us with more hope for the future. I pray in your holy name, AMEN

#### 10 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain williams. You've likely seen a few of our DCPOs faithfully traversing the entire ship updating and repairing our ship's battle lanterns. Maybe they've come into your workspace and turned off the regular lights in your work center so they can test their newly fitted or repaired lanterns, to make sure they are functional and prepared to provide light should we need to use them. If I understand correctly they are setting a new



baseline for battle-lamp readiness, and I'm so grateful they're helping us prepare to see in darkness--should it ever come to that. Having light in our lives is also important--particularly during those times when everything goes completely dark. Just like the battle lantern DCPOs it's not a bad idea to take time while the lights work to prepare or service our own battle lanterns. What is the light that illuminates you when all turns dark? What can give you hope when you're in a dark place. Conversation with A trusted friend? Your faith in God? Positive energy expressed to the wind while standing on the O-3 or fantail? Tonight I'd like to pray for a discovery of our own battle lanterns. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we come to the close of another day, I pray for each Sailor tonight as they take time to assess what brings them light. God, would you please guide them to an awareness of what can truly fill them with light, with hope, with purpose, and with resolve to do well. Thank you for providing your light that shines in the darkness, and may we be guided to those amongst us who are in need of more light. Please continue to light our path, I pray in your holy name. Amen!

#### 11 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain williams. As I go around the ship and visit with you all I've seen so many of you working on Personnel Qualification Standards--there are some working on their ESWS, there are others working on 3M Work Center Supervisor, or their line handling safety, or their mater helmsman, and many others. Each of these PQS's require learning, study, memorization, internalization, and the requisite knowledge checks and boards in order to successfully meet the standard. These standards provide a solid and firm line of demarcation indicating the highest caliber, and ensure all performance in the designated areas is top quality. Setting and abiding by high standards should and most often will yield high quality outcomes. Likewise, as we each identify what personal standards we want to abide by and actually live by them, we feel better, happier and more qualified to stand tall with confidence around our work colleagues and family back home. So, tonight I'd like to pray for courage and help in living according to our own personal standards. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we pause briefly tonight in reflection I thank you for the chance to consider for a moment what we hold up as our standards. God, I pray for each of us that we might be able to see clearly the standard for our lives. Help us each to sense what that standard is and how we might more fully align ourselves with it. As we do so, would you help us to live by those standards--to be true to ourselves and others in the process. God, thank you for another day and I pray you would lift and bless all those who are learning or studying for any personnel qualification standard at this time. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 12 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain Williams here. Did any of you have the marinara sauce for lunch today? Maybe you had it on pasta, or perhaps you dipped your breadstick into it, or just ate it plain from a bowl? It really was a wonderful and creative blend of ingredients mixed together in the galley with a giant metal paddle, then scooped out of the cauldron into the heating pans with a humongous ladle. I've often been in awe of how our CS staff cooks with such finesse and flavor, despite having to use a massive cauldron and a paddle to cook it. I thought cooking for 7 back home was hard--these Sailors cook for a fluctuating configuration of day and night shifters, crew and riders alike. I know they would tell you they're just doing their job, but the way they

adapt and create from ingredients at hand, and in the quantities required is a profound skill. Being able to take what we are given and run with it is an essential and foundational building block to a happy day, happy week, happy month, satisfying patrol and fulfilling life. As hard as we try, we cannot always control what is handed to us, but we can choose how to manage those ingredients. Tonight I will pray for creativity in managing what life presents. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, you have given us life to live and I thank you for that. More often than not, life seems to be unpredictable--full of unplanned pop-ups and unforeseen junctures. It seems almost daily we are presented with ingredients and asked to make a sauce and it may feel overwhelming. God, I pray you would bless each one of us with insight, ingenuity, and increased intelligence to know how to mix the material we're given, and Help us to adapt and respond appropriately to what is presented. I pray you would guide and protect us and those we love. AMEN.

### 13 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Greetings Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Recently there have been some events happen on the ship which required a very quick response. Reacting quickly to emergencies, whether actual or during drills requires a remarkable combination between the mind and body. Quick movements are required, whether to get out of the way of harm or to hurry towards the harm--depending on our role in the situation. And to react or move quickly we as human beings need energy, drive, or motivation. Just like the Antietam wouldn't be able to respond quickly and sustain 27 knots for 12 hours straight on 12 gallons of F-76, neither can we sustain our various duties and tasks on minimal energy and drive. So, tonight I'll pray for added energy. Let us pray: Dear Heavenly Father, I thank you this evening for another day we've had--a day of safety, protection, calm seas, stable ship, good food, and the support of others to lift us through the day. God, the various tasks we have are sometimes daunting, overwhelming and quite enervating. We often sense more than ever the need for energy, for drive and for increased will-power to persevere and prevail. God would you bless each Antietam crew member with greater stores of energy, of both physical and mental stamina. Bless them with keen minds to make quick and challenging decisions with collectedness and sound logic. I pray also for our families at home who shoulder the home guard duties--caring for the children, managing illnesses, working other jobs--bless them with exponential energy that will sustain them through our absence. Finally, I pray you would energize those on watch tonight and tomorrow to perceive clearly and stand alert and ready for whatever comes. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

### 14 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain Williams. Today I noticed how many of you literally RAN to your response stations or lockers when you heard the flooding casualty called out. I thought about the space in which the casualty occurred--shaft alley--and what a tight, seemingly obscure space that is, located directly under one of our berthing heads. And yet, no matter how obscure a space on the ship may be--any one of us will go running to do whatever it takes to help restore its integrity or fix the problem. IS it any different when one of us--the crew members of Antietam--feels obscure or insignificant, or may have a leak or even flooding with something in our life? My sense is that when we involve our Sailor family in our own flooding--no matter how major or minor--we activate an organization of caring--shipmates, colleagues, friends, fellow

humans who will come running to assist. So, tonight I will pray for courage to either give or receive this help. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for being the constant help present for us at all times and in all things. God, I also pray that we may have courage to receive help available to us from those around us--no matter how obscure or insignificant we may feel. I pray for those who are in need of help, that others might be able to find them and help them back to wholeness. Bless each of us to know when and where to run to help anyone in need--no matter what the issue. Thank you again for the chance to help and be helped, I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 15 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Happy Sunday evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Last night I was sitting in the Mess Decks eating a bowl of ice-cream and I looked behind me and saw a whole booth of Sailors studying for today's Chief's ESWS board. I definitely didn't want to interrupt their studies so we didn't talk long, but it struck me how in the middle of an ice-cream social, with two TVs playing, people visiting and talking, and exhaustion settling in--they still chose to study and review notes for today's big board. Today these and the rest of the 14 Sailors passed their Chief's ESWS board. What a great accomplishment and a powerful witness to endless hours of study, sleepless nights, and countless choices made to study and prepare, rather than relax. Their example reminds me of how much latent power rests in our ability as human beings to exercise good choices. We can choose to endure hardship. We can choose to push through emotional or physical pain. We can DO rather than NOT DO. We can expend effort through striving rather than claiming defeat. It is literally mind blowing to consider the depth of capacity for good we human beings possess if we can just choose to push through our challenges. And the feeling of accomplishment at the end of it all is definitely worth it. So, tonight I'll pray for a deeper awareness of the power of our choices. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we rejoice together for those who have passed their ESWS boards today--may they feel a sense of relief and satisfaction in the work they've done to get to this point. God, we each have challenges we face and there are times when we question our ability to keep going. But I pray that we may each recognize the power endowed in us to choose continuance; to choose commitment; to choose endurance. Lord, strengthen us in our choices--to have power in perseverance; to keep going even when the distracted world around us seems to cave in. Finally, may we all see the power available to us in the appropriate exercise of our choices, I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 16 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Life is very much like an UNREP working-party line. Perhaps you've been a member of the line, either going down O-country p-way, or maybe extending forward away from the port break--or anywhere else for that matter. When the boxes start coming, they often come at a rate that is too hard to keep up with because of some obstacles up ahead--usually due to waiting on the elevator or just due to the nature of the distance the food or items have to travel. So the key is to start stacking boxes off to the side until the line picks up again and you can recommence passing. It seems some items that come flying at us in life we can't really control or even do anything about in the moment they come. Sometimes we just need to set particular things to the side, wait for the dust to settle, then pick right back up again. There's no need to stand there breaking our back holding the box of jasmine

rice if we can't do anything about it in the moment. Focusing on what we can actually control and patiently setting things to the side that we can't can be a relieving and healthy activity. Tonight I'll pray for discernment to determine what falls within our control. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for another day of life--for the blessing to live it in real time, to live moment by moment discerning and deciding. God, as events, situations, and challenges are presented to us I pray you would help us to see clearly what lies within our immediate control and what we may need to defer for another moment. Through that process would you give us the strength, the determination, and the will power to then pick those items back up when the time is right? Thank you for your guidance, direction and blessing I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 17 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Today during sweepers I happened to be in some new spaces I hadn't been in during other sweeper moments. I have noticed as I go through spaces there are many differing cleaning activities occurring. Of course, there's sweeping of dust bunnies, there's wiping, there's polishing or grinding of knee knockers and valves, or other metal plates, there's mopping, there's paint sanding and chipping, and there's dusting...etc. Each of us in every space on the ship are afforded the opportunity to choose how most effectively to clean our space. Today I also came across this statement: "Between stimulus and response, there is a space. In that space lies our freedom and our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our happiness." Perhaps this could also read, "between the alarm clock going off and climbing out of bed there is a space, or...between approaching a shipmate and our response to that shipmate there is a space in which we choose our response...or, between being tasked to do something and my response, there is a space. How do we choose to respond in those space moments? Do we recognize the power for good within us to respond with honor or commitment? It might even take courage to respond in accordance with the commitments we've made, despite insecurities or fears we may have. Tonight I'd like to pray for strength in the space. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for another day with so many spaces to act, to choose and to live life. Thank you for the gift of spaces and moments, that make up our lives. I pray for each of us that we might have strength to choose to live honorably, to act with honesty when confronting others, and to have patience when approaching sour situations. God, I pray in those many split second spaces that make up our day that you would help and bless us with wise choices and courage to make them. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 18 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. If you haven't been back aft in the STG p-way around the corner from the barber shop, you ought to swing by to check out the new permanent non-skid they laid on the deck. Prior to this addition the deck was slick and presented a pretty substantial safety hazard--particularly when it came to handling torpedoes, the nixie and other like items. Laying of the non-skid was likely done for the primary purpose of facilitating what its name suggests: creating an environment free of skidding or slipping. While slipping is something that most of us have experienced-it is not necessarily an enjoyable experience. Perhaps some of us have even slipped on the deck of the ship in certain places. There are also moments in our lives where we slip--maybe we've set some goals for ourselves and have slipped from the routine required to accomplish those goals. Maybe we've slipped out of sync with some important

relationships in our lives. Sometimes it just feels like our ability to manage our task list is skidding out of our control. I can't recommend enough that we find some good non-skid and begin laying a foundation that will help keep us from skidding or sliding. This might look like establishing boundaries for ourselves, or like sitting down and writing out healthy routines for ourselves, or maybe even inviting a friend or family member to hold us accountable to a goal we are trying to achieve. So, let us pray. Heavenly Father, life can be pretty slippery at times. Tonight I pray for each of us in these slippery moments--I pray we might have strength to build and establish a non-skid foundation. Would you please guide us to find traction, to get a tighter grip on the things that matter most. Bless us to be able to hold ourselves accountable for slippery moments, and to be influences for good in the lives of others. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 19 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain williams. For those who went to dinner tonight, you discovered it was breakfast for dinner night. What a great idea and a unique way to interrupt routine and introduce such a novelty this evening. Typically we thrive off of routine--and we need it to survive, and live a full life. But it is also important sometimes to pause and breathe new life into routine activities--to enliven them; to make them new again. Having a pancake with the fixens for dinner seems to do something not just for our taste buds and bellies, but the shift in routine can lighten our mood and give us that added energy boost to go take care of the day's remaining tasks. While breakfast for dinner likely won't make it into the 21 day menu, we can identify ways to introduce healthy variety into our own daily menu. Maybe walking a different path to our work space or speaking to a shipmate we don't usually approach. Perhaps learning something new tonight before hitting the rack, or encouraging a Sailor in their board preparations. There's something about introducing variety that can keep life fresh. So tonight I'd like to pray for variety. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, As we complete this day and consider plans for tomorrow, I pray we might be able to identify some way to introduce variety into our day. God, to help us stay fresh, attuned to the needs at hand--both of our shipmates and our ship--would you help us daily to see with new eyes. Help us to recognize when we hit ruts or depressions in the path, and to find ways to infuse newness and hope into our outlook. God, I pray for each Sailor and their family members to be filled with hope--hope that comes from a new and fresh perspective you provide. I pray in your holy name, AMEN. Goodnight!

#### 20 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain williams. The past few days there have been lots of preparations for zone inspections, zone inspections have been conducted, and zone briefs have happened. As I have observed some of the zone inspections it struck me just how amazing it is that we can account for every single zone on the ship. Personally, I was in the forward VLS fan rooms--both port and starboard sides. We looked for compliance with certain regulations, instructions and standards--all with the purpose of ensuring the zone posed no safety issues and was satisfactory and functional. I found it instructive that on our zone visits there were at least 4-5 inspectors present--that's 10 eyes looking over the space to identify any discrepancies, for the sole purpose of maintaining an environment of safety. Being on that inspection team reminded me how important it is that we assemble our own inspection team of sorts--people who will tell us the truth--to help keep us on par and safe. As members of that team for others, we may need to

do a zone inspection every once in a while--particularly as we come home soon from patrol and are confronted or surprised with scenarios or issues we failed to prepare for or see while underway. As a person receiving the zone inspectors, we may need to be humble and complicit, and receive the guidance given. So, tonight I'd like to pray for each of us in our zones. Let us pray, Heavenly Father, thank you for being present in the various zones of our lives. As each of us prepares to return to port in the next few days I pray we can be aware of the other. If need be, help us to have the courage and tenacity to inspect or be inspected, so that we can help keep others or ourselves safe and secure. Please give courage where needed, or humility when called for. Where discrepancies are found, would you please bring restoration and renewed hope, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

### 21 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain Williams. Today we received another refueling replenishment at sea, and I know it was exciting for our engine department because we had all four engines online. The breakaway was excellent as usual and we left the RAS full of the good old fuel that keeps our engines running. Lately I've been thinking a lot about the commonalities we share with our mighty Antietam. One obvious parallel, we--like Antietam--need fuel to keep chugging along. There is a direct relationship between the amount of fuel the ship has and how many days the ship can continue her mission. Likewise, to continue our mission WE ALSO need fuel--not just food, but also adequate rest and inner renewal as well. As we all know, RAS details happen at a variety of different times--sometimes they are early in the morning, other times in the afternoon--certainly there are all kinds of factors that play into when the RAS's occur, but one thing is certain--each RAS is planned for and scheduled. Can you imagine if we just said, "well, the RAS will happen when it happens....or, we will just see whenever the Caesar Chavez comes into our vicinity maybe we can grab some fuel then!" I wonder sometimes if we also just wait for rest or inner renewal to just happen on its own. Perhaps it's something we need to put into the outlook calendar. A closer look at our schedules might reveal some possible RAS moments--no matter how brief--where we can fuel up. So, tonight I'll pray for guidance to find time for personal refueling. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, here at the close of another full day I thank you for the many opportunities we have daily to engage in so many important things. I pray as we do, we might also be able to find time to refuel--physically, mentally and spiritually--so we can maintain steady forward momentum and be effective in our routines. I pray you would give each of us insight into how to schedule refueling in an already jam-packed routine full of important and critical activities. God, please Watch over all of our events and activities with continued safety and bless our loved ones back home, I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

### 22 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain Williams. The past couple days we have had another large group of Sailors finishing up their ESWS First Class and Chief boards--congratulations to you all! As I've talked with many of you preparing for the boards I'm reminded of the core value of courage. There's something about being placed in a sticky or nerve-racking scenario like a board that necessitates great courage for those attempting the board. However, it also seems that the level of one's courage in a board is directly related to how extensive that person's preparations were. Greater preparation equals increased courage. So when we tell ourselves to be

courageous, perhaps what we are suggesting is that courage is a reliance on and a trust in something that is trustworthy. If we are ill prepared for something--a board, a meeting, a speech, an important conversation, a test etc., etc., we may experience increased levels of trepidation. Perhaps courage is really a byproduct of extensive and calculated preparations. If we are prepared, we can stand firm with courage and hope. So tonight I'd like to pray for preparation. Let us pray, Heavenly Father, at the close of another day I'd like to give thanks for your presence in our lives. I pray you would bless each Antietam Sailor with strength and foresight to prioritize preparation in our lives. As we do so, God, would you please bless each of us with added courage--courage to face the challenges each day presents us with; courage to face the unknown; and courage to prevail through adverse situations. I pray in your holy name, AMEN. Good night.

### 23 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. Today was a full day--I'm sure most of us appreciate the tireless efforts of our POD staff who try and piece together the myriad items, events and meetings into a readable and interpretable document. Not only that but determining how much time it might take to make transitions from one point to the next--for example, transitioning from a fresh water wash down to an all-hands call--they built in a nice 15 minute buffer to allow all to make a smooth transition. Transitioning is not new for us in the NAVY--it's something we do all day everyday here on the ship. We transition from a dead sleep to flight quarters, from meal time to sitting a TAO watch, from the A/C of CSMC to the 90 degree climate of the mainspace, etc. etc. Well, as we are all aware, we are now all about to make another transition back to homeport. Transitions can be both challenging and exhilarating. So, tonight I'd like to pray for strength as we transition. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we wrap up this day I want to thank you for your support, strength, presence and protection during our patrol. Thank you for blessing us with safety along the way, and for sustaining us in the transitions we've already experienced. God, would you please bless each Antietam Sailor during this next transition. Bless them in their relationships and families, help them to communicate clearly with those they love and care for, and strengthen those who are going into difficult situations with family or friends. God, I pray over our ship and all who will preserve or repair her--would you guide their minds and hands to accomplish all that is needed in our short in-port transition time. Finally, be with all of us with your peace, presence and power as we transition, I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

27-29 July constituted a sortie period to avoid storms

### 27 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. After walking around the ship several times today I've noticed a couple things. First, we are all human beings, which means we all have hearts that beat and throb for stability, closeness with friends and family, and respite from challenging duties. Second, we are exceptionally resilient and flexible human beings. Without exception this morning I saw so many of you putting one foot in front of the other, trusting in leaderships decisions, and doing what you do--while suspending the heart throb or predetermined plans for this weekend. Despite not having a choice or say in much that is happening, many I spoke with understand and have embraced the principle that we do in fact have a choice in how

we respond to our circumstances. It seems today's experience is all about Flexibility and acceptance of the constancy of change, and acceptance that we are human and will therefore have human feelings regarding our situation. So, tonight I'd like to pray for strength of mind in the face of change. Let us pray: Dear Heavenly Father, tonight we reach out to you in a prayer of gratitude for our lives God--for the experiences we have to learn and grow. I pray at this time you would strengthen our minds and hearts as we wrestle with normal human emotions, and as we rise to the occasion we have now been called to. I pray you would watch over and bless with safety our crew, our ship, the other sordied ships and crews, and all of our families and loved ones. God, through this unforeseen experience, would you please develop and shape us, and may we have foresight to reach out and connect with each other, to lift one another along the way. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 28 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. For the past couple of days I have noticed several of you around the ship doing preservation work. Particularly, some have been doing Lagging repair work to preserve age-inflicted cracks and crevices in the bulkheads and lagging casings around pipes and other places. Re-applying lagging is quite a process, involving first of all identifying where the cracks and crevices are, then applying coats of the white lagging glue, the lagging tape, the lagging material, and likely more glue etc. A couple of the times over the past few days I witnessed Sailors applying lagging--and they were doing it with others. Certainly there are times when we all feel cracked or creviced, or maybe we just feel completely tuckered out. Perhaps over the next few days it would do us all some good to identify some cracks in us that could use some lagging repair. And we don't have to go at it alone--let us lean on one another in the repair process; let us rely on our shipmates to help us repair in any needful way. So, my prayer tonight is for healthy self repair. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, tonight as we come to the close of another day I thank you for our safety during this underway. Thank you for sustaining and lifting us through any and all challenges, disappointments, fears or concerns. God as we recognize areas within ourselves that feel cracked or broken, I pray you would help us see clearly a pathway to repair. Give us humility and strength to allow others to help us repair the cracks if need be. And would you apply your mercy, love and healing power on our cracks or the cracks between us and others in our lives. Finally Father, Please continue to bless our return path with safety, and strengthen our crew with energy, hope and repaired perspective this evening. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 29 July 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. All it takes is a quick and cursory look out a porthole or hatch in the ship, or a walk on the fantail or focsle to recognize the stark truth that water is the most prevalent element in our near vicinity. In fact, just over 70% of the earth's surface is water. Interestingly, our bodies consist of just about that same percentage, at around 60-70% in adults. Ironically though, we Sailors out on the ocean--who are in need of so much water--are unable to enjoy the vast amounts of water around us unless we send it through a reverse osmosis process. The past few days some of our engineers in Auxiliary 1 have been trouble shooting our number 1 Reverse Osmosis system. I was fascinated by the changing of the membranes--almost (yet not completely) like changing my Brita water filters at home. These



membranes are vital to the reverse osmosis process and are literally the key ingredient to filtering out the brine to produce fresh water. Just as having a membrane, or a Brita water filter is vital to our habitability, we may need to filter or discern between the different choices and opportunities life presents us. Paying close attention to what might be harmful or helpful for our long-term physical, mental, or spiritual well-being is an important endeavor. Just as membranes and filters need to be replaced periodically, it may be important to assess and reassess the serviceability of our own discerning forces. So, tonight I'd like to pray for insight to effectively discern and filter. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, thank you for your care and watchful eye over us these past couple days. Thank you for those working on our RO and the entire crew for the various services they provide. Would you bless each of them with increased ability to discern good from bad, and power to prevail in favor of the good. God, as we are faced with countless filtering moments, would you bless each of us with clarity and resolve to choose wisdom and prudence. And would you continue to bless those on the watch, and protect our families and loved ones back home. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

### AUGUST 2018

6-9 August constituted a sortie period for storm avoidance

#### 6 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain williams. During our transit away from Yokosuka today I was on the fantail and observed a couple of our Sailors repairing areas of the line that had been frayed from normal wear and tear likely over years of sea and anchor evolutions. I was fascinated by the technique they used, called whipping, where they take a smaller gauge line called Manila line and wrap it around the frayed portions, creating a support to the damaged line. Perhaps the image of the repaired line can be a metaphor for some of us as we now head underway again. Likely, each of us feels at times like a frayed line--weather beaten and well used through multiple sea and anchor details, countless watches and endless balancing acts as we juggle our work, relationships, families, and other important time-occupying life elements. What I learned today though, is that frayed line is not a game ender. With some Manila line patches, the line can retain its strength and serviceability. Our own frayed line can also be patched and we can move forward with strength; strength that is tied and woven from a consistent choice to move forward, with faith in every footstep. So, my prayer tonight is for strength from steps of faith. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, tonight as we begin our first night underway there may be some among us who are feeling frayed. God, in the midst of those very real frayed feelings and experiences help each of us to recognize the power within us for binding, healing, recovery and renewal--and ultimately strength as we choose to step forward in faith. I pray for your blessing and support on all this night as they juggle life complexities, balance demands and do their best to move forward with faith. As they do so would you bless them with hope and a strengthened perspective. Finally God, would you energize and lift up those who stand the watch, both night and day, and sustain those we left at home. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 7 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. I am completely confident that there is one thing we as the Antietam family all have in common, that is that none of us can read the future. This is not a new concept and is not just unique to us here on this ship in this moment. This is a principle as consistent as any in our lives--the principle that change is the only constant. And yet, if you're like me, I still manage to get surprised or even blindsided by change at times. It seems some unforeseen elements and events just come out of nowhere to surprise us--these can be family issues, work situations, assignments--or lack of assignments, situations with our own health or of our loved ones. It could be as petty as looking forward to a certain menu item for dinner and due to arriving late, that menu item is gone. How do we manage the unforeseen in our lives? Today I learned about the concept of a global statement, which is an administrative and overarching strategic statement for how to manage, for example, a potential enemy engagement or group of enemy threats. Thankfully, very smart Sailors on our ship study our enemy threats and gather together to codify our global statement on how to approach these threats. It seems this practice could have wonderful implications for our lives as well. Perhaps it would be helpful to create or at least contemplate a global statement on how I plan to act in the face of the myriad uncontrollables around me. It seems this might provide some stability in an extremely unstable context. So Tonight I'd like to pray for clarity in developing a secure stance in the face of the unknown. Let us pray: Dear Heavenly Father, you know in this life we all face uncertainty, questions, concerns and ambiguity. God, while we can look to the past and learn from it, it's virtually impossible to see into the future. Yet, I pray you would bless each of us with clarity to devise an active statement for our own lives--to know how to face the incoming unknowns in our lives. Help us to be rooted and firm, with ability to stand with strength and energy as the future unfolds before us. Bless each of us, our families and loved ones with this clarity, and with resolve to act where we can, even despite the unknowns. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 8 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. On several occasions today and yesterday we have heard the IMC announcement "the ship is now entering a Seaman-ship environment." For those who hear this announcement they make a mind shift in which they understand that all further announcements--until the pipe indicates the end of the exercise--are for the purposes of the exercise only and are not actual. So, for those who heard the seamanship announcement, follow-on announcements such as loss of steering in the pilot house etc. are taken within the context of the training environment. Without a knowledge of the activated training or seamanship environment, someone may be functioning within the context of an actual environment, under the assumption of actual casualties. All of this made me think of how important it is to notice and be aware of the present environment in which we currently stand. Awareness of the present can be difficult to achieve. We have so many elements regularly competing for our attention so taking moments to pause and reflect on our present environment may seem challenging but it's not impossible. Like any other skill, noticing the environment around us and living in the present can be learned and achieved. So, tonight, I pray for increased awareness of our present environment. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, tonight we pause--even just briefly--to recognize the present moment. I pray that no matter where we are at this moment we might have the ability and strength to notice our environment--our physical, emotional, mental, spiritual wellbeing. Would you bless us with a heightened sense to recognize and receive with gratitude the moment in which we now stand--this moment in which we have the opportunity to

live, to breath, to make choices, and to determine our approach to our environmental circumstances. God I pray you would be with and strengthen us in this moment, I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 9 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. If you've been outside today and looked across the water about 10 knots away you probably saw the Ronald Reagan. As most of us know, she has had some issues since coming out and has been dead in the water for a day or so now, but has just begun moving along again. Being at a standstill in a vessel that is made for the singular purpose of patrolling through vast amounts of sea to far-off locations and ports is surely a frustrating experience. As a fellow human being looking across the water at them, surely you've felt frustrated as well that they were stuck there--frustrated at the situation, at them, or at the helpless feeling of waiting and wondering what we can do to help. Maybe some of us can relate to the Reagan--maybe we have felt plateau or stuck in some sort of stationary way in our life, our work, relationship, or in some personal way. It's not pleasant to feel stuck and plateaued. Just as our Reagan colleagues have likely been working overtime to get her up moving forward again, it may likewise be valuable for us to observe our own wellbeing. Though painful or tough to do, moving forward--even if just at a snail's pace--still creates forward momentum, which can generate a sense of fulfillment and purpose. So, tonight I'd like to pray for strength to move forward. Let us Pray: Heavenly Father, thank you for this moment, for forward movement and momentum. I pray at this time God for all within earshot who may feel stuck or plateaued in any way--would you please bless them with ideas and insights, for options to help them move forward--no matter how fast it may be. I pray as that movement begins to happen that hope may regenerate within their hearts. God, as we prepare soon to come back into port I pray for your blessing and strength to be with each of us--bless those who will refuel, repair, preserve, onload pallets, or fix in any way our ship and the Reagan. Especially God, would you bless each with increased energy of mind, body and soul to move forward in faith. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 18-2 Begins

#### 14 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain Williams here. Today has really been a big day for making final preparations to go underway--there were unbelievable efforts made in installing parts for the RAST, work was done aloft almost all day, some SPY repair was conducted, there were last minute runs to the NEX to get those underway creature comforts and necessities, there were trash runs, maybe some last phone calls, music downloads, trips to the VRO, some bonging off of shipmates, and many other preparations for going underway that are often not visible to the average person. Preparing for things is an activity that we on the Antietam, and in the Navy are fairly used to doing, just because of the nature of our work. It seems there is a clear connection between preparation and confidence--the more prepared we are the less fear we have and more ready we are to face the unknowns in our path. As we start out this patrol I would like to pray for insight and foresight to prepare for the unknown. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, tonight as we have begun our 18-2 patrol, we are fully aware and cognizant of the need for preparation. God, I

pray now that the preparations made for this underway may prove useful and pertinent for our operational success and sustaining to our morale and inner wellbeing as well. If there are areas where further preparations can be developed and fostered, I pray you would enlighten us to see those, and others opportunities to prepare our minds, hearts, and hands for the mission and tasks that lie ahead. Bless the crew with foresight, ingenuity, energy, clarity of mind, and a perseverant posture to prevail. God, I ask a special blessing on the families and friends we have left behind. I call upon your grace, strength and power to protect, uphold and sustain them in our absence. Be with us all now I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 15 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain williams. Perhaps during sea and anchor detail last night you heard one of our standing orders announced over the IMC to set the maximum engineering reliability. This means that our propulsion and electrical plant are aligned for maximum reliability. It seems for reliability to occur this alignment is necessary. For most of us, today represents the first full day on a new schedule, and for others this is your first full day at sea. Starting anything new, whether it's a new workout routine, a new diet, a new work schedule, or a new week of chief's season, can be a little disorienting or unsettling. It seems in order to attain and maintain maximum human or Sailor reliability we also need to have several things aligned--we need balance to our work, sleep, nutrition, exercise, and enjoyment. So, tonight as we conclude day one of 18-2 and many of us find ourselves trying to find ourselves, I would like to pray for help in setting our own maximum routine reliability. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we come towards the close of this first full day underway I thank you for your supportive presence in all that we do. God, in our various routine changes and as we adjust to these changes, I pray you would steady our hearts and minds, fill us with confidence and assurance, and empower us towards an aligning balance to our underway activities. Would you strengthen and align each Sailor physically, mentally, and spiritually--to be ready to rise to any occasion and develop maximum routine reliability. In the reality of it all, God, would you also provide comfort and support to those who may be silently struggling. Finally, would you please be with our many families and friends at home whom we think of and love. I pray all of this in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 16 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain williams. I recently looked up the definition of the word broken, one definition is: something that is damaged or altered by or as if by breaking." Most of us know and understand that from time to time things on the ship break, whether it's a fuel pipe, a RAST, a helo door, a head, a refer, a washer/dryer set, an antenna, or maybe even the sole of one of your shoes or boots blows up and breaks, and surely the list could go on and on. Typically the thing that is broken became that way because of some sort of force or impact--whether that be extended wear and tear over time, a sudden brute force, or some other less explicable reason. Interestingly, When something is broken its state is altered to the point where it doesn't work the way it should anymore and it will typically remain in that broken state until another force is exerted upon that thing to fix it. Fixing is a creative, energizing and uniquely meaningful experience. I have noticed in my short time on Antietam that we are surrounded by extremely intelligent and adept fixers. We witness this almost every day. So tonight I would like to pray in

gratitude for our fixers out there. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, I pause at this time and give you thanks for the creative and intelligent minds you have blessed to be on this ship at this time. Thank you for guiding them to fix things that break--both small and large things. Thank you for syncing their minds, eyes, words, and hands to work in teams to repair and patch up vast portions of our floating home and work center. God, at this time I also ask a blessing on all out there who are fixing things today, tonight, tomorrow and everyday--would you guide and shine light on the path before them? Would you give them ideas and directions to fix those things that perpetually seem to break? Finally God, I pray in any case where one of us feels or senses signs of brokenness in ourselves or others, that we might find recovery in the resources around us. Thank you again Lord, for the gift of fixing, I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 17 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. Lately there has been a very important push to maintain A/C boundaries--primarily due to the problem we've had with various p-ways and spaces becoming overly moist and turning into fertile platforms for mold and other unwanted byproducts. Maintaining these boundaries has not--and will not--come without great efforts and exertions on the part of many. In some cases signs have been crafted and hung to warn passers-by of the need for securing hatches and scuttles to keep cool air in and block hot air from entering. Surely the benefits of staying cool in an environment of sweltering heat outweigh the cost of the effort it takes to secure a hatch or go through another entrance to avoid letting in hot air. I got thinking, having appropriate boundaries in our lives is also important--and just as it takes constant vigilance to maintain A/C boundaries it also takes consistent effort to uphold healthy life boundaries such as social, ethical, moral, or physical safeguards we can establish to keep us secure. I wonder if there are hatches or scuttles in our own personal lives that have been left open for too long; hatches that may need securing--and if done, could save us from unwanted, unneeded, or even dangerous stressors or influences. So, my prayer tonight is for strength to maintain healthy boundaries. Please join me in prayer: Dear God, as we close another day I pray for your strength to rest upon each one of us as we consider what is important in our lives; what we want to safeguard or protect and how we may need to establish healthy boundaries in our lives. Lord, would you give each of us strength to exert necessary effort to safeguard those moral principles for which we stand--those elements of healthy living that will benefit us and those around us in the long term. Finally, please support those who have the watch tonight and sustain our families and friends at home, I pray in your holy name, Amen. Grace and peace be with you all, CHAPS OUT.

#### 18 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain williams. Today several crew members were out spraying and sweeping the salt encrusted decks and rails of our Antietam. It seems like Over the past few days at sea we have accumulated enough sea salt to season all of the burgers at the next steel beach. Sea salt accumulation is an interesting thing--because it arrives in the form of sea spray--wet and clear--then after a day of baking in the sun it turns white and flaky. For the health of the ship skin and other weather-exposed ship parts, this salt needs to be removed from time to time--hence the hard work performed by many Sailors this morning. Surely this can be a bit of a daunting task, seeing that every minute of every day we are beholden to the sea as our area of

operation! Nevertheless, we do the best we can on regular occasions to clear away the salt. I couldn't help but think about the lesson buried beneath the salt--we too collect salt along the path of life--often times almost imperceptible, this saline build-up, if left unattended can weigh us down or degrade our operability. Maybe there are unwanted or un-needed distractions that we've left unattended for a while that could afford to be washed away. So tonight I'd like to pray for determination and energy to help maintain ourselves and those around us. Let us pray--Heavenly Father, being out at sea we deal with salt all the time, but I know there are many amongst us dealing with salt buildup in our own lives. God, would you bless each of us with energy to consistently wash that salt away--to de-clutter our lives if necessary? I pray as we do so that we can find relief, refreshment, and renewed strength to carry on. Finally, as we UNREP tomorrow and execute our various taskings I pray for your safety, protection and guiding light. I pray in your holy name, Amen. Have a great night!

#### 19 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. I think most of us were involved in some way during today's UNREP with the Tippecanoe. I am always struck at the multiplicity of responsibilities, assignments, and coordination between so many of you to make an evolution like this succeed. This time, on the working party unloading our groceries, I noticed how many open boxes there were. It seemed there were particularly lots of frozen food items that were open--so, naturally, when passing an open box a polite head's up is in order, announcing to the next person in the working party that the box is open in some way. On a few occasions, there were boxes that were open on both ends, but except for a couple minor casualties that happened along the way, we were able to move the boxes successfully. One thing is for certain, most of us on the working party could not choose what type of box was coming our way--whether it was open or sealed, whether it was milk, frozen meat, coffee mate, or a box of celery--you are handed a box and need to figure out how to heft it to the next person. In these scenarios you realize how much you depend on your shipmates in the line to support you by receiving the box you pass--no matter what the makeup of that box. Perhaps there is a metaphor in this for us. Prevailing through an UNREP onload cannot be done by one person alone. We've all felt that exasperation at times when we need more people on a working party. Likewise, for power to prevail through life's challenges, mistakes we've made, or just circumstances that don't seem to go our way, we need each other. Sometimes we need a friend to take a box from us--or maybe we need to receive a box from a friend--and these could be nice and tidy boxes of Knorr soup mix or haphazard half-opened boxes of frozen chicken strips or French toast. So, my prayer tonight is that we may all support one another in our efforts to prevail. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, as we move out of one day and approach another, I pray we may have a sense for how we can support one another in our various challenges and responsibilities. God, I pray you would guide us with creativity and inner resolve to know how to receive or give to those around us. Please enable us to connect with unity and respect in our days' work and interaction, and energize each within the sound of my voice to rise to the occasion of whatever moment we are presented. Gratefully, I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 20 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Unless you just arrived an hour ago on Antietam, you have probably heard on various occasions each day the IMC announcement "Set River City 1" repeated two times. This is then followed by "River City 1, SET". Whenever this order is given, the ITs up in Radio essentially shut off the capability for the vast majority of account holders to connect to IP services. For some, this is not a big deal. While the River City 1 was likely set for the purpose of freeing up bandwidth for important off-ship comms or for security precaution measures, for others this announcement may seem like an interruption. An interruption to some important internet work, a conversation with a spouse or loved one, or maybe some research on some important topic. It is human nature that when our plan is interrupted we feel frustrated, perturbed, misunderstood, or maybe even disregarded. But often, we are missing the big picture. While all of those feelings are valid and real, if you're like me we are sometimes missing the larger context. Perhaps managing interruptions to our schedule, our plan, or even our life is more about how we choose to adapt as opposed to wishing the River City moments away. After all, there are likely River City 4 moments just around the corner. So, tonight I'd like to pray for patience as we navigate interruptions in our lives. Let us Pray: Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for another day to learn, grow, breathe, and experience life. God, certainly as we traverse our days not only at sea, but in life, there are perceived and actual interruptions to our expectations and plans. We feel pain at times in these moments and it may be confusing. I pray at this time, if there are any who feel interrupted in their life plans, their goals, or aspirations, that they might have your presence and strength to lift them through the unknown. Help them find resources of help and support to rediscover purpose and meaning, and above all I pray you would give us all power beyond our own to press forward in faith. Additionally God, please be with all who will take ESWS tests or stand boards tomorrow--may they sense your support and presence. Finally Lord, though interruptions abound around us, may your light shine continually uninterrupted before us, I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 21 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. As most of you know, we have adjusted our course to avoid several storms along our original track. While some of us may be fans of the show storm chasers, here on our ship--at least for the past several weeks, including the past few days--we have been storm avoiders. While it could be exciting for some brief moments to be in the midst of a raging storm, We are not in the business of increasing potential risk to our crew or vessel by maintaining a track through storm infested seas. Thanks to some high quality meteorological data and photos, we are able to get a pretty good idea of the various storm locations and trajectories. Based on that data our amazing NAV team--in coordination with the Reagan--we can set a new track to avoid the storms. While it may mean traveling in a different direction, and could even necessitate a change in our schedule of events, the bottom line is we are safe. Of course there's a lesson in this for us as well! Often we see a storm brewing or catch wind of a potential danger area in our lives, and are presented with a decision of whether or not we plan to avoid that storm. Interestingly, similar to storm avoidance on the ship--where avoidance may mean leaving a certain area and then returning to the same area when the storm has passed-- avoiding potential communication blow-ups or anger-driven comments in the moment might surely pave the way for a return to those conversations once the emotional storm has passed. We may need to implement storm avoidance procedures in our own inter-personal relations, with the intent on re-visiting areas of conflict after the storm has subsided. So, tonight

I'd like to pray for wisdom to recognize and avoid storms of life. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, thank you for another day and chance to live and experience life. As we engage our life paths there are certainly storms that arise. God, while there are some storms that may be completely unavoidable in our lives, I pray for wisdom and discernment to see clearly the storms we can avoid. Fill us with patience, understanding, and inner strength to navigate a path clear of emotionally damaging storms; storms of harsh words or critical comments; storms of gossip or disparaging remarks. Lord, as we recognize the brewing storms, I pray you would provide us with an alternative route--one with calmer seas and lighter winds; one that can contribute to the greater good and peace in the lives of those around us. And may those on watch tonight supporting ship operations and storm avoidance have peace and energy I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 22 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Of the many things that unite us as a team of Sailors, women and men, there is one universal item--and that is our shared need for maintaining our laundry, and perhaps this has been on some of our minds of late. In some parts of the world and perhaps in distant bygone eras there was less of a need to clean, change, or even wear clothing. As we all know that is not the case today. Because of this need, companies such as Tide, Whirlpool, GE, and others have thrived making washers and dryers and endless types of soaps and fragrances, while capitalizing off of the steady demand signal. Of course, while being out at sea does perhaps necessitate some level of acceptance of degradation to our typical patterns of laundering and cleanliness, most of us at least attempt to be clean, despite the perceived or actual challenges to do so. That inborn desire for cleanliness and order can be an important guide in other areas of our lives as well. There is something freeing, gratifying and strengthening in maintaining clean and orderly life habits. For example, being true to our word, or following through with a goal or commitment we've set can give us a deep sense of self satisfaction and drive. Cleaning up some self or other-assessed personal behaviors or attitudes can also free us from the burden of contemporary victim mentality or self defeatism, and ultimately sharpen us in our various mission-oriented roles. So, tonight I'd like to pray for cleanliness. Let us pray: God, as we fight the good fight on ship laundry, may we also be strengthened in our efforts towards personal cleanliness. If there are self imposed burdens in our lives we feel guided to cleanse, would you please empower us to that end? Lord, as we seek cleanliness would you imbue each of us with drive, perspective, and determination to fulfill our part in the mission at hand, and bless all our shipboard instruments of cleanliness as well to fulfill their proper functions. I pray all of this in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 23 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. I know I'm stating the obvious when I highlight the fact that we operate in an environment full of unknowns. Whether it's our day-to day schedule, determining time and date for the next RAS, or anticipating where our next gear maintenance issue may occur, it's not easy to foresee the future out here in 7th fleet! For those of us who like positive control of our environment, it can become necessary to look around for the best way to navigate these unknowns. Over the past few days I have encountered several times a remarkable group of CS's and Food service attendants who have taught me an important lesson



about how to manage life's question marks. This group has identified that, in addition to the need for doing laundry, we Sailors also have a need to eat--now there's a constant if you're looking for one! This small band of FSA's gathers daily to do an activity called BREAK OUTS. I think most of us know what that is, but for those who don't--it's the moment where the food to be used in creating the next few meals is dislodged from the refers and store rooms, and passed up the ladder well and down the P-way into the scullery, where it is eventually prepared for our culinary delight. This breakout activity happens daily, regardless of whether or not we may be pulling into Okinawa, or whether or not it's determined yet what course the Reagan might set, or where the next storm may brew etc. The key take away for me is to focus on the Break Out. Focus on what I know I can do and what I can control in the moment. Perhaps there are break out areas in all of our daily routines that we could spend more time focusing on. As I focus on breakout it seems I can avoid my own personal breakdown, or over focus on the elements that tend to crowd my emotional platter. SO, tonight I'd like to pray for power to break out. Let us Pray: Dear God, thank you for another day filled with opportunities for growth and learning. Certainly, as each day approaches there are countless unplanned events which unfold and require our attention. Lord, in the midst of those uncontrollables, I pray you would give each of us power to break out--power and focus to zero in on what is most important and vital to the health of our team, our safety and our wellbeing. I pray as we do choose to break out in various ways, that you would empower and encourage us to find fulfillment and satisfaction in that process. Bless all who break out each day in so many ways, and I pray also that you would lift and support our families and friends at home--particularly those who may currently be enduring great difficulties. I gratefully pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 24 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. Recently I purchased a new watch from the ship store because a couple months ago my other watch stopped working, possibly due to over exposure to the SPY arrays. So, the first day I wore the watch I found myself walking around outside for a period of time, and wondering what time it was I looked down at the watch only to notice that both time and date had been reset, so I was going to have a hard time determining what time it really was. After the resetting happened I went and found the watch user's manual and learned how to correct the problem using a hand home position correction procedure. This procedure took about 5-10 minutes and after that the watch was functional again...until I walked outside again with it and it reset again. After the second time I vowed I would remember to leave the watch inside when venturing out. I think it took 1 or 2 more times of having to endure the hand home position correction procedure before I really truly learned my lesson. Life seems to present each of us with learning lessons like this--where we may feel like the magnetic moments reset or knock us back to ground zero. It can be disappointing, but never fear--we can engage the home position correction procedure! We can re-align ourselves with our core values and healthy habits. We can choose to improve ourselves physically, mentally and spiritually--and by so doing, we find our home again. So, tonight I'd like to pray for determination to make corrections when needed. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, thank you for another day, and for further opportunities to learn, grow and improve ourselves. God, if there are some out there who feel somehow they've been reset back to ground zero, I pray they may be filled with determination to return to home position--to recharge, re-calibrate, and re-commit to the standards we uphold.

Lord, also would you help us to learn from our mistakes, to take those lessons and apply this gleaned wisdom in useful ways. I pray this in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 25 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Have you ever played that game with some of your friends where you ask one of them to trust you by turning around, face away from you and then fall backward toward you with the hope and trust that you and the other friends present will catch them before they hit the deck? Well, today during the ITT drill I witnessed something like this as the Medical Training Team expertly lowered one of our Sailors in a stretcher down the aft missile deck ladder well onto the fantail, all while the ship was rocking and rolling through some fairly rough seas. Despite all of nature's distraction, these Sailors executed their stretcher bearing with ease and poise--working together to transport the patient to safety. Likewise, the patient did a great job trusting her bearers to successfully deliver her to safety. Their collaboration and her trust enabled success all around. Watching them reminded me again how vital trust is, not only for our safety, but also for mission accomplishment. To show that we can be trusted we must fulfill our responsibilities, follow through with what we say we will do, and be consistent. For us to trust another, we choose to rely on their willingness, consistency, training, and proven track record over time. These relationships of trust are the bedrock for success in an organization and in life. So tonight I'd like to pray for trust. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, thank you for all those who--despite both literal and figurative wind and waves--expend consistent efforts to work so hard on our team. God, there are those days when each of us may struggle to find energy or strength to maintain the high standard, but I pray you would energize and enable us to do so. Through all of these efforts I pray that we might be able to trust one another in our goals, our vision, and our mission. Finally, we trust in you God to care for our family and friends back home who are beyond our reach at this time. Please bless, heal, and abide with them always. I pray all of this in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 26 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. I'm always impressed with the mechanism and genius behind a working party. In fact, each week when we do these I am always impressed with the sense of comradery, teamwork and Esprit de corps generated through the means of this united effort. Today I even noticed a few Sailors asking if they could fill in some gaps in the working party line. Filling gaps is not just limited to working party lines, in fact Filling gaps is vital to the success of our organization and to the wellbeing of our crew. I learned today about an engineering concept called masker air--which is a type of bleed air system air inserted into a low-pressure zone or pressure differential space, to create an effect which masks the sound of our machinery noise to potential outside listening threats. The process of filling a gap or filling a needed space is something that many of you are so good at. I have observed on many occasions such a high level of willingness and desire by many of you to insert yourselves into the gaps, into the pressure zones--to help others, to lift others, and to support your work center, division, department, and the ship. Whether it's on a working party, setting up for and creating a steel beach picnic, handling a line, helping someone study for an advancement exam, listening to another person's personal struggles, saying thank you in the chow line, working overtime to fix a casualty, or just smiling at a fellow shipmate, we all have opportunities to fill the gaps. So,

tonight I'd like to pray for wisdom to recognize and fill the gaps. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, as we begin a new week I'd like to pause and thank you for this past week and the countless moments where people filled a variety of gaps. Thank you for their awareness and alertness to prevalent needs, both material, social, and systemic. I pray you would continue to inspire and guide us to see the gaps around us and to have inertia and drive to insert ourselves into those gaps--to bless and lift in our various spheres of influence. And finally, I pray you would fill the gaps for us with family and loved ones back home who are without our direct support. I pray this in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 27 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. Recently my oldest daughter received her Japanese drivers license. This is both exciting and frightening! However, she did pass her tests, so she is legally authorized to drive. Maybe some of you remember when you first learned to drive and if you're like me, it seemed you had to keep correcting the steering from time to time--and when you do that often enough, it can be really easy to start doing zigzags down the road--which doesn't turn out well for passengers with sensitive stomachs, or for your relations with the law. All of that being said, if you paid attention today you probably felt the ship doing something like that--it's called mad Maggie's. Essentially, the key with these types of evasive maneuvers is to be as unpredictable and creative as possible with our turns, while still staying within our prescribed sector. This unpredictability essentially outwits potential enemy threats and keeps us safe. I got thinking, unpredictable creativity, executed within the sector of our specific ship domain, is a really great model for our lives as well. It can be so easy to be lulled into a Groundhog Day--every day is a Monday--mentality--particularly when your day and POD seem to reflect repeated activities day in and day out. Perhaps it can be useful and healthy to body, mind and soul to add some new turns into the daily routine; to mix things up a bit if you will. Maybe start reading a new book, find a new song that speaks to you, memorize a quote and share it with a friend, try a new workout routine, or compliment someone's crazy hat--it is mad Maggie Monday after all. So, tonight I'd like to pray for creativity. Let us pray: Dear God, tonight I express gratitude for life and for the opportunity to near the end of one day and start a new one. Lord, as we travel along the course of a day there are certainly points we experience that become routine or even monotonous. I pray you would fill each of us with renewed energy and drive to think outside the box, and to pursue creative excellence in all we do while simultaneously keeping our eye fixed on the mission. Heavenly Father, as we continue our transit south-west, I pray you would sharpen our minds, ready our hands, and bless us with sound decision making. I pray in your creative and loving name, AMEN.

#### 28 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. I'm guessing that most of you have been a part of a zone inspection. At today's zone 4 debrief several Sailors briefed the zone spaces which were initially inspected--with results of either satisfactory or unsatisfactory. For the spaces that were unsat, the briefer spoke about efforts made to correct the deficiencies etc. and nearly without exception, each unsat zone had been reinspected and found satisfactory. I am struck by the concept of a reinspection--which is really a gracious act allowing for time to re-assess, repair, or even renovate something that was previously deficient. I believe this process of reinspection

highlights a very important aspect of human progression and forward movement. As we notice things about ourselves, our behaviors, mannerisms, habits, thought patterns, or any other personal awareness, we may have a sense of something or some area of our character being unsat in some way. At times if we are not careful, this discovery can pull us down--leaving us feeling despondent or defeated. While we may feel that way initially, we can do what the zone 4 Sailors did--identify areas for improvement, make course corrections, and reinspect. This process can breed much needed hope, and will also shape within us a healthy perspective for the future. So tonight I'd like to pray for hope in reinspection. Please join me in prayer. Dear God, life is full of unsatisfactory moments--times when we seem to fall short during initial inspections in a variety of ways in our lives. I pray you would inspire and encourage each within the sound of my voice to learn from these, identify what needs repair, and take care of the work necessary to find satisfaction in a reinspection. God, through this process would you please fill each of us with hope, with a sense of forward momentum, and with relief as we move into the future. Thank you for chances to try again, to improve ourselves and learn from the past. Finally, I pray a blessing of safety and protection on all involved in tomorrow's RAS, and may the weather be Amenable to these operations I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

29 August 2018 Evening prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. In considering what to share this evening I was intrigued by a statement in Today's POD reminding us to get into our less traveled spaces. One thing I have noticed is that most of us feel more at ease when we function in our comfort zones, or associate with those who are like we are. It is often easier to just cruise around with like-minded friends or acquaintances because it is typically less challenging and makes us feel more comfortable. Although I don't think any of us would disagree that it's important to make good friends and build relationships with people whom we like, when we do that exclusively, our opinions often will not be questioned and consequently not stretched or broadened. In like manner, Any of us who've tried to improve performance in the gym, with our run times or dead lift amounts know that in order to grow and improve we need to pay attention to the areas in which we may be weak. Perhaps today's POD wisdom to get into our less traveled spaces not only includes ship fan rooms and out-of-the-way ladder wells, but our own personal blind spots and minimally-explored character traits. Maybe an exploration of the less traveled spaces of ourselves could reveal some important keys to helping us develop our own potential. So, tonight I'd like to pray for courage to get into less traveled spaces. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, tonight as we continue our South China Sea journey, I pray for courage--courage to notice within ourselves the roads less traveled. Please illuminate blind spots we've tried to cover due to embarrassment or shame. Help us to humbly accept where we are at and empower us to learn and grow through that awareness. God, I pray you would bless us with safety and steadiness as we continue our underway and as we come to know ourselves more completely. Finally, I thank you for our safe completion of the RAS this morning, for the crew especially who rose to the occasion and pulled off a successful evolution. For your light, your presence and courageous vision I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

30 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. Have you ever been working on your computer, or maybe sitting in a briefing when a little note pops up which reads: This Copy of Windows is not genuine, click here to get genuine. It got me thinking about what it means to be genuine. Likely, that word has different meanings for different people, but generally it denotes a state of being which evokes realness, honesty, integrity, or truthfulness. If something is genuine, it's usually the real or actual thing, something which is not fake or conflated, something authentic. Perhaps this lesson from Windows can apply to us as well. I recently read a quote which read "Authenticity is about living an open life between the lines...both lines of success and of failure." Maybe genuinely presenting ourselves means that we present a balanced self--one that is not perfected--one that still yearns for growth, but also one who has overcome much and is imbued with potential. So, tonight I would like to pray for help to be genuine. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, as we travel the intricate and sometimes delicate walk of life we are surely confronted often with opportunities to present ourselves with authenticity, with respect for both our own ups and downs. Father, would you bless each of us with a clear sense and awareness of our own selves so we can genuinely reach and lift others. Thank you for chances to connect in authenticity with those around us and for genuinely connecting with us. I pray gratefully in your holy name, Amen.

#### 31 August 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. If any of you have tried to do family photos in the past, you know it can be quite a challenge. I remember one in particular--it was for my brother's wedding. My 4th daughter, Ruby was just 15 months old and for some reason she didn't want to hang out in the 100 degree weather, looking directly into the sun for 30 minutes while the photographer kept trying different angles. She threw a major fit--it was so bad we even talked about using Photoshop to insert a happier Ruby. Another challenge with family photos--particularly if they are being conducted in public places--is the risk of getting photo bombed. We all know what that is and perhaps some of us have personally done it to others photos. Today during the photoex--and in past South China Sea photo exercises, I have noticed China potentially attempting to photo bomb our family photos. These attempts by China, and our own attempts to bomb others' photos represents a disrespect for the group who is conducting the photo session! In my experience, the inverse has also been the case--I have seen many times polite people stop in a crowded area and avoid crossing the path of a photo being taken. Respect for others bespeaks a character and quality so important to our own personal wellbeing and that of our crew--our family. So, tonight I'd like to pray for respect. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, tonight I pray for added insight, wisdom and guidance to fill us with a sense of honor and respect for our own lives and those of our shipmates. May we never find occasions to harm, steal from, disrespect, or defame our fellow Sailors. God, inspire us in fact with guidance to know how we can bless, lift and encourage them--and respect them for who they are. Finally, father, would you accompany us during our upcoming straits transit, energize the bodies and activate the minds of all those who will be on watch through the transit. May they be firm and strengthened. All of this I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### SEPTEMBER 2018

## 1 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. As we all know on several occasions these past few hours we have had losses of power. Thanks to several alert and industrious sailors, they are working as we speak to regain power again. I am particularly amazed at how quickly so many of you move with a sense of urgency, jumping up from whatever you're doing to try and identify and fix these problem. Experiencing this loss of power brings a few things to mind. Perhaps we--like the Antietam--from time to time experience loss of power. Maybe due to minimal or restless sleep, over concern for a loved one at home, sheer mental exhaustion from trying to coordinate roles in the upcoming exercises, or possibly from an early morning watch--no matter what the activity, we may feel drained, like our batteries have run dry and partial or even all power is lost. Additionally, a sense of lost power could come as a surprise, almost like during a sunny, then rainy Saturday afternoon passing through the San Bernardino straits. Feeling drained of mind, body or soul can be frustrating or unnerving. But all of this being said, we can learn from each other and how we handled the ship's loss of power--by focusing on finding, assessing, and addressing the source of our power loss. We can urgently take personal inventory and come to discover where the source of our depleted power comes from, then we can talk with those we trust to find relief and set measures to recover the power. So tonight I'd like to pray for restoration of power to all Antietam sailors and to areas of our ship. Let us pray: Dear God, as we travel the straits of life there are times we become tired, exhausted, or overwhelmed in some way--all of this potentially leaving us feeling completely enervated. Lord, I pray for each Sailor tonight that you would help them identify and find a remedy to restore their loss of power. Bless them God with determination to find a balance between care for self and care for their work, that they might be energized and enabled to more faithfully and powerfully fulfill the mission at hand. God, at this time I pray especially that you would bless all those who are working to restore power in various areas of the ship, and particularly be with our radar during this loss of power, that it may withstand the loss and remain effective. Thank you this day for your power and goodness, and may it remain with all who stand watch tonight and with those we love at home, pray in your holy Amen.

## 2 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Have you ever told a close friend a secret--maybe something really private and only meant for them to hear, thinking they would protect that information, but then you learn that they disclosed that information to another person? I think we all know, or can at least imagine how that feels. It's definitely embarrassing, and can sometimes even be dangerous or harmful in certain ways to the one who initially revealed the secret. This concept recently came to mind as I spoke with some sailors today about the upcoming EMCON measures we will be conducting. Emissions control measures are employed for the safety of the ship and crew particularly during wartime scenarios. As we execute NUDAY Hunter this week, we are also setting EMCON measures to limit the information we emit which could be retrieved by the enemy and used against us. Perhaps a lesson lies in this. There may be times in our human experience where we need to set EMCON in different areas of our lives. Are there circling influences around us--perhaps just as dangerous to us personally as data-collecting, and secret sharing Chinese AGIs? Just as shifting our phones to airplane mode,

or turning off our emitting or Bluetooth capabilities is safe practice and vital during EMCON, perhaps setting some important boundaries in our own lives could be useful for protecting our personal safety. Healthy communication, adequate rest, and even just a few minutes each day for self reflection can be safety measures akin to wartime emcon procedures. Additionally, we may need to establish boundaries to limit or even block out extrinsic negative influences that attempt to eat away at our morale or wellbeing. So, tonight I'd like to pray for protection from unwanted extrinsic sources. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, first I thank you for your blessing of help and restoration to losses of power recently endured. Additionally God, as we travel through our days I pray you would give us wisdom to know when and how to set boundaries of protection from destructive forces. Lord, if there are influences that could harm our mind, character, sense of self, our purpose or meaning, or any aspect of our being, I pray you would strengthen us to set appropriate boundaries of safety. Through this, would you please enable us to find peace and happiness in that security. Thank you for your guidance and direction, and I pray you would be with our crew, ship and all our families in this endeavor. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

### 3 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Today at one point I was sitting in my office about to reflect on what to offer for tonight's evening prayer when all of a sudden two CTR1s showed up at my hatch with a spectrum analyzer. As most of you are aware this instrument is used for detecting RF and other radio emissions from our various electronic devices. Thankfully I was in the clear, but it did cause me briefly to reflect on some things--a personal self introspection if you will. As I saw the instrument pointed at me I'm pretty sure I did a brief self evaluation--was I emitting anything with my Bluetooth device or with anything else? After they were done I even asked, "did you detect anything?" All of this spectrum analysis gets me thinking about the importance of finding regular moments on our own for self reflection and introspection. It can be very helpful on a regular basis to take time for self analysis--we can ask ourselves questions such as "how am I feeling?" Or "What currently lies within my sphere of influence or realm of control?" Or maybe, "what choices do I currently have regarding my situation and how can I more effectively make them?" Or another one, "how do my choices influence my own mood and the mood of those in my Antietam family?" Perhaps taking some personal spectrum analysis time on a regular basis could be useful for us. So, my prayer tonight is for opportunities to self reflect. Let us pray: Dear God, our lives are so full of important responsibilities, watches, details, admin and other tasks that sometimes it's hard to find time for reflection. Lord, I pray you would help each of us see moments in the day--even slivers of time we may have--to pause for reflection, to open ourselves for personal introspection and heightened awareness. Would you please help us to see where we stand in real-time reality and to understand a vision for further healthy self development. God, thank you for our opportunities to reflect, and would you please Bless each within the sound of my voice with courage, power and energy to stand their watches tonight and during tomorrow's RASes. And bless Our entire Antietam family both on ship and back home, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

### 4 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaplain Williams here. Recently I was on the mess decks and noticed a whole bunch of avocados which had recently been put out. I love avocados and wanted to take a closer look, and when I approached I saw they were beautifully sized and perfectly shaped, but they were very green. In short, they were not ready. The color and readiness of those were sharply contrasted by some avocados that came in our RAS today, which were just the right consistency for some guacamole! How soft, malleable and scoopable an avocado is really depends on the ripening time of the fruit itself. So it seems to truly enjoy one of those messdecks avocados we will need to patiently wait a few more days. This process of waiting for ripening reminded me of the waiting process we often experience in life. In fact, perhaps Life is a lot like a ripening avocado. There are many wonderful things we wait patiently for--things that have such great potential, but are just still a little green. Maybe there are some of those elements in your life, I know there are in mine! Like Waiting to be eligible for a promotion test, waiting for a package or expected piece of mail to arrive, waiting for a baby to be born, waiting for EMCON to lift so you can hear some important news, waiting for an injury to heal, or maybe waiting for hard orders to arrive. Maybe things happen in their right time and season, just the way they need to--despite our sometimes hurried need to have the avocado right now. So tonight I'd like to pray for patience in waiting. Let us pray, God, tonight as we approach the end of a long and productive day I thank you for the chance to rest and recover--May each of us have an opportunity to do so at some point. Lord, additionally, as we travel life's course we all experience waiting in some fashion, and sometimes this can seem unbearable or unenjoyable. However, I pray you would gift us with patience to see the potential and even wisdom in waiting for things to ripen to their optimal state. Humbly I pray for your support to those who wait for significant life events or solutions to personal problems. Please guide them and walk beside them with your comforting peace through the ripening process. I pray this in your holy name, Amen.

#### 5 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is Chaplain Williams. Just prior to leaving on 18-2 our family computer finally gave up the ghost. After 8 years of hard work performed for the benefit of my family, countless kids homework projects and lots of games played, its memory finally diminished and it came to its end. So, I went and bought a new computer--this time with more RAM and a lot more hard drive memory. What I've learned, whether it's a hard drive, a computer, an iPod, or a phone, it's nice to have an expansive memory. It's actually not much different when it comes to us--remembering is something we all do on a regular basis. Particularly at this time of year, many of you are expanding your memories, adding cerebral RAM to your cranial hard drives, stocking up that knowledge for recall on the upcoming advancement exams. Many of you have been studying for weeks--maybe months in preparation to remember important facts, principles and concepts for these tests. So tonight I'd like to pray for the memories of all advancement test takers. Let us pray: God, tonight as many of us prepare to kick off another advancement test season, I pray for all who will be taking tests these next few weeks. Would you bless and activate their minds and memories to be able to recall the many principles and concepts they have studied? Please give them adequate rest this night and in the coming weeks so they may think clearly and be free from distraction. Thank you for the power of memory, and may each test taker be blessed with an increase of it I pray in your memorable name, Amen.



6 September 2018

Good evening Antietam, this is Chaplain Williams. When I was growing up my mom taught me--mostly due to my own negligence--how important it is to let her know where I was going whenever I left the house. She made sure I understood that I was accountable to let her know of my comings and Goings. So, when I headed off with my friends somewhere I'd let her know where I was going and the approximate time of my return. This checking in was critical to the maintenance of good order and discipline and effective communication in my home. I have been reminded of this on many occasions as I've observed the role of red crown in CIC. Perhaps I could describe redcrown as A few of our OS's essentially operating as a mom requesting her many flying children, or military aircraft, to check in with her when they enter our airspace. Redcrown then relays that info to TAO for awareness and further de-confliction. The principle here of checking in is very applicable to many aspects of our lives. Checking in, letting certain people in our lives know about our wellbeing and whereabouts--while being mindful of OPSEC of course--is part of being a responsible human being. Most of us have musters daily or multiple times per day, many of us check in--or ought to check in--regularly through various means with family and loved ones back home, we check in with our Work centers, supervisors, subordinates--many check in with each other at the smoke decks. We also can check in with others to ask about their wellbeing, their day, or the meal they just ate. Checking in implies that we care about maintaining relationships of trust as well as sustaining accountability with each other. So tonight I'd like to pray for determination to check in. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, tonight I take a brief moment to check in with you as we begin to wind down this Thursday. Thank you for another opportunity at a day of Life, to live and breathe, to make choices. God, I pray at this time you would give us the mind and strength to take time to check in with those in our lives who need us or maybe whom we need. May we find opportunities to connect, to strengthen, and to be strengthened by, them. Whether it is our families back home or our Antietam family, whether personal or work-related, God I pray you would help us to consistently check in. Thank you for allowing us to check in with you tonight God, and I pray you'd strengthen those on watch and those assuming the watch tonight. I pray in your holy name Amen.

7 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is Chaplain Williams. Last night I spent some time up on the port bridge wing during HRUs watching the QMs do some light signaling. This was completely intriguing to me--to see how this Morse code communication method, most likely used since at least the Civil War times, is still being used today in the absence of normal comms. I was totally impressed with the QM's knowledge of the signals and their correlating alphabetical representations. In particular I noticed that one had to look through the big eyes to adequately notice the signal coming from the Reagan. She paid close attention, watching for the carrier's signal so we could then pass along the required course and speed. I thought about how important it was for this QM to NOTICE the signal in the moment it was being displayed. How often do we notice those around us or those in our charge? What do we notice about the other human beings we associate with here on the Antietam? What signals are they sending? I also wonder what we do when we notice a signal--either mundane or something out of the ordinary--how do we signal back? I want to invite each of us to notice signals from our shipmates and think about how we

can signal back--maybe through a smile, a compliment, an act of service, a kind note, or just our presence. So tonight I'd like to pray for awareness of the signals around us. Let us pray: Dear Heavenly Father, I thank you this night for another day and the opportunities it presented us. As we each travel through a given day on Antietam, there are many moments of intersection with our fellow human beings--God it is in these moments we have an opportunity to notice each other; to be aware of one another. I pray that we might be vigilant and perceptive of the other--of those both in and out of our relationship circles. Help us Lord to see the signals displayed, understand the message, and then provide a helpful and compassionate reply signal. As we do so God, please help our sense of team and family to grow and flourish. And finally, bless, illuminate, and strengthen all on watch, and all who will assume the watch this night I pray gratefully in your sacred name, Amen.

#### 8 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is Chaplain Williams. When my family was preparing to move to Japan, we did what most families do when PCSing from one house to another, we went through all of our personal items and decided what to throw away, what to put in long term storage and what to take to Japan. In that process I realized I was going to have to organize some things along the way--one of those being my tool box. I'm not a total slob--at least I don't think so--but my tool box was not really in order. I had to take probably a good half day to organize all of my tools and clean and prepare the tool box for shipment. I was thinking of this when I observed some of the AD's handling their tool boxes while doing final phase work on warlord zero 3. I was completely impressed by the meticulous care taken to ensure all tools were in their proper spots, and whenever the box was shut it was also locked for safety. Seeing the organized tools led my mind to thoughts of other tools--less visible tools each of us carries along in a less conspicuous tool box. This box may consist of character tools like perseverance, patience, persistence, perspective, and politeness. How orderly is your toolbox? Perhaps some of us could stand to empty the box, clean it out and reorganize the tools. That may take some time but it will be time well spent--after all, who likes to open a toolbox in a pinch looking for the right tool and it's missing? So my prayer tonight is to find time to hone and organize our tools. Let us pray. God, thank you for another Pizza night and an opportunity to prepare for a new week of our journey. As we do so surely the need becomes apparent through the course of the day for certain character tools to be used to thrive in challenging situations. Lord, the unknowns of plans, the minimal ability to communicate home, or various frustrations with fellow shipmates can be difficult at times. I pray you would help us develop and organize our set of tools that can let us thrive through the unknowns and life twists and turns. God, bless each of us with minds and hearts to maintain our tool boxes and as we do, may we grow in hope and motivation. Finally God, please care for our families, and those on watch and those coming on watch later with an extra set of tools to accomplish their tasks at hand. I pray all of this in your most holy name. Amen.

#### 9 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain williams. Hopefully many of you were able to enjoy some of the steel beach picnic today. Gathering together for these events always reminds me that no matter what our backgrounds, nationalities, race, gender, or other distinguishing factors, we all love some good food. Some of us prefer a clean steel beach diet of bun-free burger, veggies and chicken, while others go for the Hawaiian Punch, cookies, and two-bun burger-dog combo. I've also noticed there is something unique and meaningful about us gathering around a table, some serving and some receiving. This pattern of serving and receiving replicates itself most days , and opportunities present themselves regularly for the betterment of ourselves and our Antietam team. If we are aware and keep an eye out, we will notice opportunities to serve and to receive service from others. Sometimes it can be just as hard--or even harder to receive service as it is to give it. So, tonight I'd like to pray for wisdom and insight to see opportunities to both serve and receive another's service. Let us pray: Dear God, as we wrap up a steel beach picnic and finish up another day underway I thank you for the opportunity to eat together, to journey together, to work together, and to learn together. As we start a new week most of us will be presented opportunities to serve and lift others. We will also likely have the chance to receive someone else's kindness. As these situations present themselves, I pray you would guide us to kindness and selflessness. God bless each of us also to know when to receive the kindness of another, and to receive with a grateful heart and spirit. As we do so, may a spirit of togetherness and partnership grow amongst us, to give purpose and meaning to our actions. Finally, God bless us in the new watch rotation as many of us build and establish new routines--sustain and strengthen those on watch and those assuming it this night, I pray in your holy name. Amen.

10 September 2018 Evening prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is Chaplain williams. Most of us are creatures of habit--we travel the same paths to our work centers, we order our eggs pretty much the same way each morning--or make our oatmeal in similar fashion, we maintain fairly consistent routines with showering, pre and post sleep rituals, and even ship store or vending machine purchases. Routines provide us with much needed stability in an unstable and uncertain world. Developed through repetition, Routines become a source of strength and reliability ingrained into our very existence. So, what happens when routines change? What happens when watchbill assignments or flight quarters schedules change? Or when there's a significant turn-over in your department or division? Or when our ritualized vending machine drink purchases have to shift from Coke to La Croix or even Hawaiian punch? If you're like me, there's a little bit of pain and discomfort--getting our mind, body and spirit on board with new patterns and ventures--but we are very adaptive creatures. It seems what most often gets me through changes in routine is to notice other routines in my life which still remain--usually patterns of behavior I can actually control, like deciding to take personal time daily for self reflection and prayerful introspection, or consistently hitting the gym, or trying to make healthy eating choices, or managing my time to get enough sleep. It seems while there are some routine changes that happen to us, there are others--even if it's just 1--we can choose to maintain and thus retain stability. So, tonight I'd like to pray for help to see the

routines we can maintain. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, in the midst of change and transition, it can be difficult to settle into routines we can rely on. And yet, God I pray each of us might find patterns of consistency each day, despite these changes--routines in which we can have some sense of control in the midst of transition. Lord, as we establish these routines, would you please lighten loads of those who feel burdened or weary, and provide a sense of stability as we choose consistent patterns. Finally God, I ask a blessing upon all those in Guam at this time who are preparing for the storms, may they be guided in their preparations, and I ask that you would stretch out your protective arm to them these next several hours. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 11 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain williams. Last week I shared an evening prayer based on the concept of memory. In essence, memory seems to be the substance or material resulting from the act of remembering. Sometimes remembering comes most natural--perhaps even unbidden, recollections or memories simply populate in our minds. However, other times memories are only conjured up through the dynamic process of remembering. Perhaps some of you today took the opportunity to turn back the gears of time in your mind's memory to recollect where you were on 9/11. I spoke with a few of you about this--"I was 4 years old and playing in the living room when it happened" one said. Another recalled "I was serving as a 2nd class on my first ship when we got the word." Another said, "I remember sitting in 3rd grade watching it on the TV in the classroom and my teacher was crying." Taking time to remember can be enriching, enlivening and energizing. So, tonight I'd like to pray for remembrance. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for the opportunity to pause, reflect, and remember the sacrifices of those who have gone before; those who have gone into the fray; those who have embraced challenge and affliction, and those who have sacrificed for the greater good. God, may we have minds to notice and recall past memories, to learn from our past and thereby influence our present and shape our future. Father, as we come to the end of this day and span the transition into the next, may we take time to reflect on our past, and remember our roots, and on this particular day, remember the lives lost and those who gave their lives freely to try and save others. I pray for these blessings in your sacred name, Amen.

#### 12 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain williams. I recently noticed that there are more and more people eating burgers on burger Wednesday WITHOUT the bun than with the bun. Likely there are a couple reasons for this choice--perhaps the Sailor has become suddenly gluten intolerant, or maybe someone is trying to shed a couple pounds, or maybe they're just tired of hamburger buns and prefer a lettuce burger. Then, there are those who at this point have simply boycotted burgers and go for a dog or just some corn and beans--but they still may measure the patrol by the amount of burger days left. In my mind, what this highlights is the natural creativity of the human decision-making process. We are amazing beings capable of conceptualizing

complex thought and developing insight into our life choices and how they affect us--even while underway on the mighty Antietam. As I think about choices, and our innate ability to weigh options and choose the best, I also think about those of you studying and hopefully resting in preparation for tomorrow's exams. So, tonight I would like to pray for your increased ability to make wise choices in the morning! Let us Pray: Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for the chance to pause and pray together this night. In particular, our thoughts and prayers are with all test-takers--please bless them with added insight and capability to make the best and right choices tomorrow on their tests. I pray they will feel energized and awake tomorrow, and that as they face the various questions they can be confident in what answers to choose. God be with them and all of us this night, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

### 13 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is Chaplain Williams. Today as I was making some rounds through the ship I was walking through a certain P-way I've walked many times and came to a hatch that always seems to give me trouble. A few months ago when I first came onboard I actually had to ask a passing Sailor for assistance to properly dog the hatch because I just couldn't figure it out. Now, after countless times trying I realize the physics behind it and the nuanced approach required to secure the hatch. Also in my ship wanderings I have learned this is not the only door presenting a challenge. There are some hatches like the one to Main 1 that--if you're not careful you could be sucked into the vortex of the main space if the hatch down the admin office p-way or the hatch to the messline opens at the same time. Then there's the starboard quarterdeck hatch which requires brute strength to fully dog down. And there are many, many more which we all know about. Thinking of the nature of these doors reminded me of a very important leadership concept--the principle of trying to see things from the perspective of others. In order for me to effectively navigate my way around the ship, I needed to come to understand each hatch and its various intricacies. The more I understood, the greater likelihood I would have in being able to properly open and secure each hatch. Likewise, in our interactions with those we lead or those we work with, seeking first to understand might be the key to unlocking or sealing up some tricky situations. So, tonight I'd like to pray for greater understanding of each other. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, as we interact with others on our Antietam team, surely there are moments it can be very challenging to see another's perspective. God, I pray at this time you would help each of us to find the ability to see things through the lens of others--to try and understand perspectives of others. Lord, as we do so--not only with our shipmates, but perhaps family and friends at home as well--I pray you would unite and connect us in commonality of brother and sisterhood. That we may have understanding and this unity I pray in your holy name, Amen.

### 14 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain Williams. Yesterday something happened to me that I think many of you can possibly relate to. I will give a brief back-story to explain. On 18-1 I realized I wanted to have more accessibility to music out on patrol, so in speaking with my teenage daughter I was encouraged to purchase an Apple Music family subscription. She told me I could download any music I wanted and it could be played from my device without wifi. I was sold. So, I got all of the music I wanted and we set out on 18-2. It worked like a charm--until yesterday at around noon when suddenly it didn't--I would soon discover, it was the day the music died. As the afternoon went on I began hearing the same story from others, and as it turns out, yesterday was day 30 of our patrol, and without wifi, both Apple Music and Spotify subscriptions expire. Some I spoke with however, told me how they had actually purchased music, songs and albums, and had downloaded them to their devices. In contrast to those of us who purchase subscriptions to music databases, those who still have music wisely went directly to the source and stocked up for future days like these. Surely, being properly prepared is an important message for all of us in many walks of life, and seems to be highlighted in this scenario as well. So, tonight I'd like to pray for wisdom to prepare. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, thank you for another day which has come and now nearly gone. We have been safe, and we were blessed with beautiful weather for this morning's Chief pinning. Thank you Lord for that. God, tonight we are mindful of the many activities we are involved in--whether it be valiant shield planning and execution, watch-standing, studying PQS, or maybe trying to set up transportation off of the ship so as to take care of very important obligations. Lord, no matter what events we are involved in on a daily basis, I pray you would give us wisdom to know how to prepare--and how best to be prepared. Would you please bless all who have important events upcoming, and inspire them to know how best to prepare, so they may be ready for whatever lies ahead. Strengthen those with challenging family situations, with wisdom to prepare now for future interactions upon our return. Finally God, please prepare each of our minds, bodies and spirits this night that we will be energized and strong for the day tomorrow. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 15 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain Williams. Last night as you all know we conducted man overboard procedures, to include a full accountability muster of our crew. I was particularly impressed with the speed in which the boat crew manned the starboard rib and set out in the direction of the glowing chem light, which was bobbing up and down in the distant waves. As I walked past many of you rushing to support the effort and be in your appointed places of duty I marveled at the sense of purpose and drive each person seemed to possess. Not knowing if someone was out there or not, presented a deep-seeded momentum; a powerful impetus for motivation and movement to help in any way possible to rescue a struggling shipmate. It made me realize what deep and magnificent potential each of us has--if we so choose to activate it--for performing at a high level and excelling in our duties. Many of us already access this potential within ourselves--I have witnessed this countless times around the ship. If you're like me, there

are also times when we can choose to dig down deeper--like last night--and rise to that potential that we all possess. So, tonight I'd like to pray for help in accessing our potential. Let us pray. Dear Heavenly Father, first of all I thank you for our safety last night in conducting the man overboard muster. Thank you for the efforts made by many to ensure this safety. God, I pray at this time for each Antietam Sailor--bless them all with an even deeper understanding of their potential and ability for excellence. Bless them with desire and power to access this potential through conscious and consistent positive choices. I pray you would give them insight and determination to choose progression and hope--and a mental firmness to build our team from wherever they stand. Finally, I ask you would strengthen all those on watch--both day and night--to have energy and to be alert and aware. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 16 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain Williams here. Today if you looked closely at the POD you will have noticed that there are 54 days left until our next PFA. With this being the case, and 54 being a special number around these parts, that must make tonight a special night. Likely, for some today represents no great significance, but to another--perhaps today signifies a birthday, a wedding anniversary, or maybe a year marker for time in service. This got me thinking, what makes a day special anyway? It seems sometime there are events or anniversaries that happen TO us--such as major holidays, or turning 16 or hitting 20 years in the service. Other times--in fact most times--there are no such events, most times life can present itself as Monday times 6 followed by a Sunday--at least that surely can seem to be the case underway. So how then do we discover the hidden secrets in our various PODs? How do we discover the "special" in the mundane? Perhaps it's like reading the POD--noticing the little "fold here" line, or checking out the "Today in Naval History" section, or considering what the POD words "Procedural compliance, questioning attitude, forceful backup, formality, level of knowledge, and integrity" mean to you. Likewise, maybe proactively searching for the special in a day--noticing a sunrise, recognizing the effort put into creating a meal, paying attention to a shipmate passing by in the P-way, feeling gratitude for breath and fresh air--can also bring color and flavor to the repetition. We might even feel happier in the process. So, tonight I'd like to pray to recognize the special in the mundane. Let us pray: God, on this night of 54, I thank you for our safety and wellbeing. As we start another Monday tomorrow, I pray you would open our eyes to the many details of the world around us--elements of each day which, if we take time to notice, can change a regular Monday into a significant and special day. God, while it is vital to establish routine, would you help each of us to find meaning in that routine, to look for details that can bring purpose to our existence and make a day special, not just for ourselves but for others as well. Lord, bless our entire crew with safety, peace, and a wonderful Monday tomorrow I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 17 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. As many of you are aware, today we commemorated the battle of Antietam. During quarterdeck cleaning stations, several of you have spent time polishing the bronze plaque detailing some of the events of that battle. Additionally, you may have noticed the Civil War relics in shadow boxes around the ship, reminding us of our heritage, and our humanity--and the stark reality that we are a nation born out of struggle and conflict--yet we are stronger for it. This day of commemoration has reminded me of other struggles and even conflicts we engage in, sometimes on a regular basis. Perhaps some of us are enduring relationship struggles, or maybe financial struggles. Or conflicted relationships in your work center, with another shipmate, or a subordinate. Maybe we are just struggling to stay awake at times. Whatever that struggle is, the battle of Antietam teaches me there are unfathomable depths to the human soul, which if we dig down deep we can find the power to prevail. So, tonight in honor of those 22, 717 who fought and died near Sharpsburg, Maryland and Antietam Creek over 160 years ago, I'd like to pray for strength in our struggles. Let us pray: Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for another Monday of life and a new week to rise to the challenges placed before us. God, though we don't find ourselves on a battle field in Maryland, we are engaged in battles day in and day out in our personal and vocational lives. Lord, would you please bless and strengthen each of our Sailors with courage, fortitude and strength to struggle--no, not only struggle, but persevere through the challenges thrown our way. May we learn from history's lessons what it means to live with faith, act with courage, and return with honor. God, I ask you to be with each of us this night--particularly those who have the watch. Give us power beyond our own to stand tall and bravely face the struggles in our path. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 18 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain Williams here. This morning I went to fire up my computer and discovered it was off. So, thinking that maybe I had turned it off the night before, I went ahead and just pushed power. Still no result. At this point I realized there must be some sort of power outage--asking around, no one else seemed to have a power problem like mine. I called the electrical shop and they were very helpful and said they'd come by. In the meantime I crawled around looking for the problem. Finally I discovered that there was just one outlet that was not putting out any voltage, so I unplugged the computer cord from that outlet and into another. Voila, the computer worked. A few minutes later an IC-man stopped by to see if I was having electrical problems--he said he discovered a breaker which controlled my office and the forward IC which had been tripped and he flipped it back on--this fixed the power problem in my outlet. Ultimately there were two solutions to fix this problem--first, by switching outlets and second, by flipping the breaker switch back on. Of course there are likely endless metaphors in this scenario, but one stands out as the problem with power. Here on Antietam we believe in the power to prevail, but where do we draw our power from? I'm aware sometimes we feel great amounts of power, and other times we may feel like a computer plugged into a powerless electrical outlet. Maybe the sources from which we are trying to draw power are not putting out a



high enough voltage. Or maybe, we have simply overtaxed or unbalanced the circuitry to the point that the breaker has blown. Perhaps we could use a restructuring of priorities to find even just a little more balance in our lives and consequently find greater power. It could look like taking just ten minutes of regular self reflection, or 20 minutes on the stationary bike, or voice dictating a couple thoughts down in a personal audio journal--just expressing our feelings from the day. So tonight I pray for help in powering up. Let us pray: Lord, as we make our way through another day I thank you for our safety. Thank you for opportunities to learn and grow. God, in our daily walk some of us may wonder how to find more power, more strength to move forward. I pray you would help us find new sources of power--even in the midst of the many important tasks that fill our days. Where there is a sense of powerlessness I pray for empowerment, and that you would switch on the breakers in our lives. Thank you for YOUR power and may we feel and sense it this night I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 19 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Today was a very full day. As the POD is our witness, there were many activities related to valiant shield, various drills, MCI checks, meetings, trainings, a few meals prepared eaten and cleaned up--some of which is still happening, and many other events still to come! Amidst all of those things there is the seemingly never ending job of performing Day-lies. Many of you perform these checks on....a daily basis--hence the name. The reason for day-lies is to ensure readiness and compliance with a variety of equipment standards. In light of the E-4 advancement and ESWS exams tomorrow I got thinking about the usefulness of day-lies as they relate to studying--I have seen so many of you daily reviewing flash cards, study guides, study notes, notebooks with questions and answers--most of us understand that regular--if not daily--study is what it takes to pass a test with flying colors. So, tomorrow is your day--the day all of those day-lies will finally pay off! And tonight I'd like to pray for all taking tests tomorrow. Let us pray. Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for daily opportunities to learn and grow, daily choices to make. As we round out this day and consider the importance of Day-lies in so many aspects of our lives, I pray for all who will be testing tomorrow. Bless them to recall the items they have daily studied. God, guide their minds and memories to recollect the endless notes and daily study sessions they've engaged in. Finally Lord, I pray you would be with each of us on a daily basis, to give us the energy and fortitude to meet our daily responsibilities with courage and determination. I pray this in your holy name Amen.

#### 20 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Standing shoulder to shoulder with other K-pock adorned line handlers, a Sailor on the refueling line may hear the command to take cover while tensioning span-wire. This particular wire, while under extreme stress from the pull between two ships, must be tense in order to bear the weight of the Fuel probe as it rushes towards the receiver. Without that tension the probe would plummet into the water and we'd be

pumping a lot of salty fuel that day. I'm fascinated by the concept of some level of tension--or opposition force--being necessary for something positive to happen. I also learned that an enemy submarine in the area, and not the torrential rainy deluge or the endless amazing groceries we received, is what made this RAS today an opposed RAS. And yet, despite the opposition from both submarine and Mother Nature, I noticed countless positive actions occurring as I walked around the ship. I saw deck Sailors dripping with salt water smiling and laughing as they sprayed the deck with the fire hose. I witnessed people on the PND line laughing and encouraging one another, as their hands shriveled up like grapes in the rain. There were Sailors in all parts of the ship standing their various watches--decided and set with a firm determination to complete their many tasks. Even the steady drone of the fog horn reminds us of the commitment to press forward through tension and opposition. It seems the right amount of tension and opposition in our lives can also hone and shape us into people with purpose. Perhaps opposition is not such a bad thing--maybe opposition can ultimately be the force which makes positive growth a possibility. So, tonight I'd like to pray for growth in opposition. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, tonight I thank you for our safety and protection we've enjoyed. Thank you for strengthening and supporting those who have navigated and guided us through foul weather. God, while it is very difficult sometimes to encounter opposition or life events which cause great tension, may we begin to recognize how these events or experiences can help us grow and develop. Bless each who may be facing opposition of any kind, to include preparing for tomorrow's advancement exams. Bless them and all with your strength, peace, and power I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 21 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. For most of us, from a very early age we became attuned to various commands that invited some sort of action. For example, when learning to walk surely many of us were encouraged "walk to mommy!" Or at dinnertime perhaps we were told "eat your vegetables then you can have dessert". Or maybe as a freshly minted driver your parent, an older sibling, or guardian gave you a verbal safety warning such as "watch out for the lady crossing the street!" Each of these verbal pronouncements led to positive action. On Antietam many sailors are familiar with the pronouncement of "flight quarters, flight quarters!" At this announcement many are called to action from wherever they are and whatever they are doing. Thank you to those who heed this call day and night, rain, wind or shine. This call and response process got me thinking about the power of words to rouse us to action, as well as their power to raise our spirits. Perhaps there are words we utter--or can say--which might have the effect on us and others of instigating positive thought and action. Words that lift and motivate, not from a place of fabricated adulation, but rather a genuine inner inertia toward positive growth and subsequent positive results. Maybe it would be useful for us to observe the dialogue we have with ourselves and others--to notice the words we choose. While the words "flight quarters" may cause sudden indigestion in some sailors' systems, these words nevertheless rally a helping force together, unified in common cause for good. So tonight I'd like to pray for

help in choosing helpful words. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, on this Friday evening I take a moment to thank you for another safe and productive day. As we reflect on this day, may each of us also have the time to consider the words we use with ourselves and others. God, where we sense improvement may be necessary, would you please help us to do so. May we find clarity in choosing words that will call us and others to positive and fruitful outcomes, and to development and learning along the way. Father, finally I pray these words tonight might sit positively with someone and that through and in many things we can feel blessed by your words. Please strengthen and sustain those on watch this night, I pray these words with gratitude. Amen.

## 22 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is Chaplain Williams. Long days and short weeks--is how some explain the phenomenon of being out on patrol. And a lot happens during those long days and short weeks! In a given 39 day period at sea, it can be easy to accumulate buildup of various substances such as salt crystals on the PCMS, or rust on the weather decks. Last night I learned about another type of buildup and the amazing means for releasing it. In AUX 1 there is a bilge which, after some time at sea, fills with oil and water, creating a very undesirable good for nothing liquidy mixture. This liquid represents the refuse from the various systems in AUX 1 and really serves no purpose other than to be discarded, once we have reached a proscribed distance from land and have the captains permission. Two very knowledgeable sailors told me last night about the genius eductor system which, when aligned allows the firemain water to flow in, causing a Venturi effect suction which dewater the bilge! To top off my engineering lesson, they showed me how they could actually control the opening and closing of miscellaneous valves using the Meevac system. Genius. If you can believe it, Learning about all of this from these outstanding sailors got me thinking metaphorically. Surely just as the ship accumulates unwanted substances and elements on a prolonged underway such as this, we humans also do likewise. Perhaps we've developed some unwise habits, or accepted and nurtured a negative or pessimistic attitude. Or maybe we've chosen to carry the backpack of resentment, shame or guilt for longer than necessary. I pose this question: Is it time to align our eductor and de-water? This might look like first acknowledging there may be an issue, in other words recognizing liquid in the bilge. Then doing what it takes to create the requisite suction through introducing firemain--this might look like engaging more regularly in de-stressing activities, or having bilge conversations with someone you trust will listen and help you process. Aligning the eductor is like aligning or re-aligning ourselves with our core values. So, tonight I'd like to pray for help to de-water the bilges of our lives. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, thank you for your careful and protective eye today and for watching over our crew and ship. As we journey along most of us build up unwanted bilge liquid of life. God, I pray you would give us eyes to see areas where this is happening. Especially Lord, would you take away these unwanted aspects and fill us instead with hope, peace and a purposeful and positive perspective. God, I pray for your helping hand to guide us to freedom from unnecessary burdens and may we also be in place to assist others in aligning with

what matters most. Now I ask that you would Be with all of us and our loved ones back home I pray in your holy name. Amen.

#### 23 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain williams. As most of you are aware, today and the past couple days there have been several engineering and combat systems casualties. In fact many Of our shipmates are still working on finding solutions to these problems. Perhaps you saw some of them rushing down to AUX 1 with 5-gallon buckets, or you heard them talking about bringing DeMIN water from the forward skid to the aft skid--and even witnessed the bucket brigade humping water past the messline, or you could have heard discussion about fixing HPAC number 2 after disassembling it and finding the right parts to put it back together--and Sailors working around the clock to try and get that going so we can maintain our high pressure air, and therefore be able to start our generators and engines--should they turn off. Along with all of these systems and collection of machinery, there are the many people--all of you--who work tirelessly to identify problems, find solutions and then fix the problems. So, tonight my prayer is simple--it is a prayer for all of you who work tirelessly to keep our floating city, as the Captain called it, afloat, armed and capable of fulfilling the mission we came to do. Let us pray: Dear Heavenly Father, today has been one of those days--one which brought unforeseen challenges and obstacles to bear. Lord, as passengers and stake-holders on our 31-year old ship, it becomes the lot of each of us to bear the burden of responsibility for her wellbeing. God, what a responsibility that is! So I pray at this time Lord for each Sailor and civilian onboard Antietam. I ask you would bless their minds with firmness and clarity. Bless their eyes to see and recognize what needs to be done. Bless their ears to hear each other as they communicate across departments, cultures and mentalities. Bless their shoulders to be strong and firm in the responsibilities they carry. Bless their backs and legs with energy to keep momentum and forward progress. Bless their feet with durability and dependability, to carry them to the exact location they need to be in. Finally God, in all things physically, mentally and spiritually be with and sustain them I pray in your sacred name, AMEN.

#### 24 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. Today it was either disappointing or relieving for many of you that we were not able to complete our swim call. For some, diving into a nearly bottomless body of water full of mysteries of the great deep is an exciting and exhilarating experience. For others, sheer terror would be words to describe the activity. Well, as we all know, the weather always gets a vote in our decisions out here, and her vote today was no to setting ideal swim call conditions. In fact, the conditions were such today that on several occasions we heard the announcement "the weather decks are secure due to high winds." Making a decision to protect the crew from high seas, swift currents and high winds is something done out of a desire to protect you and me. Without you or Me, the ship does not function, SPY isn't brought back online, food doesn't get made, breakouts don't happen, coverall pockets aren't

checked and emptied in laundry prior to washing, HPACs aren't repaired, helos aren't brought up FMC, PWP isn't processed, CASREPS aren't routed, ERM numbers aren't documented, etc. etc. The reason we are given standards, procedures, liberty regulations, and warnings about high winds is so that we are kept safe! Whereas it might be easy to look at restrictions as things I can't do, perhaps they are more parameters to keep us safe, alive, and happy. We all need guidelines, left and right lateral limits to stay safe and maintain a creative, balanced existence. So, tonight I'd like to pray for our safety in adhering to our established parameters. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, thank you for all of the Antietam Sailors--each who brings a unique and valued perspective to the team. God, thank you for established standards and procedures set in place to keep us safe, and in some cases to keep us alive. Lord, I pray we may recognize these parameters not as annoying restrictions, but as vital lifelines to protect and support us in a variety of environments. I pray you would bless our crew with safety in all of our decision making, safety in our interactions with each other and with others. I pray your safety and peace would be with each who has the watch tonight and all of us as we continue towards the Philippines tomorrow. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 25 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Have you ever sat and stared at a pot of water waiting for it to boil? Or have you ever stood with baited breath over a toaster while waiting for the bread to turn to toast? Or, maybe you've been running on the treadmill watching the seconds tick by and feeling like you'll never get to that magic 30 minutes, or whatever your goal is. It's a fact that waiting seems to be a part of life--and sometimes it's a very frustrating part. Perhaps some of you recently have sat with strained necks and clenched fists, eyes fixed on a screen which reads LOADING. Whether waiting for NFAAS to load, waiting to get music back, waiting for dinner, waiting for a port visit, waiting for the radio head to be free, or waiting for an important e-mail reply, waiting can present all sorts of challenges to our emotional, mental, and spiritual fortitude. What is it about waiting that is so challenging? Perhaps it's because--whether right or wrong--we are fixed on things turning out a certain way; the way things ought to be! Another challenge to waiting is there is some sort of discomfort involved--perceived or actual loss of time, loss of energy, or even loss of opportunities. The fact of the matter is, as long as we exist as humans, there will always be things we wait for. Perhaps the key to navigating the waiting may be to accept the unpredictable nature of things, and identify what we can actually do while in the midst of waiting. So tonight I'd like to pray for all who have been overwhelmed with waiting. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, tonight as we transit through the straights, I thank you for your watchful eye and careful protection over us. As we navigate not only this patrol, but life in general there are many things we seem to be waiting for. God, I pray you would help us open our eyes to live in the present, to sense what it is we can actually control and affect. Those things out of our control that we wait for, would you please help them along to reach fruition; to reach a state of secure rest. While we don't have an omniscient perspective on things, I pray in your infinite wisdom you would enlighten our minds to know the paths to pursue to take care of what

we can--even while waiting for other things to reach completion. Finally God, bless all who suffer in waiting--lift them, strengthen them, and in some cases I pray you would heal them or family members who wait for broken things to mend. Now Be with us all this night as we continue the straight's transit, I pray in your patient name, Amen.

### 30 September 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain Williams. Today as I was walking around the ship I passed several of our new Sailors who are going underway with us for the first time. There is one thing each and every one of us has in common--namely, that at one point we all were new on Antietam. In this we are all united. As one new Sailor walked past they told me cheerfully that they were out getting lost. I don't think anyone told them to get lost in a vindictive way, rather, they were out getting lost and finding their way again. Ironically, getting lost seems to lead to getting found. In fact, as a new Sailor on board, learning our way around the ship requires leaving the safety of berthing or the security of the messdecks to go adventure to radar 5, aft steering, or forward VLS. Additionally, it's been said before that to find oneself, one must lose oneself. Perhaps there is some wisdom in getting lost. Getting lost may look like acting with courage in an area where we feel weak. Admitting that we lack in certain areas and stepping out into the dark--getting lost--can lead to finding pockets, patches or even places shed with light, knowledge and new understanding. Getting lost could look like trying to learn something new, reaching out to someone we don't know very well, or maybe seeking out a mentor to help shed light on our personal blind spots. So, tonight I'd like to pray for help in finding through losing. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for our safety and the chance to recharge and regenerate these past few days in Cebu. Additionally, I thank you for our new Sailors who have joined us and pray you would bless, strengthen and guide them as they get familiar with their surroundings. Lord, I also pray for each one of us--help us to have courage to step into areas where we need growth, courage and faith to move forward into the unknown, humility to lean on mentors and to learn from others so that we might eventually find our way and find our peace. God, additionally please help all those who feel lost and can't seem to find their way--would you send guides to their aid and would you also give them light to see the path clearly. And finally As always God, I ask you to bless and strengthen those who have the watch this night, with energy and sharp mindedness. I pray all of this in your sacred name, AMEN.

### OCTOBER 2018

#### 1 October 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain Williams. Today is an intersection of new beginnings. To just name a few we had our first full day underway after leaving Cebu, today also marks the first full day of command indoc for all new Antietam Sailors, additionally, today is the first day of October, which also happens to be the first day of the new fiscal year. Today some of us received a new haircut. Perhaps some of you started a new work-out routine in preparation for returning home this month. One of us onboard celebrated a birthday and began a new year of life. It appears that each of us gets to take part in at least something new today. New beginnings can be both exciting and overwhelming. Exciting because of hope in new opportunities for

experience and growth. Perhaps overwhelming because of the newness and fresh sense of loss from what was had before--like losing a luxurious hotel room and becoming re-accustomed to ship's berthing. Nevertheless, new beginnings offer opportunities for choices and progression. Just as getting lost can lead to finding, ending one chapter and starting a new can lead to deeper purpose and life perspective. So, tonight I'd like to pray for perspective on this day of new beginnings. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, tonight I express gratitude for the newness of this day and the opportunities it presents us. I pray at this time that our hearts and minds might be infused with hope and insight as we consider the wise use of our choices at this time of new beginnings. God, may we use the emotional, mental, physical and spiritual gifts we've been blessed with to reach for new heights; to achieve greater perspective regarding the world around us and our place in it. May we not forget the past--but be informed and shaped by it as we transition onto new paths and new perspectives. Finally God, as always I pray you would strengthen and bless all who have the watch this night and those who come on with the new day tomorrow. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

## 2 October 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain Williams. Today if you spent some time in combat, out on the weather decks, or up in the pilot house you may have noticed our Chinese shadow, the ChangKai 577. As we transit through the South and East China seas, she and perhaps others will surely be our shadows--attempting to watch our moves and observe our operations. As I looked out at the ChangKai earlier this afternoon I thought about the concept of shadowing and was reminded of my youngest daughter Annie, who, for the past 7 years has been shadowing her sister Ruby who is just 15 months older. Wherever Ruby goes, Annie goes; whatever Ruby wants to do, Annie wants to do. There have been some occasions when Ruby has expressed frustration over this and she's attempted some evasive maneuvers to try and lose her shadow. I explained to her that being shadowed comes with great responsibility. Annie is not only just mimicking Ruby's actions, but she is also soaking in ways of being. I have seen this shadowing take place on the ship as well through the "Under Instruction" program, which allows many Sailors the opportunity to observe and learn from more seasoned and trained Sailors in various areas of expertise. In addition, Being watched, or shadowed also happens up and down each of our chains of command, it happens when we receive new Sailors out of A or C school, and sometimes it even happens without our knowledge. Surely, there are always others watching what we do, how we behave, and how we respond in a variety of situations. So, tonight I'd like to pray for strength in being shadowed. Let us pray: Dear God, as we approach the close of another day, I thank you for our safety and protection as we continue our mission. Lord, as we go about our day here on Antietam, and in our interactions with others through other means, there are many who watch and observe our actions. I pray you would strengthen and bless each of us with firmness of mind and heart to stand in alignment with our core values, to do the right thing and to be examples of integrity to those who watch. Heavenly Father, in those areas where we may sense personal struggle in leading or providing an example, would you give us insight and power

to step out in courage; to lead by example in word and deed. Be with us all in this great responsibility now I pray in your holy name, Amen.

### 3 October 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaplain Williams here. Have you ever had a really important conversation with a person you respect and later that evening after your visit you happen to notice yourself in the mirror and you see a nice big chunk of food in your teeth? Today's lunch could have given you that opportunity in that you may have chosen to eat corn on the cob as a side augment to your burger or corn dog. When something like corn or a nice piece of cilantro gets lodged in between teeth there is nothing more relieving than a nice flosser stick or a string of floss to remove the rogue food item. This type of relief brings a beautiful smile to the face in more ways than one. In contemplating this metaphor surfaced within my mind--like tiny annoying pieces of corn, there are often tiny and sometimes aggravating thoughts, behaviors or mannerisms that we can easily adopt...almost imperceptibly--which can fill our proverbial mouth with unwanted clingons. Perhaps we would do well to look in a self reflective mirror on a regular basis and pull out the internal floss--like healthy gums from regular flossing, finding relief from emotional and cognitive burdens can be the result of regular soul flossing. So, tonight my prayer is for help in self reflection. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, tonight as we have just completed our RAS I thank you for our safety and protection. Though many of us are tired and spent, thank you for supporting us in this big evolution. Now lord, as we wrap up this day I pray for your light and guidance to help us look in the mirror of self reflection and to see clearly those burdens we carry that we could floss out. God, where we are cantankerous may we be filled with care and compassion. Where we are self absorbed may we be more selfless. Where we are self defeating may we recognize the innate and essential goodness of the self. Finally God I ask a blessing on each Antietam sailor for their wellbeing and inner strength. And for a blessing in their families and loved ones for safety and health. I pray this in your holy name. Amen.

### 5 October 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. At least once a day the announcement is made summoning the snoobie team to action. Often the reason for snoobie team is VI quick draw, other times the call is for other sorts of data collection. Regardless, the snoobie team, or Ships nautical or otherwise photographic interpretation and examination team has a mission to document either unsafe actions extraneous to the ship or data collection on unknown objects which could impact us in some way. Aren't you grateful to have a team dedicated solely to the detection of harmful or threatening entities within our operational area? Every time we hear "away the snoobie team away"--whether routine or not--it's really inconsequential--we can be assured that they are helping us all out. This has made me think about the importance of maintaining our own snoobie senses in our daily life interactions. There may be times when a heightened sense of alertness to our own or a shipmate's wellbeing might be in order. Perhaps taking note of the potential situations or unknown entities around us could help us develop



healthy and productive habits. Maybe there are known, unknown, or unnecessary distractions in our lives that are keeping us from operating to our full potential, robbing us from wise use of our time and resources. So, tonight I'd like to pray for greater alertness and awareness. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, tonight as we roll forward on our mission I thank you for watching over us and protecting us in safety. God, just as you watch out for us, I pray you would enable us to have a greater sense of watchcare, alertness and awareness of our own surroundings. Help us to see areas where we may have blind spots, where we could remove distractions or maybe add more self-care to an unbalanced schedule. Lord, thank you for the time you've allotted each of us to make choices and experience life--may we never take that time for granted, but make wise, safe, and value-based decisions informed by sound judgment and discerning awareness of our surroundings. I pray all of this in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 6 October 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaplain Williams here. You may have noticed there are just 35 days left until our PFA. That's just a little over a month. With that big event looming, many of us have increased our fitness regimens, trying to build or re-build stamina, core and push-up strength so we can excel on the PFA. If you're like me and sometimes feeling your age, you may notice that one key to success in fitness is flexibility. It seems the older I get the more and more I need to stretch to maintain healthy flexibility. Needing to stretch is one thing, but actually carving out the time to do it can be much harder. Often, because of crunched time schedules and various commitments, time for stretching may be minimal or virtually non-existent. For me, foregoing stretching means tightness, soreness, rigidity, and plenty of lower back pain. Not fun at all. However, I've also noticed that when I regularly stretch I'm more pain free, I feel more prepared to make it through the day, and I'm just more flexible in general, which leads to greater ease of mobility. Likewise, I am learning that flexibility in scheduling, approach to our work, relationships, expectations, and other elements of regular life is one of the keys to a more enjoyable existence. I see many of you bending and flexing in so many different ways to accomplish tasks, prepare and execute drills, navigate new sleep schedules, preparing for exercises, re-adjusting events on the POD, preparing for the next gun shoot or RAS, and surely countless other things only known to you. Flexibility is a way of life and is essential to our wellbeing. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, Tonight we pause to thank you for another day. Thank you for the dinner that was prepared for us tonight and especially those who prepared and served it. God, in this mission-oriented environment we work and live in, it becomes so important to be flexible--to take what comes when it comes and learn to manage. Lord, would you bless each of us with strength, with resilience and with flexibility to be able to bend and stretch, but not strain or tare. As we do so, may we maintain a clear focus and inner peace that can sustain us through the unknown twists and turns that we face at present and in the future. I offer this prayer in God's holy name, Amen.

#### 7 October 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening and happy Sunday Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Over the past few days many of us have been noticing the change in temperature as we've come north. Believe it or not, the temperature shift can even be felt in the main spaces, where earlier today one temperature gauge read 80 degrees. Much nicer than the heretofore balmy 95 degree heat. For many of us Feeling the slight chill in the air brings memories of fall time, leaves changing, family get togethers, chili cook-offs, or perhaps going out elk or deer hunting. Depending on location these seasonal changes are either more pronounced or miniscule in nature. Nevertheless, in most locations there are some forms of seasonal change. While it is usually easy to recognize and respond to seasonal changes, such as standing on the weather decks, feeling the cold and donning a jacket or wearing a turtle neck, it may be more difficult to recognize positive changes and developments in ourselves or others. Perhaps taking time to recognize positive personal change and improvement is something we could stand to do more of. Noticing progress we've made in a personal goal, on a PQS, or on strengthening a relationship with another person can be really invigorating and hope filling. Additionally, when we take time to notice positive change in another person--even if it is minute--we may be the catalyst to improving that person's hope and perspective, which may in turn ignite their productivity and willingness to work hard. So, tonight I'd like to pray for eyes to see positive change in ourselves and others. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, thank you for the earth, for its beauty, and for its consistent and reliable changes in season, which bring us variety and contrast. Father, likewise, each of us makes changes on a regular basis. I pray you would give us eyes to see the positive changes we've made--how experiencing change has led to our greater wellbeing and positively influenced those around us. Additionally Lord, please help us to recognized positive change and growth in our fellow shipmates. And as we do so, I pray you would energize and encourage them to move forward with hope and perspective. I pray all of this in your sacred name AMEN.

#### 10 October 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening and happy Wednesday Antietam, this is chaplain williams. For any of you who are old enough to remember 1999 when AOL made famous the phrase "You've Got Mail", that may have crossed your mind today when seeing the endless pallets of mail for our crew! Although, after today most of you could actually say "I've got mail". There's something unique and exciting about receiving mail--I'm sure it's the anticipation and rush of dopamine through our bodies heightening the excitement of what we will find after tearing into those care packages or Amazon boxes. Combined with the underway replenishment and parts delivery, the great accumulation of mail reminds me how wonderful it is to receive things. Whether you're Antonio Brown or a Sailor on Antietam, we all like to receive! What is the best way to receive and how do we go about doing it? How do we receive the food offered to us three times a day? How do we receive another's help with ESWS walk-throughs? How do we receive orders given to

accomplish a task? Or how do we receive a compliment from another person? Receiving graciously then, is something perhaps worthy of our reflection and consideration. So, tonight I'd like to pray in gratitude for what we have received. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, tonight at the end of this day of receiving fuel, food, stores, parts and plenty of mail I thank you for the blessings in our lives. Thank you first and foremost for the breath of life--the opportunity we had to wake up again today and make choices. God, thank you for our bodies, our hearts and minds that work in concert to help us survive and thrive. Thank you for good food and enough water to keep our systems hydrated and lubed. Thank you Lord for jobs to support us and our families as we travel the trail of life. Finally God, I ask your blessings and good graces to be upon all who will take their ESWS boards tomorrow, May they receive a gift of good memory to reside with them in that process, I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

11 October 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain williams. Today we heard many amazing stories and messages calling our attention to the 243rd birthday of our great U.S. Navy. While not everyone celebrates birthdays, those who do typically gather with family and friends to do something celebratory; something to signify the occasion of advancing one more year; something to lift the spirits by drawing strength from the past and making wishes for the future. Additionally, birthdays seem to be great chapter markers and periodic measures of time in which we can capture accomplishments or maybe reminisce on struggles we've overcome or fought through during the year. Thus, birthdays can be events to capture the strength and drive of the human will to persevere. Perhaps it would be useful for us as we celebrate the Navy's birthday tonight and in a couple more days, to consider how we too might cultivate hope and fortitude for this new year and new beginning. After all, it is we who make up this Navy! Let us pray: Heavenly Father, tonight as we gather and celebrate the birth of the Navy I thank you for all those who have gone before, who have given heart, might, mind, and strength to the cause of freedom and peace. Lord, I pray your blessings to rest with each Antietam Sailor this night, those who make up the fabric of the navy. Bless them in their boards tonight, in their MCI preparations, and in their upcoming Jeju port visit. God, I pray you would bless them as they do their maintenance, train in their jobs, and care for one another. As this year ends and another begins for our Navy, Lord would you give us all a new and energized perspective on the way forward, I pray in your glorious name, Amen.

16 Ocotober 2018 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is Chaplain Williams. Like many of you this morning, I was very impressed with the South Korean send-off on the pier. The Navy band playing the Village People and our very own Anchor's Away put a smile on my face as we pulled away and set out underway to continue our mission. Despite protestors, some meetings, and finalizing last underway checklist items, we stuck pretty close to our schedule. Time and time again I have witnessed the setting of sea and anchor detail and watched all of you go to your appointed places

of duty to fulfill your responsibilities. Consistency is a word I would use to describe most of our shipboard evolutions. Recently I came across an article speaking about how to develop mental toughness. The author writes, "When things get tough for most people, they find something easier to work on. When things get difficult for mentally tough people, they find a way to stay on schedule. For 95% of the circumstances in life, toughness simply comes down to being more consistent than most people." So I got thinking about consistency and how important it is to develop that within ourselves. Whether in our communication patterns, in our daily cleaning stations, in our eating choices, our physical fitness, our sleep plan, or our watch attentiveness, it seems consistency can be developed through setting small measurable behavioral goals. Developing a schedule and sticking to it out of principle can help build consistency. In the last several days of our patrol, perhaps we could challenge ourselves to choose some area of our life to be more consistent in during this remaining time; maybe develop a routine that can get us going in moments we need it most. So, tonight I'd like to pray for toughness through consistency. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, as we begin another period of underway I thank you for consistently hearing these prayers. Thank you for allowing us consistent 24 hour periods to shape our existence within the framework we've been given. God, I pray for each of us that we might find strength to choose consistency over complacency; to choose schedule over stagnancy. Lord, when we face tough going would you help us identify patterns and habits that can keep us going. I pray at this point in our patrol you would bless each of us with this persistent and present frame of mind and will to persevere forward. I pray this in your most holy name, Amen.

#### 19 October 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain williams. We are all aware of today's news from the Ronald Reagan, and in acknowledgement of their current situation tonight I would like to offer a prayer on their behalf. Let us pray: Dear God, on this Friday evening we collectively in our own manner and fashion come together to think upon and lift up our brothers and sisters on the Ronald Reagan at this time. At this very moment there are some of our fellow Sailors who are injured to varying degrees. Some have been medevaced and others are being treated aboard Reagan. Heavenly Father, I ask that your presence, your healing touch, your caring and attentive spirit would rest with all of the injured from today's accident. God, would you be with them in their treatment and bless their bodies to respond in positive ways to the care they receive. I pray for the doctors, nurses, corpsmen and others who are attending to them, that their hands and minds may be steady and firm in their healing task. God, be with all family and friends as well who are concerned for their loved ones--would you watch over and sustain them with your peace that surpasses all understanding. I also pray for the leadership and crew who still have a mission to perform--May they be enabled and blessed to do so. Finally God, bless each of our Antietam Sailors as we prepare to execute our PPO, as we work on repairing broken equipment, and as we continue to stand our watches and fulfill the mission we've been allowed to do. Lord lift us, empower us, energize us, and protect us in safety with your strong and steady arm I pray in your holy name, Amen.

## 20 October 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is Chaplain Williams. Have you ever been on the focsle or the weather decks, or maybe you were aft lookout on the fantail when all of the sudden a rogue wave seemed to come out of nowhere and just soaked you clean through? I know I've been the recipient of this on a couple occasions, but I've recently spoken with some who have been completely drenched from such a wave. While getting blindsided by a wave is not necessarily enjoyable, it stands as a reminder how important it is to be ready should that happen, and just how wet water is. Being on the lookout for potential rogue waves--even while enjoying a few minutes of downtime on the weather decks or focsle could mean the difference between being drenched or being dry. Likewise, there also may be life events, work items, or maybe elements of post-deployment transition back into families, marriages, or relationships that can blind-side us if we are not watchful and aware of what is coming down the pike. It can be very useful to project forward--even just for a few moments here and there--and consider what expectations we have, where we see potential pitfalls, or how we might avoid getting really wet during high wave moments. But then again, surely we ought to go easy on ourselves and remember that no matter how much we prepare, there are also wave moments that just happen and many of those are out of our control. So, tonight I'll pray for awareness to life blind spots. Please join me in prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, collectively we pause to thank you for our safety this day and for your guiding light and direction. Father, each day we live, experience and grow--and in that process there are surely times when we are blindsided or perhaps contribute to blindsiding others. God, would you be with us with perspective and awareness to be prepared for those wave moments. Bless each of us with hope in life's learning moments, and with understanding as we progress forward through the unknown. I pray you would continue to attend us with safety in our mission and bless our families and love ones who support us from afar. We pray in your holy name, Amen.

## 21 October 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is Chaplain Williams. Most of us are aware that in 20 days we will have our bi-annual opportunity to partake in the PFA. Do you remember that first time you got down into the push-up position--maybe it was at boot camp, OCS or the academy, and the PFA administrator yelled out "are you ready?" The first time this happened you didn't realize that there was a response required for this question, but after getting yelled at you probably discovered the answer was "Always ready!" This statement of always ready is something that highlights the very nature of our Navy--the attempt and movement towards a state of readiness for defense of our country, our assets, and interests world-wide. During the past few days this concept of "always ready" has come to mind as I've heard many times both day and night the 1 MC announcement to "Man SCAT" and "Man DRAKE", as well as sending the snoogie team into action. In the case of these quick response teams, being ready means that no matter what

they are doing they drop it to move urgently to their appointed place of duty, and often times that means giving up something like sleep, food, personal time, or other work to fulfill this important and vital responsibility. Thank you all for what you do! To be always ready surely is a tall order and takes effort. I've seen many of you studying for ESWS lately, to be ready for the test or boards, but even more importantly to be ready to understand how everything fits together in the bigger picture and to operate accordingly. I've noticed the ship store personnel doing inventory and stocking the shelves to be ready for the daily onslaught of hungry Sailors. I've seen CS's working around the clock to be ready to feed the masses. And I've sat in many meetings watching leaders coordinate to be ready for various operational missions. I've also seen many of you in your various watch stations ready to respond when the moment requires it. So, tonight I'd like to pray for our readiness. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, tonight I thank you for each within the sound of my voice who responds at short notice in so many ways. May they feel a sense of all our gratitude for what they do. God, I pray at this time that each of us might be filled with an awareness of our personal readiness and may we have ideas of what to sustain as well as how to improve. Father, bless our Sailors, our ship, our equipment--as well as our partners to be ready for anything and everything that lies ahead. May we be and remain always ready, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

22 October 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain Williams. For many of our salty Sailors, you may have a very difficult time remembering the first time you heard the Bos'n's call. Used for passing orders, especially routine orders--these pipes have been a part of maritime tradition likely since the days of the Crusades. Here on Antietam we have the pleasure of hearing various pipes throughout the day played by our very able and proficient bos'ns--whether for mess call, sweepers, casualties, special announcements, or flight quarters, these calls help keep us alert and aware of what's happening in our underway world. With two main notes--either low or high, and three tones--plain, warble, and trill--the Bos'n's pipe seems to be the perfect instrument for helping us draw our attention towards what is most important. In a world of countless distractions--finding ways to draw our attention towards what matters most in life might be a very useful exercise for many of us--particularly as we transition between underway and in-port periods, when more distractions--both positive and negative--present themselves into our daily schedules. Short of hiring our own personal boatswain's mate to pipe reminders to us on a daily basis, perhaps there are reminders we can build into our day to keep our priorities aligned with what is most important. Putting first things first can be a useful activity for each of us. So, tonight I'd like to pray for help to be alert to what matters most. Let us pray: Dear Heavenly Father, I thank you for our safety today during our transit--you have blessed us with a calm and steady transit and we are thankful for that. God, as we travel not only the straight but also our day to day--and particularly as we transition home soon--may we have the insight and foresight to be alert to what matters most. Lord, would you help us see how to most effectively prioritize our many life elements--may we see clearly how to put the first things first in our lives. Finally I

pray Father that you would continue to keep us alert and vigilant as we patrol, and may we be ever listening, alert, and ready to respond in the right way. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 24 October 2018 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain Williams. Today as we cruise back to Sagami Wan, and then on to home port, I've really noticed the up and down motion of the ship--particularly up forward where my office is located. I know it's even more pronounced up in the pilot house. Those in the forward gym can also feel this up and down motion--particularly when trying to do pull-ups, dead lifts or push-ups--the g-forces have the effect of making the body feel light as a feather during the upward motion and heavy as wet cement on the downward motion. This up and down movement sure does have one effect--it lets you know you're alive! Speaking of life, it seems to be akin to an 18-2 patrol--affixed with various up and down moments and days. Some storms and line tangles, accented by some calm seas, and complimented by various port calls. Likewise, as we transition home we may find that ups and downs continue--with homecoming comes transition, a re-alignment with family or other complimentary or competing elements vying for our attention. As we navigate the waters following 18-2 we may do well to join with those we live with, work with, and connect with, and set a track that will help us maintain an effective and balanced transition--even through the ups and downs. So, tonight I'd like to pray for all of us in the upcoming transition. Let us pray: Dear Heavenly Father, as we soon come to the end of our 18-2 patrol, I thank you for our safe travels over thousands of nautical miles of ocean. God, you have watched over our crew and ship through ups and downs, line tangles, straights transits, shadows, HRUs, carrier escorts, photo-ex's, Filipino barge hook-ups, small fishing boat avoidance and more. Thank you for your care and concern. Now as we move to complete our final range and transition home I pray you would be with all who are involved in tomorrow's range with your strength and presence of mind. I also pray for safety in tomorrow's sea and anchor duty--be with us all that we might focus on the task at hand. Additionally, Lord bless each Sailor in the transition from underway back to home port--strengthen them in their re-connection with family, friends, and ways of life. In and through all things--ups, downs, and in between Lord, bless them and their loved ones with your peace, I pray in your holy name, Amen!

#### JANUARY 2019

##### Underway to Sapporo, Hokkaido

#### 29 January 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam this is chaplain Williams. As we all know, other than the berth shift in December, it's been nearly three months since we were underway. Interestingly, it's also been almost three months since we had our PFA, and it's quite possible that some of us can relate to the mighty Antietam getting underway for the first time in awhile. You know that feeling of waking up early to hit the treadmill or weights, or maybe swim laps for the first time in several weeks. How many electrical or engineering casualties do we experience when trying to get up

and be active after long periods of sedentary posture? Whether we are young or like Antietam, more advanced in years, plainly stated, it can be hard to get moving again when we've been stationary. But, there is a thrill and even an exhilaration that can and does occur when we begin moving again. To be going somewhere feels good and feels right. Perhaps there are areas in some of our lives where we've been sedentary and could use an increase in movement, an underway of sorts. So tonight I'd like to pray for positive movement. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, tonight as we conclude our first day underway I thank you for the safety and support we've been blessed with. Lord, like going underway today, movement in a positive direction can sometimes be difficult, even encumbered with spiritual, emotional or physical obstacles. I pray at this time that each of us might be strengthened and empowered to make those wise and sometimes difficult decisions that will aid in moving us in a positive direction; those presently small choices which ultimately can lead to big joy and satisfaction. Please strengthen us in our movement. God, I also pray for your continued watchcare over our families and friends at home and abroad, and may your presence and power be with all on watch and all of us this night I pray in your holy name Amen.

30 January 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Yesterday morning at our sea and anchor brief i heard NAV say that the seas were going to be confused. While that is an actual navigational term, I'm sure many of you tonight would agree that there is some literal meaning to it, as you experience a very confused intestinal and digestive system as a result of the seas. And yet there are some--usually those with a few more wrinkles, maybe less or graying hair, and a maxed out sea pay account who seem to be virtually unaffected. Why do the seas affect some of us but not others? Are there some who have learned over time to adjust and manage through these difficulties? What is it that gets us through challenges and helps us weather the actual and proverbial storms of life, and seasons us for more storms to come? Surely it has something to do with the fighting spirit we all possess. The will and motivation to press forward, to prevail against challenges. So my prayer tonight is for strength through rough seas. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, tonight there are many among us who have felt the nauseating effects of the increasing sea state. Likewise, some within the sound of my voice may be experiencing rough seas of life, family or health challenges, financial struggles or fears about futures unknowns. God, in all of these challenges I pray for your presence, your persistent and strong foundation, and for your steadfastness. Bless the Antietam crew father--strengthen those feeling ill or overcome from sea and life's waves. And god, would you make us salty through the seasoning salt of your security and steadiness. And finally, again I ask your blessings on our families and all those who have the watch this night. I pray in your holy name Amen.

31 January 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, This is Chaplain Williams. Like most of you I've been fascinated with the change in weather as we've traversed north up to Hokkaido. It's not like it's a surprise--the



cold, snow and ice--we've heard our leaders talk in many occasions about the cold weather, and we may have even taken time to Google the weather prior to leaving or along the way these past couple days. it's safe to say we all had a somewhat clear cognitive understanding of the pending shift in temperature, but ultimately for many of us it took a shocking blast of frigid air today or last night to solidify the truth of it all. It's likely that shock of cold left you either grateful you had prepared with adequate cold weather gear, or despondent that you had not quite thought through the effects of the cold on your body. After all, when standing in the relative comfort of home port, it becomes a choice--an act of faith if you will--to prepare or not. Preparation requires positive action, a trusting attitude and sometimes hard work. But it always pays off in the end. So tonight I pray for preparation. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, thank you for the safe transit we've enjoyed so far on this underway, which in large measure was due to the preparations of our crew. As we prepare to pull into port tomorrow, may we ensure that we are prepared, father. Not only for the cold, but I also pray for prepared minds and a firm resolve to make positive choices and to act according to the values we hold close. Lord would you also prepare the path for us that our sailors may be kept safe from harm or any other threat. Bless each of us with safety in travel, whether by bus or train, and I pray a protective blessing on all Antietam family and friends traveling up to meet us this weekend, with safety and health. I pray this all in your holy name, Amen.

## FEBRUARY 2019

### Waiting to go in-port Sapporo

#### 1 February 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, This is Chaplain Williams. As we all know we are currently in a state of water conservation, and have been encouraged to limit long showers and use paper plates and plastic utensils etc. surely there have been other times in most of our lives where we had to conserve certain things for a variety of reasons. This morning those shoveling snow out in the cold tundra of the focsle tried to conserve body heat by wearing face masks, layers, gloves and even cold weather suits. Growing up in my home during the winter months my father would go around the house just before bed and turn all of the thermostats down to try and conserve energy and save money on the electric bill. In each of these cases conservation means being a good steward over what we've been given, precious resources allotted us for our wellbeing. This means being proactive and responsible, making a conscious choice and effort to avoid waste. The result of this type of living will be extended subsistence, and possibly even abundance, as conserved resources accumulate over time. So tonight I'd like to pray for courage to conserve. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, I thank you this night for the Antietam, our shelter, our home and our protection this night from the elements. As we attempt to conserve water, I also pray we may have the strength and fortitude to become good stewards over all of the gifts we've been given. May we recognize the miracle of our lives, our bodies, our minds and souls and care for them courageously, appropriately and adequately. Father, there may be other areas in which we ought

to conserve--please help each of us do so, and through those efforts find fulfillment and sustainment. God I pray for those managing and executing ships movements this night and tomorrow, and bless the Japanese tug operators and crews as well with their operations tomorrow morning. Finally, I ask that you would conserve us with energy and power in you to maintain our course toward a successful port visit here in Sapporo, I pray in your sacred name, Amen!

#### 2 February 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Have you ever been on a long car ride with children? One thing they may be apt to ask from time to time is "dad, mom, are we there yet?" You May have responded as Tom Brady did about his teams presence in another super bowl "not yet, we're still here!" Now whether you believe Brady's proclamation or stand firm like a Ram, the fact of the matter is that WE are still here, and we have stood firm ever since we arrived in our icy operating box a couple days ago. We have not given up--I have walked the decks as you have and seen sailors using hammers to excavate lines and mounts. I have witnessed so many of you choosing to make the best of our situation and even help one another in tasks such as shoveling snow or inquiring into another's wellbeing. Being still here is something we choose to do--choosing to be here for ourselves and for others, and choosing to do the best we can within the parameters we've been allotted. Day and night I have seen you being here while on watch. Recently a young sailor pointed out a play on words suggesting the importance of having a watch while on watch--but rather than staring at the watch on watch, willing the second hand to accelerate into the future, many of you mindfully soak in learning and expanding, honing your skills to become an even keener watch stander. So, my prayer tonight is that we might choose to BE here, in the present moment, even as we move on toward the destination, both underway and in life. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, tonight we are here. God, surely many of not most of us would rather be there or at least somewhere other than here in our icy box we've been allotted. But God, it is here that we are and here that we stand together. Father, I pray your presence and peace would attend us in our present moment. As we join together as colleagues in arms, friends and fellow human beings, help us to be HERE in mind, in purpose, and in effort. As we choose to be HERE I ask that you would also be HERE to support our cause God. Finally, please watch over the watch tonight with your invigorating power and strength. And be a light to our feet and a lamp to our path tomorrow morning I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 6 February 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Today I walked from my office past admin and as i stepped through the hatch into the main 1 pway I noticed the burger Wednesday line extending nearly to admin. Several were commenting on the length of the line and noticing how crowded it was due to the pending sea and anchor detail at 1130. This was not the first discussion of lines these past few days. Those on the ship Monday worked tirelessly for hours handling lines in a heroic endeavor to save Antietam from going underway due to high winds and parted

lines. And then again today during sea and anchor detail there were several sailors who handled freezing lines and others who kept tabs on lines to be sure we could get underway safely. Additionally, others did not handle physical lines but worked to keep lines of communication open and active, in order to maintain the safety and functionality of the ships underway procedures. All of this discussion reminds me of the importance of lines. Lines provide much needed stability and structure for our lives. We need to draw lines in our lives to establish and maintain important boundaries or highlight valuable goals to reach for and achieve. Some lines we set should not be crossed and we can convey those to others with confidence. We can feel proud when we stay within the proscribed lines and behave in accordance with high standards such as honor courage and commitment, and behave appropriately as was highlighted by our actions this weekend and applauded earlier by the CO. So tonight I'd like to pray for clarity and awareness to remain in line. Let us pray: God, I take a moment tonight to give thanks for boundaries; lines in life that provide structure, discipline and ultimately yield meaning and purpose to existence. Father, as we all continue down the decision making path, I pray you would teach us and enlighten us to see clearly the lines we should stay inside. Lord, bless us with strength to stay in line even if the temptations are great--bless our minds, bodies and souls with a strong resolve to remain firm and in line. Thank you again for your matchless power and love, I pray in your holy name Amen.

7 February 2019 Evening Prayer

I really enjoy Italian Thursday lunch, particularly because of the Italian sausage, with sautéed peppers and onions. I'm not sure what part of Italy our particular sausages hail from but certainly they were ground with precision and just the right spices to produce a wonderful product. I'm interested in the process that goes into grinding sausage or meat in general. I've never tried it, but plan to at some very soon future date. Recently I have heard the decision making process referred to as making sausage--a combining of multiple opinions, thoughts and ideas that all get thrown into the grinder to produce a tasty product. Perhaps we too can relate to the sausage making process as we go through the everyday grind--the blending together of planned and unplanned activities, the constantly shifting daily schedule, functional and malfunctioning gear, the wild card of one's own physical and emotional wellbeing, the intricacies of interpersonal and professional relationships, or the looming responsibilities of MCI and fixing gear, and the emotional tug of family circumstances back home. And we also add creativity, forward thinking, training, exceptional planning, a will to persist and a healthy sense of humor--all of these and more get thrown into the daily grind of our lives. And notice it's a daily grind, not an every once in awhile grind. Perhaps it could be useful to pause to reflect on what our daily grind is producing. Is it the product we want? Do we need to switch some ingredients around to achieve the desired outcome? How can we be even more creative and inventive in our daily grind? Tonight I'd like to pray for creativity and ingenuity in our daily grind. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, today as we come close to wrapping up another day, I thank you for the sailors of Antietam, for their perseverance, their consistency and willingness to do hard things. God, as

they engage tomorrow with all of its known and unknown qualities, I pray you would bless and strengthen them to meet every challenge, to give them clarity, wisdom, creativity and drive to achieve their goals. Lord as a team I ask your guiding light to unify and clarify us, to protect us with physical, social, emotional and spiritual safety, and give us success in our efforts. As we make our way back home I ask that you would bless all those standing watches and working to bring Antietam back with sharp minds and steady hands. Lord, bless us all in our daily grind I pray in your holy name Amen.

## MAY 2019

### 19-2 Patrol

#### 13 May 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. First allow me to express what an honor it is to be with all of you out on this 19-1 patrol. I am grateful and humbled to serve with you in supporting and defending the constitution of our great nation. As we began today's patrol I couldn't help but notice several family members and detaching ANTIETAM Sailors on the beach waving goodbyes and expressing in several different ways their care and concern for loved ones and fellow shipmates. Though distance separated these goodbyes, there was an obvious sense of connection between those on the beach and those on the ship returning the gestures--though words were unspoken, concern and care was conveyed. Additionally, I also observed the many instances of formal communications between line handlers, phone talkers, aft steering communicators, and others--maybe some of you also noticed how important speaking up is during the formal communication process. Speaking up, letting our voice be heard and understood is vital to connecting with others and achieving joint objectives. Perhaps it would be helpful here at the outset of our patrol to consider how we might speak up in the areas of our lives that matter most. So tonight I'd like to pray for the courage and strength to speak up. Please join me in prayer: Dear God, as we start out this patrol together I pause first to thank you for our safe underway this morning and the absolutely beautiful day you have provided us with. Thank you for our team and for those who support us from the shore. Lord, now as we embark on this mission together, I pray you would empower each of us to speak up in important ways--to let our voices be heard by those back home who support and wait for us, to speak up in our areas of responsibility, to speak up in defense of what is right and good. God, I pray you would give us courage to speak up when we sense a concern for a fellow shipmate, or maybe even strength to speak up in praise about another. Finally, I raise my voice in a request to you Father that you would bless us with safety, sound minds and inner toughness to be excellent in all we do, and sustain our loved ones throughout our absence, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 14 May 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Today as I walked around the ship and connected with many of you, I experienced a fairly consistent thread through all of our

discussions, and that was the desire to achieve some goals you've set for yourselves while on patrol. This of course was coupled with some discussion about how to balance the many duties and responsibilities most of us carry, along with sharpening our war fighting capabilities and of course getting some sleep along the way. Inevitably, starting out a patrol seems to be like starting any new routine, in that it forces us to set priorities and create a schedule that can help us accomplish those objectives. In all of this prioritization, we have the most natural human spiritual need to progress and achieve new feats of character and self improvement. Some of you are trying to get more quads, others are journaling and self reflecting, and some are trying to refrain from junk food. Bottom line is this is exciting! It engenders hope! It feels so good to allocate space in time to set and achieve life goals. And doing it while out on patrol highlights your resilience and strength of character. So, my prayer tonight is one of encouragement and empowerment in accomplishing goals you've set for yourselves. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, on this second night of patrol, I express gratitude and joy for the Sailors of Antietam--these amazing, talented and qualified women and men who have set personal goals for themselves to progress in countless ways. May they be filled with hope, with drive, and collective purpose in achieving these goals. And God, along the way, I pray they will feel empowered and energized with a sense of purpose--that the pursuit of their goals will give them momentum and meaning throughout this patrol. Father we all rejoice together in the thought of bettering ourselves, improving our lives and thereby impacting each other and our loved ones in positive ways. Be with us now this night, strengthen those on watch and protect those we love back home, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 15 May 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. As our air det and flight deck team can attest, this week is all about Initial Ship Aviation Team Training, or ISATT. This qualification period makes it possible for the Saberhawks and Antietam to integrate into one team to fulfill our 19-1 mission. Certainly, both the det and flight deck teams, and CIC watch teams have been working extensively these past few days to coordinate and accomplish this integration. So, I looked up some synonyms for integration and found some of these words: unification, merger, fusing, blending, meshing, homogenization, coalescing, assimilation, and amalgamation. The ISATT process truly seems to be a metaphor for all of these words, and when you stop to think about it, these words also highlight what it means to develop a team. Just as ISATT takes many hours and lots of proactive work and focus doing day and night deck landing, vertical replenishments, crash and salvage, and other qualifications, it also takes time for new and seasoned Antietam Sailors to integrate and connect as members of a winning team. Perhaps integration is also something some of us seek on a personal level--integrating scattered thoughts, goals, ambitions, or even relationships with friends or family. Taking the time to integrate in areas that are meaningful is an important activity that is definitely worth the effort. So, tonight I'd like to pray for integration. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, on this Wednesday night we pause in brief reflection on the importance of integration, of community and connection. God, thank you for each human being

on this ship--each comes from a different background and walk of life. I pray that each of us may bring these redeeming differences and unique qualities to bear in the building and integration of our team. Furthermore, I pray as we attempt to establish a routine and healthy underway habits that you would guide us through our own personal integrative process. Lord, help us find wholeness and fulfillment in our underway routines. Finally, I pray for your strength and support to be with those on watch, those who are repairing casualties, and all our loved ones back on the beach. It is in your holy name I pray, Amen.

#### 16 May 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. I recently learned that there are some enemy threats that are easier to manage based on how soon we act to deter them. The longer we wait the more challenging and threatening they become. This makes sense in so many obvious ways and it seems ridiculous to think that we would wait to act. Inaction certainly can lead to crippling, if not permanently damaging results. Today as I engaged with many of you in conversation I heard anything but inaction--in fact, on several occasions I learned of new routines, new study groups formed, new workout plans initiated, new approaches to solving difficult problems, new courses of action proposed. This type of action absolutely lessens the imposing threats of motivational stagnancy and mental enervation. Positive Action strengthens resolve, builds resiliency and mental stamina. Creating a plan and doing the work necessary to be committed to it can give us purpose and direction. May I recommend just taking a moment to consider your actions--what are some positive ones to sustain, and perhaps what are some that could be implemented to help create forward momentum? My prayer tonight is for power to positively act right now. Please join me in prayer: Dear Lord, thank you for another day full of safe evolutions. You have blessed and sustained us Father with your protective hand. Your actions have benefited us and continue to lift us up in all that we do. I thank you for this. Lord, I have seen your power in the lives of the crew, how they are motivated and encouraged to act in positive ways. Thank you for that. I pray now Father for continued power and strength to act in ways that build and foster encouragement and inner strength; act in ways that connect and unify our team; act in ways that give each of us the will power to push towards achieving our goals and ambitions. And if there are any positive actions that come to any of us right this moment, I pray for strength to act now! Finally father, I pray for your active presence to sustain those who have the watch and our many loved ones on the Home front. I pray in your sacred name, Amen.

#### 17 May 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. As we all are fully aware, earlier today we started moving south on our way towards Guam. This movement was motivated by our completion of ISATT as well as our requirement to get to Guam to do an ammo onload and fulfill our other mission requirements. Today there were also other movements I noticed happening. In addition to our regular movements between watch stations, berthings, the mess line, the ship store, and other spaces on the ship, there was extreme movement towards the

messdecks when AirBoss announced McDonalds cheese burgers on the menu for afternoon snack, then there was more movement as we all moved smartly to our muster locations for the man overboard drill. In all of these cases there was something that motivated our movement--whether it was a desire to fulfill our mission, or a need for a tasty, cheesy bite of goodness, or the need to be accounted for in the drill. Whether we are aware of it or not, our movement and forward momentum can actually positively impact our mood. With that in mind, it might behoove us to consider what motivates us toward forward movement and then build those things into our schedule. In effect, find out what could drive us from the proverbial berthing to the messdecks to grab a cheeseburger? Tonight I'd like to pray for insight as we consider what moves us. Let us pray. Dear God, thank you for another day and for the beauty all around us that we get to behold. Thank you again for safety and for the opportunity we have to serve you and our country. Now, as we reflect on today's activities, I pray for insight and wisdom as we consider what our motivations are for movement. God, please open our eyes and hearts to understand what drives us, what motivates us, what moves us, and give us the strength to do those things. And Father, finally I also pray for those who may be feeling the negative effects of movement, please lift and strengthen those who are feeling sick in any way. Again, I pray for those standing the watch and for your strong protective hand to move through the lives of our loved ones back home. I pray this in your holy name, Amen.

#### 18 May 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Have you ever told a friend a joke and waited to watch their reaction and the anticipated reaction was not what you thought it would be? Sometimes we may even surprise ourselves at how we react to certain life events--perhaps we experience something normally very upsetting, and we surprise ourselves with a calm reaction. Or maybe we suffer a sad life event and rather than physically emoting we feel a need for isolation. Today perhaps many of us had reactions or witnessed reactions to the affects of sea state on the human body--either our own or others! I witnessed several responses to the seas around the deckplates--some were down for the count, others expressed headache or tiredness symptoms, and there were a handful who stated that it is just annoying. While there are certain physical events that almost certainly and scientifically produce specific reactions in objects, to include us humans, it may be useful to consider how we react to various stimulæ. Have you paid attention to how you react in certain situations? Are you aware of reactive tendencies you may or may not have? How we react can make all the difference in our relationships, work centers, career pursuits and even this patrol. Learning to shape our reactions in helpful and purposeful ways could be a useful endeavor. So, tonight I'll pray for wisdom in our reactions. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we continue along our patrol, I thank you for your steady and protecting hand of safety. During the course of this day there certainly have been moments to which we have reacted or witnessed others react in a variety of ways. Lord, I pray you would give us continued wisdom and guidance to help us react in helpful and productive ways. Ways that can build and strengthen us and our fellow teammates. Please guide us as we reflect on our reactions

and curb any that may be out of alignment. As always, I seek your steady presence to be with those on watch and our families at home, I pray in your holy name, Amen. Have a great night!

#### 19 May 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Today due to the fog and some stormy weather, the low visibility detail was stationed to aid the lookouts and others to see more clearly through the storms. I'm encouraged by the low visibility detail because it means more eyes are looking out for potential pitfalls. Though it usually means some sailors are going to get wet, it could also mean we are kept more safe. Thanks to the low visibility detail! There most certainly is an applicable lesson in this as well. Consider the strength that comes from having more people focused on achieving a given task--more minds, ideas, more creativity and thinking power--this most certainly can be helpful. Sometimes our own perspective on things can be skewed or slanted, it is very easy to look at things through only one lens, and consequently--though unintentionally--blind ourselves to other perspectives, some of which may be more productive or helpful in the long run. We may at times feel ourselves traveling through life's fog, I know there have been foggy days in my life, and when that happens, calling the low visibility detail may be exactly what we need. Do you have a low vis detail handy? Do you know whom you can call for support and added vision? Certainly we ought to identify our low vis team and learn to consider wisely their added wisdom and insight. That takes trust and humility to accept their added vision, but it may be helpful in the long run. Additionally, maybe we serve on the low vis team for one of our colleagues--what could we do to be of greater assistance to them? How might we help expand their vision and see where they may have blind spots? Tonight I'd like to pray for help to see and to help others see. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, thank you again for another safe day through rough seas. Thank you for seeing us and coming to our aid in life's foggy moments. God, as we consider our roles in helping others, loved ones, colleagues friends, may we take seriously our role to help others see, to provide stratified perspective to aid in achieving the best outcomes. Father, please give us the restraint and humility necessary to see more clearly, and even if that clarity means embracing the vision of another. Lord, in all things, may we have eyes to see danger looming on the horizon and help others and ourselves steer clear. Finally, I ask for your continued peace and vision to remain with those on watch and our loved ones at home. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 20 May 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, This is Chaplain Williams. So, it's definitely getting warmer, I think we can all agree on that. And one way we've discovered in the Navy to handle heat is to dog down doors--it helps keep the spaces air-tight and seals in the cool A/C, which in turn keeps each of us at a comfortable temperature. Speaking of doors on the ship, there are lots of them, and if given the chance, most of us can think of a few doors off the top of our heads that we are either thankful for or conversely ones that give us grief. I'm sure many of you who have most recently been either trying to secure doors, open doors, or just not get knocked out by a door, can attest



that doors can be complicated things. But we need doors, they lead to places, create boundaries for places, seal in the cool air, or even in some cases save the ship during times of flooding. As frustrating as they can be, we need them. Additionally, we've all heard the adage, whenever one door closes another opens--while we don't want that to be the adage with our doors on Antietam, it can certainly apply in life. Sometimes doors close on opportunities we think we wanted or needed. It is hard to see potential for other doors during those times, but other doors do present themselves and new opportunities do arise. There may be some onboard right now feeling like certain doors have closed and opportunities have diminished. While very difficult, I invite you to open your perspective and notice the many other doors around you. Most certainly there is another one waiting to be opened! So, tonight I'd like to pray for wisdom to recognize the doors in our lives and insight to know how to engage them. Let us pray, Dear Heavenly Father, today it has warmed up considerably and we thank you for the variety and beauty of all parts of this world upon which we live. Thank you again for safety on our patrol and for your presence as we make our way forward. God, I pray at this time for each of the actual doors on this ship--particularly those that may be stuck open or sealed shut--or maybe even those that are in between. Would you bless with insight those who are either trying to or about to repair them? Additionally, if there are those tonight who feel any doors have shut in life, would you strengthen them, fill them with hope and guide them to other open doors. Lord, thank you so much for your open door policy and may your mighty strength continue with us, with those on watch and those we love back home, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

21-22 May In-port Guam

23 May 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is chaplain Williams. Earlier today I was greeting a Sailor and, as has been the case over the last year, he was teaching me the proper way to shake hands. Have you noticed how many ways there are to shake a person's hand? I shake a lot of hands so I have come to learn there are countless ways to greet another with our hands! The thing about these greetings though is that they unite and connect us with one another and assure the other that we are still here, constant and supportive, and we will remain so. This is an essential part of our human interaction as members of the Antietam family, and it also propels forward our optimism and hope. Daily I am encouraged by each of you as we greet in the p-ways or in your workspaces and you are patient with my attempts to remember the proper hand-greetings! I am also motivated as I see you all do that with each other! As we all know, these next few days each of us will be either directly or indirectly involved in the Pacific Vanguard exercise. As a team, we will be handshaking with our allies Australia, Japan, and the Republic of Korea in a joint exercise to integrate as a potent allied force, ready to respond to a rapidly changing environment. As we begin this training and handshaking process I would like to offer a prayer for all involved. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, I take a moment right now on day one of Pacific Vanguard to pray for all of the Sailors on ships from all 4 nations involved in this exercise. God, would you bless us with an increased ability to communicate, understand, connect, integrate, and unite. May we

find the means to become a united front and be ready to face whatever evil may come our way. Father, additionally thank you for our safety in conducting the RAS tonight, and may all who are able get rest and recuperation from this day. Finally, Thank you for your supportive, reaching, and sustaining hand, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 24 May 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Many of you who were involved in the photoex today learned how important planning, coordinating and ultimately positioning is when it comes to these types of things. Just like taking the family photo when we were growing up, when mom or grandma picked out the matching colors and outfits and planned the scenic backdrop, today's photo also took some pretty calculated planning to coordinate the positioning of all vessels involved. It sure was impressive! Getting into position for our photoex also required specific maneuvers and at times maybe even some slight course corrections. Surely, positioning Antietam where she needed to be today required some detailed planning. Isn't that also the case with most life endeavors as well? Getting into the position or place we want to be in requires a vision, planning, hard work, lots of maneuvering, and some slight course corrections. The great thing about it is, like with the photoex, we have lots of space to maneuver in setting about our plan. Taking time to review our own personal positioning plan is something we can do on a regular basis. Tonight I'd like to pray for guidance as we each consider our own path to our positions we seek. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we begin the wrap-up of another day we pause in grateful reflection for safety in the various evolutions conducted today. Thank you for safety in maneuvering, flying and in our daily labors aboard ANTIETAM. God, What a blessing it is to work with so many talented and incredible people. I ask now that you would bless each of them with perspective and insight as they move along their paths of positioning, as they seek to be in the place where they might make fulfilling contributions to those around them. And may they each sense what can be done now to get them into position in the future. Finally, i ask you to Bless and sustain our crew and ship as we continue the exercise and work to maintain our ship. I also pray for our loved ones back home with health and protection, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 25 May 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is Chaplain Williams. After last night's CIWS shoot, the TORPEX, and today's shoots I've noticed a theme emerging regarding post-fires and post evolution maintenance. It seems any time we exercise equipment--even for just a few minutes--there is a good chunk of time required for maintenance on the back end, and for good reason. While there may be some rates that are more specifically situated for the post flight or post-fires maintenance, it really seems that a big part of gear accountability is making sure we are maintaining that gear. I have been so impressed with the level of expertise and combined knowledge on this ship when it comes to maintenance, and I'm inspired by it! It got me thinking about what things I should be maintaining as well, and even how I or we maintain ourselves,

which is probably the most important piece of gear any of us has. I'm thankful for the brief moments here and there that we each are afforded to maintain ourselves--much like the moments we allot to maintaining our gear. A quick nap, a moment going topside to take in some sea breeze, a good conversation with friend over a meal, or maybe reading a chapter in a good book. While our personal maintenance schedules and activities may differ, they are all important. I'll pray tonight for wisdom to see and exercise personal maintenance opportunities. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, I am grateful for your blessings of safety and success today as we continued our exercise. What an honor it is for me, Lord to witness the amazing work of these great Sailors. God, you continue to strengthen them in their mission, their lives, and their various endeavors, and for that I am grateful. As they keep striving to be better each day, I pray you would also help them see opportunities for rest and personal maintenance. Help them strike that optimal balance so they may have the energy needed to fight on. Father, Now this evening I pray you would abide with us as we continue further exercises into the night. May your hands of safety lift and strengthen all this night I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 26 May 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is Chaplain Williams. Perhaps if you were outside around 0553 this morning or plan to go outside in about 20 minutes, you'll notice one of the most consistent occurrences known on our planet. The sunrise and sunset out at sea are truly breathtaking--the expanse and wash of colors, with dancing and evolving light across the horizon has inspired and mystified humans for millennia. Out here at sea I am grateful when the sun keeps coming up and going down as planned--while the sunrise and set times do change as the year progresses, the fact that the sun comes up and goes down is a testament to its consistency. While it might be easy at times to focus on the inconsistencies in life, it is highly likely there are more consistencies than we are aware. I'd invite each of us to consider some of these when we have a moment. For now, I'd like to pray for eyes to notice the consistencies around us. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, tonight as we embrace yet another spectacular sunset evening on Antietam, I thank you for your consistent presence and artistry. God, as we go throughout this night and the coming day I pray for eyes more attuned to the consistencies around us. As we do this Lord, would you strengthen our own consistency and give us means and power to be excellent in the fulfillment of our mission. Finally, I pray in gratitude for the consistency in our safety, and may that continue tomorrow as we move through our exercise. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 27 May 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is Chaplain Williams. As many of you finish up your meal I encourage you to pause for a moment of reflection on this Memorial Day evening. Just a few years following the Civil War, Americans in towns and cities across the country began holding tributes to the fallen soldiers by decorating graves with flowers and offering prayers of remembrance. In 1868, General John A. Logan, the leader of a national veteran's association proclaimed a national day of remembrance to be held on the last Monday in May. He said, "the

30th of May, 1868, is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village and hamlet churchyard in the land." Eventually, Following World War I and II, the day was renamed Memorial Day, and designated as a day to remember those fallen in all national conflicts. And so, as we find ourselves out at sea fulfilling our nation's call on this Memorial Day, may we each pause now for a moment of silence as we pay our own tributes to our fellow sisters and brothers in arms who have given the full measure of devotion to defend what we hold dear today. Please join me in a moment of silence, followed by TAPS.

### 30 May 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is Chaplain Williams. A lot has happened these past couple days since we were last underway. Perhaps of greatest note is the fact that we have experienced a change of command. Many of you were at the change of command ceremony and heard the words from Vice Admiral Thomas as well as reflections from both CAPT Kessler and CAPT Gorman as one relinquished and the other assumed command of Antietam. Of note, one common thread I noticed woven through all three messages was that the crew is the greatest asset to the operability of our ship. It also struck me that while there was a change in the leader of our organization, the crew still remained constant. It seems life is full of changes, but almost always there are elements that remain constant. Finding constants in change can be relieving and supportive. As we experience change it can be helpful to identify constants that remain. What are those? They may be different for each of us, but could be revealed through careful reflection. I invite us to look for constants in our life that can serve as guideposts as we navigate life's changes. Please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, thank you for change and for the opportunity to reflect on past experience and anticipate forward movement in new ways. In all of the changes we each experience, I pray we might recognize those constants in each of our lives we can hold onto; those principles or pillars we can rely on. God, may we also sense the importance of change as an agent for growth and further development. Finally Lord, tonight as many Sailors experience a change in schedule from in-port Guam would you strengthen all on watch this night with energy and focus. I humbly pray all of this in your constant name, AMEN.

### 31 May 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is Chaplain Williams. Today I was outside on the midships quarterdeck and chatted briefly with some of our wonderful deck Sailors who were swapping out old toggle pins in the stansions with shiny new toggle pins. After visiting with them briefly I recalled the many times I have confidently leaned against the fixed life lines, held by the stansions, which were in turn lodged securely into the stansion sockets and supported by the toggle pins. What if those toggle pins had not held those many times I leaned against the life line? The more I pursued this train of thought the more I realized how important each part is--the life line, the stansion, the stansion socket or flower pot, and the toggle pin. This four-piece

mechanism effectively keeps us safe from falling overboard--especially during an emergency break away or other moments when the ship rolls. Truly, each part of this system is needed to maintain our safety while moving about the weather decks. Likewise, each of us--no matter what our role is on the ship--is needed to create our team. Thankfully we are a team, or family made up of toggle pins, life lines, stansions and flower pots--can you imagine how disruptive and dysfunctional we would be if we were all toggle pins? The variety and interdependence of our team is what gives us strength. I am grateful for the strength and safety I feel as I lean on your knowledge of your particular areas of expertise. With this in mind, let us pray. Heavenly Father, I am in awe of the many talents, skills, and roles each member of the Antietam team plays and how extremely capable they are in these roles. God, indeed I thank you for the differences and variety of each member of our team and how these differences all work together in a symbiotic manner to help us be excellent. Father, may each of us recognize the gifts we've been given and grow into those--trusting that what we bring is valuable and is a needed contribution to the whole. Bless each Sailor this evening, their families and friends, and all those particularly who are in need of strength or encouragement, father we now lean on you and pray this in your holy name, Amen.

#### 1 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is Chaplain Williams. Today I went down to Main TWO and watched briefly as a couple of our GSMs worked on removing the fuel filter from 1 Bravo GTM. It's always shocking going from the relative comfort of the main TWO p-way, and decending down into the plant. I have the utmost respect for each of you who work in these types of environments day after day. As I reflect now on what these technicians were doing, I'm impressed with the discipline these Sailors possess, to go into a less-than favorable situation to execute a very important repair procedure. This process of facing challenges head on, even when it means going into the fray is something that each of you do in numberless ways throughout each given day. Facing problems head on, whether with our gear or with each other is always a best practice. Delaying repairs or important interpersonal communications can mean holding up the mission or further injuring a relationship. These two GSMs working on 1 Bravo GTM taught me this lesson. So tonight I'd like to pray for inertia to face our problems head on. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, I pause this evening and thank you for a safe day and a safe week as we wrap it up and kick off a new month. Thank you for each member of our crew, who daily work to fight the ship and work side by side with one another to fulfill our assigned mission. As we do so, and as problems arise, I pray for your strength and momentum to face those things head on. Lord, whether it's a qualification board, a gun shoot, fixing a piece of gear, or just engaging in a very difficult conversation with a shipmate, I pray for each Antietam Sailor to have the courage and fortitude to face these challenges head on in faith that you will strengthen and lift them. I pray in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 2 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is the chaplain. Beginning early this morning we commenced our straits transit. To kick off the transit I noticed the modified navigation detail was set, and shortly after that--due to the rain and fog--the low visibility detail was also set. I got thinking, the definition of strait in this context refers to a narrow passage of water connecting two seas. But another definition of strait, and with the exact same spelling, according to the online dictionary is the use of the word in reference to a situation characterized by a specified degree of trouble or difficulty, like when someone is in dire straits. As always, the Antietam provides us with a living metaphor in the sense that despite traveling through straits, whether actual or dire, Antietam's response was to keep plugging along, one nautical mile at a time--and in certain moments of extreme challenge, call in modified navigation or low viz support. We all travel through straits in our careers and our lives. Thank goodness we have each other to lean on and receive strength from. I'd like to offer a prayer tonight in recognition of this blessing. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, I want to thank you for the blessing of not having to travel through life's straits all alone. Lord, as life presents us with straits may we recognize the blessing of those around us to whom we can look for strength, and to whom we can also reach out to with our support. Father I pray for your presence and clarity as we navigate both literal and figurative straits these next couple days. I also pray for your presence in the lives of struggling or ill family and friends at home, that your healing and comfort may reside with them. Be with and sustain each sailor this night I pray in your holy name Amen.

### 3 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is your Chaplain. Today I was present for a portion of the DCCT brief in the LRC. I was very impressed as the team stood, one by one, almost as if on cue and read their respective parts in the drill package. I could tell that as a result of this review, they would be prepared for tomorrow's drill. I also witnessed several of you in different situations reviewing note cards, reviewing PQS notes, reviewing the POD, reviewing our CARAT Thailand exercise scheme of maneuver, and reviewing the liberty policy in preparation for our Thailand Port Visit. I'm sure there was even more reviewing that went down without my awareness. Taking the time and effort to review prior to execution of any given task is vital to success. If you're like me, reviewing also helps me feel more ready to accomplish the task at hand--like I feel more in control and can manage outcomes more effectively. Reviewing our own foundational values and morals can also be important. What is it you value? What sorts of activities and behaviors will enable the accomplishment of those values? What can be done to safeguard those values and help others do the same? I invite each of us to take time the next few days to do a personal review of what it is we stand for and what it will take to accomplish that. With this in mind, please join me in a prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, I pause this evening to thank you for a safe straits transit today and pray for continued safety as we engage in other training opportunities this evening. Lord, while it is sometimes time consuming to habitually review life elements, I pray as we make that time to review goals and ways to maintain our values, that you would give us insight and wisdom in that process. God, please guide our review

efforts. I pray that all who are reviewing notes for boards, or reviewing life decisions may be inspired to remember the things they review. And I pray for courage to make necessary changes when we sense the need. Finally God, as we continue our patrol, I pray for your protective hand to guide our path and sustain those we love back at home. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 4 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is the chaplain. Today it really dawned on me just how calm the seas have been lately. I think NAV mentioned today in a meeting that the seas were between 1-3 feet and this trend should continue. Maybe it's just part of human nature, but often it is easier to notice the rough seas, or the negative elements that arise during our day to day, than to see the calm or positives that pepper each day, if we just take a moment to notice. It's easier to gripe about the one thing that went wrong, the one mistake we made on today's zone inspection, or the one part of the meal you didn't care for. But what about that amazing quesadilla you had earlier at lunch, or those legs that you used to walk down the p-way with, or the ability we have to communicate, to breath, to see, to earn a paycheck, to see different parts of the world, etc. etc. The fact of the matter is, if you want to improve your mood, try making regular time for noticing the calm seas around you. Remember, it's often easier to passively notice the rough seas, and while it's important to notice them and try and process them, it's healthy to actively move to calmer seas and set your course there. So, tonight I'd like to offer a prayer of gratitude for calm seas. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, I want to just take a moment to express gratitude for the calm seas we are enjoying. Additionally, I pray that each of us might have our eyes opened to the calm things in each of our lives. Though it may be hard to see the calm while in the throes of our demanding work, I pray that as we take moments to reflect on the little calming blessings of our lives that you would bless each of us with hope and a sense of forward momentum and progression. God, I ask that your calming presence will be with each of us, and especially those on watch this night and all our loved ones at home. It is in your holy and calming name I pray, Amen.

#### 5 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good Evening Antietam, Chaps here. So, what do an unrep, a P&D line, go fasters, and a turtle all have in common with each other? Let me share. As everyone knows, today we experienced our second underway replenishment of our 19-1 patrol, and our first one with CAPT Gorman. As always, I was impressed with mother nature's ability to be present in yet another powerful way-- this time with rain instead of burning heat. There seems to be no better place to experience the full measure of mother nature's character than to be on the focsle participating as members of the phone and distance line. These Sailors have experienced the rain, wind, sun and sweat and while doing it they heave and slack off constantly on the P&D line for the entirety of the evolution. Sometimes they have to heave fast to gain tension in the line, and other times they have to give slack slowly to release tension. Fast and slow...picture go fasters and a turtle. IN some ways Life is very much about striking a balance between the fast pace of a Sailor jogging in their go-fasters

joining together with others, it is hard work that involves making regular adjustments, sometimes fast,

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Today I was out on the focsle briefly at the beginning of today's UNREP. As usual, I was very impressed with the gathering of P&D line handling sailors braving mother nature's fine display--it was quite a sight to see their broad smiles underneath matted hair, and experience the steady flow of moisture into the boots and the stickiness of wet coveralls against the thighs and calves. As I stood with them, the Gunners mates stepped up to the edge of the focsle and took their aim. After steadying the weapon, and waiting for the precise moment of opportunity, the GM fired and his line arced in a picturesque path, meeting its intended destination on the Walter S. Diehl. It was a perfect shot, and he did it in the middle of a squall. I also noticed that he had great support from his fellow GM, who provided encouragement, along with some expert technical guidance. After the shot there was further support expressed by clapping line handlers. It really struck me that this peer support was critical to the success of the shot. This concept could be applied and is being applied in many work centers, divisions and departments across the command. As we engage in life's UNREPs and through life's squalls, we need each other to steady us and help us take and make those shots required of us. We can help each other. We can lift one another, steady one another, encourage one another, and compliment one another. with this in mind, let us pray. Heavenly Father, we were blessed today with safety and protection, despite wet conditions and for that we are grateful. I thank you for your presence and care for each Sailor here on Antietam. God, I pray at this time that we might take a lesson from today's UNREP and continue an attempt to support each other in whatever ways we've been entrusted to do so. May we ever respect one another, and lift rather than tear down. May we be the steadying guidance to another as they aim to shoot, or courageously face challenges. Again, I also pray you would sustain and strengthen those who are standing the watch this night, that they will have energy and determination to fulfill their assignments. I pray all of this in your holy name, Amen.

#### 6 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. When most of us were kids we played the game leap frog--where one person stayed still and either hunched over or got down on their hands and knees and the other person ran and jumped over the stationary person's back. If that stationary person moved, or raised their body up in some way, then it became much more difficult for the leaping frog to do the leaping! Likewise, tonight as grown adults we have been conducting another leap frog, this one much more serious and calculated. In this one Antietam remains stationary while our partner ships practice their seamanship in maneuvering from a column formation onto either our port or starboard, then they break away and return to the rear of the column. Because of the nature of this exercise it is incumbent on us as the place holder or queen of the formation to remain steady and constant. To do this we set maximum engineering reliability. Being absolutely



reliable, with all engines and systems online allows for others to rely on and have trust in us. While staying constant and reliable in the leapfrog formation is of utmost importance, these are also hallmark traits of a trustworthy individual. If we want others to trust us in our work, our relationships, and in our lives then we need to exercise our own maximum reliability. We can live and be completely reliable; we can be constant; we can live according to our core values. I encourage each of us to consider this--and if we've slipped, it's not the end of the world, we can choose now to become more reliable. With this in mind, please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, I thank you first and foremost for your constant support and reliable presence in our lives. Thank you for watching over us with steady safety this day. Lord, as each of us travels the course of each day on the ship may we keep in mind the importance of living in such a way that we can be trusted. In our interactions with one another, whether in our work centers, berthing, on the messdecks or weatherdecks, I pray we each may become and be reliable, trustworthy and constant. I pray this in your holy name, Amen.

#### 7 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. This morning I was back on the fantail with most of CG division to watch the killer tomato get thrust off the side of the ship. However, prior to that happening, there was a period of time where everyone was waiting for the word from the OOD that they had permission to drop it in the water. The ship needed to be in the right location going the correct speed prior to deploying the killer tomato. In this case The key to the successful deployment of the killer tomato depended on the effective communication between the bridge and the fantail. This communication involved several crucial elements, such as speaking in the radio, listening to a response and repeating back what was heard, and waiting for approval to set the tomato free. Of course, there are many other keys to effective communication, but one I found interesting was the waiting part. Though it was drizzling and somewhat windy, the Sailors held down the killer tomato and waited patiently for word from the bridge to deploy the magnificent vegetable fruit. This teaches me an important lesson regarding the importance of patience in our interpersonal communications. When listening to another, perhaps patience has a role in helping us to suspend our need to interrupt, or reject another's idea when we disagree. Maybe patience can be the key to really connecting with someone else. With this in mind, I'd like to pray for patience in our communications and interactions with each other. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for each Sailor onboard Antietam, for who they are and the tireless energy they expend in fulfilling the duties with which they've been charged. God, I ask a blessing on each of us that in all communications you would bless us with patience, with understanding, with clarity and unity of understanding. Father, and in all that still remains this evening, would you grace us with safety and awareness, and energize those who have tonight's watch, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 8-11 June 2019 Thailand PVST

#### 12 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. While we were in Thailand, most of the crew sought out lodging away from the ship. And for good reason. Finding suitable and comfortable accommodations off of the ship provides much needed recuperation and relaxation--a welcome remedy to the robust schedule most of us live while underway. Additionally, having unstructured and unplanned time to yourself for regeneration is just really good for the soul. What is it about this unstructured time that is so restorative? Why does it feel so good to step away from things for a day or two and recharge? Perhaps the answer to that question is different for each person. Recharging for one might be different for another. The point to it though is singular: recharging is something we need to do on a regular basis--even while out at sea. Right now as we begin establishing new routines, I recommend each of us take the time to build recharging moments into our plan of the day. Even if it's just a few minutes a day to do those things that will charge your battery. With this in mind, let us pray. Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for our safety in getting underway today. I thank you for your presence and protection as well during our Thailand port visit. God, just as many of us were able to find some relaxation and relief these past few days, I pray now as we dig into new routines and take care of business, that we might be able to establish some recharge time Lord, and through that be even stronger and more capable to fulfill our assigned missions. I pray you would continue to watch over those on watch this night and sustain our loved ones at home, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

### 13 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. This morning after the UNREP I was very surprised to witness what appeared to be our UNREP ship breaking away from us. When in all actuality, we were breaking away at a full reverse. I happened to be on the aft missile deck when this was happening and looked back at the fantail to see ocean spray coming up over the fantail as we broke away in reverse. Having never experienced this before, my eyes were completely opened to a new perspective of moving backwards that fast. I noticed the usual wake at the rear of the ship was non-existent and water streamed in the opposite direction along the port and starboard sides of the fantail, as if it were serving as the focsle of the ship. Going at a full reverse definitely opened my eyes to a new perspective. Likewise, there may be circumstances in our lives that warrant a full reverse, or maybe a comprehensive and objective roundturn on an issue, to view it from another perspective. On many occasions during my time on Antietam I have been blessed with others who have approached me to help me take some steps back from a process or procedure, which has ultimately helped me be better at what I do and become more self aware. I hope I can continue to go into reverse when necessary and thereby make the progress I need to make. With this in mind, let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we go through our daily walk, there are certainly times when we may need to backtrack, or go into reverse in order to more objectively and constructively view a situation. Lord, at these times it can sometimes be difficult and humbling to retrace our steps, or to feel like we are regressing. I pray Father that you would bless each of us with the humility to see the progress possible in sometimes going in reverse. To see things from a different angle; to grow, develop and make progress in our lives. Thank you for the

newness of each day, and the opportunities they present us. Be with us in these opportunities, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 14 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. I was recently introduced by a shipmate to an amazing drink in the ship store. I also noticed a preponderance of Sailors purchasing this drink. It is the Tropicana Coconut Water. Wanting to see what this was all about I also jumped on the bandwagon and bought not one, but two boxes of this drink. Excitedly, I opened up my first box and took a sip. I was delighted to discover its refreshing flavor and was reminded of the times when I've sipped the juice from an actual coconut. It tasted surprisingly similar. I could almost feel the 3 essential electrolytes coursing through my body as I partook of this drink. After drinking I looked closer at the ingredients and found myself wanting to see a short list, and to my joy it was very short. Additionally, I noticed the phrase: "Made from 100% Natural coconut water." I have learned that anything that says 100% natural seems to taste better and whether it actually is or not, it seems healthier! The phrase 100% natural was followed up by the statements 'no preservatives' and "no added flavors and colors". Sounds pretty 100% natural to me. Seeing that tonight is a marriage enrichment seminar, I also began thinking about the importance of shooting for 100% natural in a relationship. In fact, being genuine and real with each other can become a source of strength and breeds trust. When others are real with me, I feel more safe with being real with them--and of course this works vice versa. Cutting out the preservatives and added colors like removing barriers to open communication, or eliminating disrespectful interaction is not only good practice, but enhances the flavor of relationships--regardless of whether they are personal or work-related. Seeking to be 100% natural may be a lofty goal, but it's worth a try! With that in mind, let us pray. Heavenly Father, tonight as we begin the wrap-up of another day, and as we pursue the development and maintenance of various relationships in our lives, I pray for your presence and help to be natural and genuine in our interactions. God, may we be ever respectful, kind, and keen to the wellbeing of those around us. Lord certainly there are those times when we need to be stern, but may we also not be overbearing in communication. God, watch over not only our shipmate to shipmate connections, but also those relationships we attempt to maintain and grow with those we love at home. I pray for your natural guidance and love to rest with all of us this night, and do so in your holy name, Amen.

#### 15 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. We've all heard of the saying "It's like herding cats". This procedure and process can be frustrating to say the least--some of you may have experienced this in various settings, both at work and at home. In order to mitigate this problem it can be immensely helpful to have an alert, adept and very clear guide--someone who can show the cats what way to go and to corral them when need be. I was reminded of this yesterday when I

learned about the Aegis component called a wave guide. This carefully designed pipe-like tube is the conduit through which the RF energy travels to the spy Arrays, bringing them the power needed to radiate. Can you imagine what would happen if there was no wave guide to carefully and deliberately deliver the RF energy to the arrays? I guess it would be like herding cats--all of that energy would turn into a hairy mess! What's more, it seems that because of the efficiency and steady consistency of the wave guide, the RF energy naturally flows where it needs to and the hairy messes are avoided. Much like the wave guide, we too have many opportunities to act as guides, as examples to those around us--often we are even unaware of those who watch us and how we are perceived. Being a guide means being steady, constant, being true to our core values, being willing to contain the energy even when we might want to be a stray cat ourselves at times! Being a guide will ultimately help us deliver the right kind of energy to the right place to help us succeed. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we near the end of another day I thank you for your guidance and protection over us. I pray now that you would strengthen each of us to be consistent and constant guides; guides who live aligned to standards and core values; guides who support each other and exemplify virtue and respect. God, additionally, I pray for strength of mind and heart as we approach our SOA and engage in our assigned missions. Would you GUIDE and energize us, that we might be ready for whatever lies ahead. I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 16 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Today as we round out this particular day I couldn't help but think, what do fathers and our situation with our Chinese shadow have in common? Now, please don't tune me out thinking I'm comparing the LuYang to our fathers--I'm absolutely not doing that! However, I do find myself seeing the shadowing process as a very inherently fatherly or parental experience. As we traverse the waters, our LuYang shadow follows our every move, watching us and paying close attention to our actions. In fact, the shadow even stopped and waited for us to conduct a fishing call! In my experience I have noticed that my children definitely shadow me--they seem to watch and follow my moves, observing how I react towards things, watching how I respond to frustrating life events, seeing how I treat their mother, and noticing the way I speak to others. Believe it or not, the LuYang is not our only shadow. There are people all around us who watch us, who shadow us, who notice our attitudes and soak in our perspectives. Are we aware of who is shadowing us? Perhaps. We may have a rough idea, but surely it is important to carry ourselves in a way that breeds positivity, strength, perseverance, and hope; thus modeling these positive characteristics for our many shadows. With this in mind, please join me in a prayer. Heavenly Father, on this beautiful evening, I pause to thank you for your glorious creations, and especially for being such a merciful and loving Father to us. God, though it's not always easy to be an example to those around us, I pray you would give us courage and understanding, power and consistency to keep the course and persist in the path. Father, may we ever be confidently those whom others can shadow, that our legacy might be one of honor and integrity. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

### 17 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. If any of you remember the classic story of King Arthur and the knights of the round table, you will remember the story of Excalibur, the great sword that was buried in stone by the wizard Merlin, only to be unsheathed by one who was worthy of its ownership. Though many had tried before to heft the great sword, only King Arthur succeeded, thus ensuring his right to rule as king of the land. Perhaps you were unaware, but we have a whole division of King Arthur's onboard Antietam, who over the past few days have been taking note of the great Antietam Pit Sword, our very own Excalibur. Noticing extra water seepage, and eventually Seeing that it needed unsheathing and replacing, and in order to more accurately measure our speed through the water, the team of King Arthurs, or knights of the Antietam, unsheathed the great sword last night and replaced it with another, which is now working like a charm. While the sword had not been placed under a spell by Merlin, it still required removal, and the requisite skill sets were exacted in order to perform this feat! Through the combined efforts and teamwork of many, this singular sword was removed and replaced. For me this highlights the power inherent in the combined efforts of our team--working together and bringing to bear our various rates, NECs, systemic knowledge and just plain old hard work, we can accomplish great things. Of course the unsheathing of Antietam's Excalibur is only one example, there are many more instances of teams joining together to do great things. So, with this in mind, please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, this evening we pause to praise you for our safety in conducting our collection mission today. Thank you for our team and the support we feel from one another. Lord, I pray as we engage in various tasks and face the responsibilities bestowed on us, that we might understand the power of the team. And that through a combined effort of skill amassed by our team's many members--we might accomplish the great things we intend to. Father, I thank you for the hard study, learning, efforts, and work our team members have offered to build our team and make us great. God, now I pray for your peace and presence this night as we move towards another day. It is in your holy name I pray, Amen.

### 18 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Today during the SERF Bravo O/C spray event on the flight deck I was so impressed with the power that spray had over participants' bodily senses. My heart went out to them as they received the spray and then flailed around gagging and screaming, fighting their way past the Red Man, yet I was even more impressed at your ability to press on and complete the event! All along I noticed the effect the spray had on the senses, mostly sight and for many, taste. Watching this reminded me how We rely everyday on the information gathered by our five senses. This information comes to us through various receptacles such as eyes, ears, mouths, noses, and hands. These physiological receptors help us make sense of the world around us. When our receptors are compromised in some way, such as getting pepper spray in the eyes, we may have a difficult time perceiving the world around us, and therefore could have trouble making wise decisions. It is imperative that we take good care to strengthen our senses so as to be prepared, should the time come, that we can fight through whatever may

come even when one of our senses is compromised. In fact, I noticed how important it was for those who'd been sprayed to rely on their other senses and to trust in their training, and shipmates cheering them on. Taking time to strengthen our senses through self reflection and mindfulness could potentially give us a leg up as we move through our own obstacle course of life. Let us pray. God, tonight I express gratitude again for safety and protection. Thank you for overseeing our mission out here and for protecting us from harm. Lord, as we face a close and shortly the beginning of another day, I pray you would heighten our senses, help us to be alert and mindful to our own wellbeing and that of those around us. May we have eyes and ears to see and hear clearly. Would you please strengthen those of us on the ship or at home who in any way feel some of their senses are compromised at this time, whether due to illness or other reasons. I pray you would bless them and heal them. I pray all of this in your holy name, Amen. Have a SENSATIONAL night!!

19 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Due to the vastly uncontrollable nature of human existence, which is also highly epitomized by serving at the tip of the spear in seventh fleet, the likelihood that you or I may be waiting for something to happen is highly probable. In fact, I can guarantee that most of us are waiting for something. Waiting is part of life. We wait for e-mail responses, we wait for a certain day to arrive, we wait for orders to pop, we wait for our laundry--the list could go on. I have found with regard to this aspect of life that the key to a happier and more fulfilled existence is to be effective with the waiting time we've been afforded. Sure there are times that playing a mindless game, or even a mindful game while waiting can be useful to decompress or relax. But, there are also other activities we can do that are meaningful and help develop our sense of purpose. I witnessed some GMs doing preservation on the fantail and thought of this. preservation is something that seems to be a viable activity at all times and in all places. Perhaps we can also look for ways to preserve ourselves and mentor others to do the same during times of waiting. Perhaps as we begin preserving ourselves and each other our goals, our motives, our aspirations, then the feeling of waiting will end and the sense of LIVING will begin. Life seems to be the essence of what happens while we wait. I invite any of us who may sense a hang-up on the waiting game, to try initiating some personal preservation. Take some time to work on ourselves, develop our character, set and begin working on some patrol goals. With this in mind, please join me in prayer. Dear God, tonight I express gratitude for life and the many opportunities it presents. Certainly there are hard times, when waiting gets frustrating. Times when we want to know what is going to happen and how. Father, I pray in the waiting that you would help us see how to preserve, how to develop ourselves, how to support one another in their preservation, how to grow and how to live. As we press to preserve rather than wallow in waiting, God, will you help us live a life of abundance and meaning. I pray you would bless each within the sound of my voice with determination and resolve towards preservation, and also pray you would preserve those we love at home. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

## 20 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. It's always nice to get a fresh haircut, and today was my day! As I sat down in the comfy barber chair I was asked the question that every person is asked when settling into the barber chair--with the one exception being boot camp of course. I was asked, "how would you like it cut?" I entertained the idea very briefly of replying, "you know, just cut it however you want!" But then I realized that probably wasn't the best idea--not because I didn't trust the barber, but because it left me with so little say in the whole thing. I realized that rather than just give over all autonomy to the barber, the best approach is for me to somehow try and convey my vision of what I want to the barber, so then he or she can go and turn it into a reality in their creative way. I am realizing that this process of conveying a vision to another is really an art, and requires patience, communication, self control, understanding and persistence. Likewise, receiving the vision of another also requires listening, recitation of what was heard, and checking in along the pathway of vision fulfillment. It seems the process of a haircut is an extremely useful metaphor for effective communication with one another. So, today after expressing my vision for the haircut I settled in and before long, my eyes became heavy and I nodded off! I can guarantee I'm not the first to doze during a haircut. Often we communicate a vision or intentions to others, yet after communicating that vision we nod off, we disengage and fall asleep to the process. Staying awake and engaged in our communication and correlation is critical to the outcome of our visionary haircuts. Thanks to our amazing Antietam barbers by the way for all of the actual haircuts you've provided. So, with this in mind, let us pray. Heavenly Father, I express gratitude for another day of safe evolutions. Lord, in all of our communications with one another, I pray you would help us as we attempt to convey ideas, visions, intentions, and other items to one another. Help us to be effective in speaking what's on our mind, as well as receiving what we hear. In all of it God, I pray we might stay mindfully engaged and work together towards mutual understanding. I offer this in your holy name, Amen.

## 21 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. Lately it's been really hot outside and in the main spaces, and other places. Even by 0700 this morning the sun was beating down. Many of you who work outside or down in the engineering spaces, or humping ammo, or scrubbing dishes in the deep sink or scullery know what it's like to sweat. Our body has this amazing mechanism for cooling the temperature of our skin by excreting sweat from the tiny glands in our skin. This process happens automatically, naturally without us really trying to make it happen. It's quite amazing. This natural reaction in the body, while important and even necessary for our health and wellbeing, is sometimes frustrating. Like when you put your clean set of coveralls on and then a couple hours later their soiled from sweating so hard. Or when you try to fit in that workout and don't have time to cool down to shower off but immediately continue sweating. Likewise we human beings come equipped with the emotion of anger, or frustration, which, like sweat plays an important role in helping us survive and thrive. Anger warns us when something is not right with our system or setting. Anger can let us know that something vitally important or of value to

us has been disregarded or even disrespected. Anger can teach us about what is truly important to us. Just as we would never try to purposely plug up our sweat glands, we should also not bottle up anger, but rather allow for healthy channels of expression. Talking through or journaling about frustrating situations, or going for a run, or even just spending some quiet moments focusing on your breath can help navigate and understand our anger. It takes some time to cool off from the heat, and it may also take time understanding what our frustration or anger is telling us, but once we understand it certainly is relieving. With that in mind, let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for blessing us with another safe day and for strengthening us in our many responsibilities. God, as we go through a given day there certainly are times when we feel angry or frustrated. Lord, I pray when this happens we might seek the emotional awareness to recognize and be informed but not controlled by these feelings. Finally Father, in cases where our anger is directly connected to the actions of another, help us to have the courage and character to approach and engage with truthfulness and understanding. I pray this in your holy name, Amen.

#### 22 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. If you've ever been to Discount Tire or Firestone and purchased new tires, you know that you have to get your tires balanced prior to driving back out onto the freeway. This balancing process involves either adding or removing weight to remove excessive vibrations as the wheel revolves. In similar fashion, today was a big day for our awesome Air Det team, in that they executed a Functional Check Flight with 701. After doing pre-checks to test the newly installed shims, the bird launched, thus initiating its first flight coming out of phase. The first few flights are opportunities, much like checking the weight balance on car tires, to test the vibrations on the helo blades and other parts of the aircraft. An electronic reading is provided upon return to identify whether weight must be added or removed to subdue any unwanted vibrations. This process of checking for vibrations goes on until they cease and then the bird is effectively mission ready. It strikes me that the helo may be a metaphor for group dynamics within organizations. Working as a team, workcenters, divisions, departments, and our entire command may engage in functional check flights. As we test out our system, we can pay close attention to any unnecessary vibrations, disharmony, or discord. When we notice such things, in order to improve our mission capability and just create a smoother ride for ourselves, maybe we need to add some weight, or various activities to improve overall communication or general team safety. Or perhaps, we need to remove some weight, such as unwanted backstabbing, squabbling, or gossiping--characteristics that may increase negative vibes. Whatever the case, we all have an opportunity to do functional check flights, and check the overall balance and wellbeing of our team's system. And, congratulations to HSM 77 for successfully coming out of phase! Let us pray. Heavenly Father, tonight as we continue our mission I thank you for another day of life and opportunities to serve our nation's call. Lord, as we work together engaging in this service, there are certainly times when we need to check ourselves and our relationships. I pray you would guide us and fill us with love and awareness to



notice vibrations and have the wisdom to know how to decrease them. Father, I seek a blessing over our entire team that we might seek honesty, authenticity, and team harmony, thus bringing balance to our lives and securing our readiness for what lies ahead. I pray all of this in your holy name, Amen.

#### 23 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. I'm pretty sure we all appreciate the steel beach picnics--the company, commraderie, the nice ocean breeze, etc etc, but what really stands out is the amazing food, which is always provided for us by our super supply department, and served by Antietam crew members, tonight in particular being the chiefs mess. It blows my mind that we can have a meal like this while floating hundreds of miles away from land. Thanks to our supply department for doing what they do best, supplying us with what we need to accomplish our mission. It got me thinking about the definition of supply, which according to the online google dictionary's definition is "to make something that is needed or wanted available to someone; to provide for." What a noble and important job--to provide for others. Of course supply isn't the only group of individuals on the ship who provides for others. Certainly, there are many of us who are providing for spouses, children, family members in other countries, and others. The act of provision is genuinely one of selfless caring and compassion. Sacrificing the needs of self and serving others in the role of provider can create a unique and profoundly meaningful direction for life. I see it happening all around the ship and it's very heartening. I see it in the form of mentorship from experienced to learning Sailors. I see it in the form of quiet assistance rendered outside one's rate to another in need. I see it in the form of leaders taking evals seriously by spending extra time to review the material and mentor a shipmate. Truly, supply is part of the lifeblood of who we are as human beings. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we round out another Sunday, I thank you for the supplies and provisions you have given us. Thank you for caring for and supplying us with all needful things. God, as we wrap up the steel-beach picnic and close out this day, I pray we might take to heart the principles of provision, that we might have energy, fortitude, and inner strength to supply what is needed. I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 24 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. Over the past couple days many of us--if not most of us--have been pleased to have communications back up. For many it offered greater capability to do your job. For others it freed up communication with family and friends. For those research types, it gave you google back. When communication capability is up, it's almost always a positive thing. But sometimes various comms within the command are down and require assistance. For example, this evening UTJ and STJ were lost and so the Boatwain mate of the watch called for the link response team to come attend to the issue. This team consists of an IT, OS, FCA, and an ET who all meet in combat to determine the best course of action to bring the communication link back up, and they usually give themselves about 10 minutes to do it. The real work then

happens as these four team members put their heads together to look at symptoms and make a diagnosis, after which each team member goes back to their respective Systems and implements the needed fixes to repair the link. Restoration of the system is then pronounced emphatically over the 1MC. Thanks to this team for their clutch ability to heal an injured link and restore communication. Likewise, we as Sailors on Antietam are living, breathing systems, bound together with each other by means of communication links. Sometimes these links are functioning just right, and other times we may be in need of a link repair team. I would encourage each of us to consider the links we have in our various work centers--how are those links? How is the communication? How clearly are we understanding each other? If we sense a need for link response, let's get to it and get the links restored! Just like with the link response team, interpersonal relationship teams may need to diagnose link issues together, then go to their respective areas and implement changes to restore the link. Who knows, it might only take an extra 10 minutes out of our day to build stronger links of communication. With this in mind, let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for another day of safety and protection as we fulfill our nation's call out here in the South China Sea. Lord, as we go throughout a given day here on Antietam, there are many opportunities for us to communicate with one another. Because none of us are perfect communicators Father, from time to time we lose comms or maybe miscommunicate or misunderstand some communication. God, in these moments would you please help us respond together to rebuild areas where we miss each other, or mis-interpret one another. May we have the understanding and patience to restore, and the determination to maintain healthy links of communication. I pray you would help us maintain links with one another and with those we love back home. I pray this in your holy name, Amen.

#### 25 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Every evening a new Plan of the Day is populated to provide the entire crew an idea of what is potentially going to happen the following day. Earlier in that same day, the POD is populated, developed, reviewed, re-reviewed, and then re-re-reviewed to check for accuracy. This POD is our best effort at predicting the unpredictable, at reading the unreadable future, at interpreting the unknown tea-leaves of life in the South China Sea. My hat goes off and my heart goes out to the many Sailors whose finger-prints are found daily on the POD. Those salty Sailors on Antietam have learned that to bank all of their hopes and dreams on some expected outcome would be ridiculous, but we as humans can try and hold onto our own personally developed POD. It is most natural to create ideas in our minds for how we ideally want to spend our time, whether in port or underway, only to discover that higher-order requirements are given us in the form of various taskings. But, does that mean that we just give up on trying to plan? Absolutely not! That's WHY daily efforts have been, are, and will be devoted to creating a daily POD. Perhaps we could learn a lesson from this as well. Despite the unexpected twists and turns of our schedule, that shouldn't stop us from still pursuing a personal POD which includes the development of our careers, our mental and physical strength, our inner peace, and our relationships with others. Developing a POD that does not depend on certain

outcomes happening in order for us to have happiness or peace is the key to happiness and peace. Setting our own goals to fulfill items on our personal POD and then working daily to achieve them, can create within us a deep sense of satisfaction, whether we make that desired port visit or not. With this in mind, let us pray. Heavenly Father, Thank you Lord for walking with us through another fine day at sea. Thank you that we are alive and that we have choices we can make daily to develop ourselves and those around us. God, as we follow the plan of the day, may we also develop and follow our own personal plan of the day, to seek out areas for growth, develop projects of interest, and seek to improve our lives in different ways. Lord as we do so, I pray we may feel a sense of satisfaction and happiness in our progress, and in seeing the progression of others as well. Continue to bless our days with safety and our crew with clear minds and strong determination to excell in all they do. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

### 26 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. I can guarantee that most of us, when pressed, can identify and name the coldest, most flavorful, most nutritious and fulfilling scuttlebutts on the ship. I have several favorites. I like the one just outside of forward ops berthing on the starboard side, with its unique twisty button. I also really enjoy the one right near medical. When it is working, I appreciate the one outside Radio. And although the water tends to overshoot the basin, I do like the one in between the mess decks and the galley. No matter which one is your favorite, I think we can all agree, that if we want to fill our waterbottle or just get a cool sip of water, we need to go straight to the source to get it. It would be strange to try and get some cool water just by hearing about the scuttlebutt water and imagining the cool substance quenching our thirst! Likewise, let me refer to the other type of scuttlebutt that also tends to find its way into an organization like ours. The rumor mill is not always a negative place--in fact, sometimes it is quite productive and even accurate, in some cases. However, like trying to get a drink from a secondary source, digesting the ship scuttlebutt without going to the source could be problematic. Like the game of telephone, certainly most rumors probably have some truthful foundation, but when proliferated and passed around from shipmate to shipmate, this scuttlebutt ultimately leads to unsatiation and parched lips. WE need a drink from the true source! Perhaps it could be useful when catching wind of scuttlebutt to seek out the source and verify. Going to the source when we have concerns or issues with another person can be freeing and invigorating. Though it may take courage, it's always more satisfying and refreshing to connect directly with those in our work or personal circles where we may have questions or concerns. When in doubt seek the source out. So with this in mind, please take a moment to thank A-Gang for our amazingly cool and refreshing scuttlebutts. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, tonight as we come to the conclusion of another day of patrol, I pause to express gratitude for good, cold water, great commraderie, and the chance to learn and grow together. Lord, as we do so, there may be times when struggles arise, when unfounded speculations or even founded interpretations about one another circulate in an uncontrolled fashion. God, I pray when we hear some of these things, or when within us concerns with others arise, we may have the courage and determination to go to

the source. God, bless us with capacity to understand and the mindset to go directly to those with whom we find concern. Finally, again I humbly pray for your safety and protection as we continue our mission. In your holy name, Amen.

#### 27 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. Today as we approached and came alongside the Walter S. Diehl I was fascinated as always by the sheer magnitude of what we were doing, coming alongside another giant hunk of metal out in the ocean to take on fuel. Furthermore, I was struck even more this time at how many hands it takes to execute a replenishment at sea, and particularly how many hands are never even seen from outside the skin of the ship. While all watchstations during a RAS are important, there are many less-visible locations where Sailors stand watch. For example, there are 28 Engineering spaces manned and ready during any given RAS experience. A couple lines from the Snipes LAment highlights this point: "And people as a general rule don't hear of these men (and women) of steel, so little heard about this place that sailors call the "Hole." I've seen these sweat-soaked heroes fight in superheated air, to keep their ship alive and right, though no one knows they're there." While some ship-board responsibilities seem to be more in the public arena, there are many that go on behind the scenes, quietly and faithfully making a difference to fulfill our mission. This principle reminds me of how important it is to do the right thing, regardless of whether it is noted on the IMC, broadcast on the POD, or just known quietly to one or two people. There are surely countless positive actions that take place on a daily basis that very few will ever know about. There might in fact be an opportunity awaiting each of us to do something right or kind for another person or within our workspace, even if it is not recognized by the masses. With this in mind, let us pray. Heavenly Father, I express gratitude for the safety and protection we were blessed with during today's RAS. Lord, just as there were several less visible watch stations active during the RAS, there are likely many quiet ways which we can serve and support each other and our ship. Would you please guide us into these opportunities, and when they approach, may we have a sense of how to engage them. God, give us the courage and the humility to choose quiet kindness, and to be true in all places, regardless of how many see us do it. Thank you for your quiet and steady blessings towards us, and may we continue to experience these this night and as we begin a new day tomorrow, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 28 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. Today marks one more day in the South China Sea fulfilling our current tasking. These past several days have also marked the longest period we've been underway without coming into port on this patrol. Because of that, many of us have had time to establish routines, and get into the groove with what we do on a day to day basis. Most of our routines consist of watch, working, sleep, eating, working out, studying, doing drills and if you're lucky some down time here and there. The routines we engage in create patterns and habits for us. Routines can be really great, and can provide stability to an unstable, unpredictable

environment. However, today someone put the suggestion into the CO's suggestion box asking if we could get rid of burger Wednesday. I was interested in that question because I think it highlights a very important point. While routine is vital to our lives, if that routine becomes mechanical, stale, or mundane, it may need to be mixed up a little bit. The same concept applies in the gym. Every once in a while it's important to shock the body and throw in a new workout-- it wipes out complacency, and may even breathe life into what you are doing. Perhaps instead of getting rid of burger Wednesday you could try eating a new combination of the foods available on Wednesdays, or maybe take a walk outside or go send an e-mail to a family member. Maybe instead of walking down the same p-way as usual between the different daily routine events, try walking a new route, or pausing briefly to check on a Sailor or piece of equipment you rarely observe. Finding ways to insert alternative pathways into our daily routine might actually be the key to infusing more life into our day. So, with this in mind, let us pray. Heavenly Father, we pause to lift voices up in gratitude to you for another day filled with important activities and opportunities. Lord, because it is deeply engrained in our nature, most of us have developed routines and patterns to our daily activities. These provide us much needed structure and support. Of course there are many Elements to our routines that are out of our control. However, Father, I pray where we sense stagnancy or complacency that you would help us see how to infuse newness and change into our routines, to invigorate and revitalize life and its meaning. I pray for your guidance, insight and direction in this matter. And I do so in your holy name, Amen.

#### 29 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is the Chaplain. Every evening while underway, and like clockwork, the announcement is made to darken ship. This process involves personnel from each division making their way to CCS to sign the darken ship log, reporting that their respective areas have been darkened. This is a coordinated and concerted effort to darken the ship for the purpose of concealing ourselves within the darkness of the night. Showing no white lights during darken ship is a responsibility each of us bears to maintain the integrity of our darkened ship. Despite this, there may be times when you have to leave a space like CCS, or the Galley, or the messdecks and head into a darkened area, or to serve as aft lookout as part of your watch rotation. We've all experienced that sensation of coming into a darkened area, and how important it is to just wait for the eyes to adjust to the change in lighting. Waiting for an adjustment, especially when going out on the fantail or the O-3 level is imperative to ensuring our safety. Waiting to adjust requires patience and vigilance in looking around to notice your surroundings, trying to see outlines of potential obstacles. Waiting to adjust is not a passive process, it is an active seeking, attempting to identify objects nearby and to build an idea of one's context. Likewise, today and everyday out at sea we have opportunities to adjust to our environment, the challenges the ship throws at us, the obstacles the logistics train presents us, or the workplace struggles we may experience in the process of working with other humans. Each day we have the opportunity to practice waiting to adjust. Perhaps we can slow down before jumping to conclusions, or note our context and wait for the bigger picture to come into view. Waiting to

adjust will also help us conserve energy and be ready to navigate within a darkened environment, but with adjusted rather than blinded eyes. So, with this in mind, please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, Thank you for another safe day at sea, and for your protection and guidance in our daily activities. Lord, as we engage in the shift between light and dark, the daily engagements that require adjustment and deeper understanding, I pray for help and strength to be patient in the waiting process. Let us find ways to proactively wait for adjustment and understanding. Father, bless our eyes to see where adjustment is possible, both prior to and after these events take place. God as we go through another day tomorrow, I pray you would bless each Sailor with wisdom and determination in their proactive waiting, that in that process they might adjust and thrive in all they are doing. I continue a prayer for their safety, health and wellbeing. It is in your name I pray, Amen.

### 30 June 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain here. Over the past couple days, if you've walked down Corpsman Avenue you will notice a newly painted medical door. It is now a beautiful white with a giant Red Cross in the middle. The Corpsmen did a great job with painting it, but I can guarantee that without the paint they got from the paint locker they would have had a hard time painting their door with such proficiency. In fact, there are other paint projects happening around the ship which also have been supplied by the paint locker and the modern-day Picasso Sailors who run the locker. These Sailors man the paint locker, mix the paint, organize the paint, and often use the paint themselves. Paint is a fascinating thing--on one hand it seems to be an unruly and unforgiving substance, often unabashedly finding its way onto the coveralls or boots, or even hair and skin. On the other hand, it can be organized and precise, covering the door to medical in a splendid pattern of red and white, signifying in artistic fashion a house of medicine, relief and healing. Ultimately, it seems that paint is a neutral substance, ready and willing to be applied and used however its master sees fit. It stands ready to be applied wherever and whenever. It can splatter on clothing, it can gush out of a can accidentally tipped or dropped, or it can be carefully applied to intricate corners and edges, etc. etc. Perhaps paint is like the human will or attitude--it is always ready and always able to do wonderfully creative things, but based on our choices that WILL can either splatter or create beauty. Our will, or our drive, or our attitude is like a collection of paints sitting in the paint locker, waiting for someone to decide what to do with them. If we wait too long, the paint locker may close. Additionally, waiting around for the paint to activate itself and begin painting a project, is a hopeless endeavour. We can DECIDE and CHOOSE to activate a positive attitude. We can DECIDE to open a can of will-power and get to work. We can CHOOSE to drive forward, relying if we need to on our fellow painters, and create a masterpiece, or an amazing looking medical door. With this in mind, let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we begin a new week of patrol, I express gratitude for the blessings we enjoy. Lord, as we go throughout this week we will most certainly have opportunities to activate our will, and attitude in unique ways--I pray we may have the deciding power to choose positivity over negativity. Where negativity does arise, I pray for support and presence from those who can

provide help and guidance. Above all though Father, may we recognize the power we've been endowed with to stand up and face challenges head on with the assurance that we are ready. May it be so, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 1 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. If you've ever tried going to the Yokosuka base commissary on pay day, you know it's going to be a mad house, and you can guarantee waiting in the checkout line for a solid amount of time. Interestingly, Today was payday and the Antietam hit the grocery store as well. But the nice thing was, we were the only one in line! As the groceries were coming down the line and making their way toward the quarterdeck elevator, I loved hearing the excited comments from Sailors around me about the fresh produce we were receiving, and particularly the lettuce. Many of us like eating salad, in fact there are a number of Sailors who are really trying to stick to a salad diet. So, needless to say, I heard many grateful comments about getting more lettuce on board. The sense of gratitude really struck me and highlighted for me the power gratitude has to impact our lives in a positive way. While it's often easier to focus on what we don't have or what we are missing out on, it can be extremely refreshing and in some cases even mentally healing to focus on what we are grateful for, which, for many of you may now have included a nice green salad. It might be worth a try, the next time you find yourself ready to gripe about something amiss, turn your focus onto gratitude for something, someone or some element of your existence. With gratitude in mind, let us pray. Heavenly Father, we pause collectively and perhaps individually to express gratitude for our replenishment today. Thank you for payday and for fresh green lettuce. Thank you for the gift of life, with it's many opportunities to make choices and be creative. Thank you for challenges that present us with invitations for growth. Thank you for each other, for the chance to learn to trust, to communicate, and to work with one another. God, as we finish this day and prepare to start another, may we train our thoughts on gratitude and thereby find relief and nourishment for our souls. It's in your holy name I pray, Amen.

#### 2 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. This afternoon during the DCCT training the Damage Control Training Team Leader announced from CCS that the clock would be advanced 30 minutes. Have there ever been times in your life you wanted to just advance the clock 30 minutes or maybe 30 hours or days? Or maybe you wanted to rewind the clock 30 minutes and get a re-do on something. It seems there are times in most of our lives that we may feel a tug to live anywhere but in the present here and now. To live in the land of "if only's", "what if's", "I wish's" or "I can't wait's" only brings discomfort. Failing to accept the reality of the present just leads to suffering. In light of our shifting and fluctuating schedule, I have been very impressed with the tenacity, resilience, and drive so many of you display. Daily I see examples of individuals not only accepting the present, but focusing on healthy practices and habits that harness and strengthen personal morale and inner drive. Perhaps advancing the clock isn't what we need, but

rather advancing ourselves into men and women armed and prepared to stand against all enemies foreign and domestic; to do hard things and to push ourselves now, so 30 minutes or 30 days from now we will be stronger and more prepared for what lies ahead. The time for preparation is now. The time for living life is now. Only in the here and now can we truly experience and be fully alive. With this in mind, please join me in prayer. Dear God, another day has nearly come to an end, and we are blessed to be experiencing it. When we pause to think about it, we recognize the many moments we encountered for learning, for understanding, and for knowing ourselves better. Lord, I thank you for daily opportunities for growth. Now, as we continue this patrol I pray you would help steady us in the present, give us strength and fortitude to live in the here and now, to engage challenges with determination and drive, and to forego pining over the past or fearing the future. God, be our strength and sure presence, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

### 3 July, 2019 Evening Prayer

Good Evening Antietam, Chaps here. Earlier today I was trying to go into NSIPS Web Afloat and after entering my password wrong several times I received an error called a "Fatal People Error". I was surprised for many reasons that an error would bare such a name, but I also realized that this indicated I had now been locked out and needed a password reset to get back into the system. Again I tried on my own to no avail. I had exhausted all of my own resources, so next step was to call Radio--the answer to all my computer-related issues. Very astutely and with the utmost customer service, they referred me to ADMIN, where I went and received the assistance needed to reset my password. This experience highlighted for me a very important principle. If you're like me, there are sometimes when it seems easier just to do things our way or on our own. It seems more attractive at times to see things from our own limited perspective or stance. After all, I've logged into NSIPS several times and I was sure every time I typed in that password it was the right one...but then it wasn't, and then it was a fatal people error. I am learning that sometimes going at things from a solo perspective can lead to a user error. We each need one another's support and perspective. Sometimes, reaching out to consult the perspective of another can help us reset in a way that will make us a more well-rounded chaplain, LPO, Chief, DIVO, or Fire team leader. This of course requires humility, getting up and going to admin and requesting feedback assistance. And this assistance really works! With this in mind, let us pray. Dear God, thank you for supporting us through another day at sea. And I pray for your continued presence as we persist in our current operations. Lord, as we prepare for another day tomorrow, I pray we might possess the requisite humility to seek the perspective, vision, or insights from others--that we can be willing to ask for feedback, which can reset our own perspective and ultimately make us more aware, alert and effective members of our team. May we have the courage to do this. Additionally, I pray you would ease any boundaries and open up the gates that may be shut to our current operational path. I pray all of this in your holy name, Amen.



#### 4 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, and happy Independence Day. As we all know we have been waiting for a few days now for permission to enter the Philippines to retrieve our Spy part. The Spy-tech FCAs will be the first to tell you how limited they have felt without the full capacity of their system, and in fact, without this part our mission has been gravely stagnated. I found it enlightening that on the day we celebrate the declaration of our independence as a nation, we also sound a resounding declaration of our intentions to move forward out of our current holding pattern. With the new part, we can get fixed and get unstuck. When our nation declared independence, we announced our intentions to get un-stuck from foreign rule, to exercise independently and be free from all bonds that would hold us back from being great. With spy on board, we too can operate independently and confidently. Likewise, in each of our individual situations, there may be instances where we feel limited or even held down by our negative thoughts, resentment, regrets, or maybe we feel we are missing something in our lives, like we are in a holding pattern just waiting for that missing part in our lives. Maybe it is time to declare independence for our own lives--to stand up and choose to be proactive, to work hard to accomplish a goal, to notice any entrapping feeling or thoughts, then get to work locating the parts of ourselves that are missing; to realize in all things and in all places we have choices, and we can declare independently and confidently that we will overcome any challenges we face. With this in mind, let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for our independence that was purchased for us by the lives of so many. Thank you for the opportunities we have to make choices and free ourselves from behaviors, thoughts, or feelings that may attempt to hold us from this freedom. God, as we celebrate together this night, may we also resolve to help one another remain free, safe, and unfettered from decisions that could lead to our bondage. And above all, I pray you would bless our great nation, her leaders and help us always to remember what it is we stand for. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 5 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. The past couple days I have noticed various Sailors polishing the knee knockers with their white rags and polish. In one case I asked the Sailor if they had a specific technique for polishing the knocker and he explained that he preferred to go from either left to right or right to left. I asked if he ever started in the middle and worked out, and he replied that he did not, because that would make it harder to eliminate smearing. I also observed that he seemed to have more positive control working from one end and moving to the other. This desire for positive control is a powerful one in us human beings. We desperately want to control our surroundings and what happens to us in those surroundings. As we all know, this is simply not possible being on a Warship, tethered to various higher missions in 7th fleet. For most of us, being tethered is not enjoyable, because our positive control is limited to whatever we are authorized to do within the bounds of that tether. However, I have learned time and time again

that focusing exclusively on the limiting factors of our tether will just lead to more feelings of frustration and possible exasperation. The more we try and control things that are out of our control, the more hopeless and cranky we will feel. The key to relief from these feelings will be to focus our mental inertia in areas we actually have ability to effect! Finding things we can do and have control over, and doing those things can bring satisfaction in the midst of the dissatisfaction of a seemingly powerless situation. With this in mind, please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, as we finish another day at sea, I thank you for our safety and protection. Thank you for the pleasant weather. God, certainly in this life there are so many things we can't control--many of which we experience in illuminated fashion out here at sea. While that is the case Lord, I pray you would illuminate our minds to see those things we can control and give us wisdom to get to work on those elements. In so doing, may we feel greater energy, drive and purpose, even while living day to day in the unknown. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

6 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. This afternoon there was a grand intersection between an actual toxic gas casualty, an A triple T drill, a liberty brief on the messdecks, flight quarters, and probably several other events as well. Because all of these events required the presence of certain personnel, it was imperative that these people respond promptly to the respective calls to action. In some cases, not responding could mean not only letting down the team, but possibly to safety hazards or mission failure. There are lots of other opportunities we have for response on a daily basis--and there are several cases in which many of us are waiting for responses we seek. While Not responding in the case of casualties is not an option, sometimes we may be tempted to treat other responses more casually than we ought. Likely there are some instances each of us can think of where we delayed in our own response to an inquiry or constructive feedback from another, or an e-mail request for information, or maybe even our own selves letting us know we need to put down the game consol and get more sleep, or we need to hit the gym more regularly. Of course there are countless ways in which each of us responds promptly and appropriately as well. And there may even be situations that necessitate a delayed response, in order to most appropriately answer the needs presented. Either way, Perhaps it could be useful to consider how we respond to others and to ourselves, and take appropriate steps to become even more aware and mindful of our responses. With this in mind, please join me in prayer. Dear Lord, today has been a full day, layered with many important events. During its course we have learned the importance of responding promptly and decisively, and with consistency. God, though we never really know completely what each day will bring, I pray you would give each of us courage, stamina, and determination to respond to our various calls as we go through the day. Heavenly Father, as we approach this night now, and many prepare to shift watch schedules, I also pray you would bless each Sailor with physical, mental, and spiritual strength to respond to these required changes and subsequently new routines. God I thank you for each of them, for their willingness to persevere, press forward and respond to the call. Bless them, sustain them, and watch over them I pray in your holy name, Amen.

### 7 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Recently it was reported there are now over 1 million words in the English language. Depending on how words are organized, they can create countless different meanings, expressions, intentions, and directions. For example, this afternoon we heard the one MC announcement of a drill for man overboard. Those two words put together Man and Overboard, activate a reactionary response in each one of us. Spoken just one word at a time in isolation, such as the word MAN, does not elicit the same response, nor should it--that would be strange! Additionally, the words "non-mustering event" also changes the response pattern. Truly, the words we use invoke and evoke meaning, and convey a variety of messages to those on the receiving end. Therefore, it seems it would be imperative that when we speak we have an idea of how those words are being received. Not to be trite or simplistic, but the process by which we call speaking and listening is called communication. For drills we are conditioned to understand and act accordingly, but what about for other communications? We can take a lesson from effective phone talking protocol, if we are on the receiving end to use repeat backs, to repeat or paraphrase what we think we heard. If we are the speaker trying to convey information, we can check with those we've spoken to and verify understanding. Truly, using, receiving and understanding our word combinations is vital to the success of any organization, and any relationship for that matter. With this in mind, please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, As we begin this new week and develop new routines I pray for your strength, support and presence. During the course of each day Lord, we have the opportunity to communicate with one another, and I pray you would guide us towards understanding in those communications. As we combine words to express intents and attempt to receive the words of others, God I pray your direction and peace will prevail amongst us. Finally, bless each who stands a new watch this night, that they might have energy and strength, and that they can adjust quickly to new routines and schedules. God, be with each of us and our loved ones back home, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

### 8 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain here. Lately I have spoken with many of you about recent qualification tests and boards you have either been preparing for, or recently stood. A big part of a test or a board is waiting for the committee's decision to be made--a decision about whether or not you passed. During the interim waiting period there can be some discomfort and some unknowing, some questions may arise in the mind either substantiating or denouncing the hope for passing the test or board. That interim waiting period can be very difficult, and even frustrating; the waiting for a decision to be made that will end up paving your future in some way--either to go back to the books and study more, or move on to receiving the qualification and everything else that comes with that achievement. I know many of us find ourselves in that type of situation right now, waiting on decisions and verdicts, and some of us are experiencing

personal life events which involve the decisions of others, some of which decisions must be made before you can progress forward in some direction. So, in light of any and all decisions or decision makers we may be waiting on, though those things are gravely out of our control, I would like to pray for these decision makers to do their duty and make their decisions. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we find ourselves at the end of another day and the cusp of starting a new one, I thank you for life and for our community--for each other--out here in this experience together. God, as many if not most of us, are waiting on the decision of others to enlighten our future operations or endeavors, I pray you would move your influence upon these decision makers, to take decisive action in providing perspective and guidance for the way forward. Lord, in the same breath, I acknowledge that while we have limited control over the decisions of others, we do have control over our own attitudes and perspectives. Would you please strengthen us in our own waiting experiences? In all of it though God, I pray for your steady and constant presence to lift and sustain each Antietam crew member and continue to bless them in their new routines and watches. I pray this in your holy name, Amen.

#### 9 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is the chaplain. Have you ever gone to the grocery store on an empty stomach? I know every time I do that I end up spending way more than I intend to. But, it's not so bad--when that is the case I usually get a great variety of things I may not have gotten had I just eaten a big meal prior to going to the store. Today was similar, as we moved the stores onto the ship I was particularly interested in the variety of foods, fruits, vegetables, peanut butter, meats, and other great things that will sustain us over the next several days. I think my delight in these things was heightened because it was nearly dinner time as well! But what really struck me is how our CS's can take all of those delectable raw materials and make several magnificent feasts out of it. The process of creating something from chaos is a beautiful sight to behold. It happens in the galley during each meal prep both day and night. It also happens in the preservation process in various locations around the ship. It happens in the formulations of future operations planning that turns into current operations. It happens in the conceiving and drafting of standard operating procedures. It happens all over the place. Creation is something that each of us can do, and doing it can bring such satisfaction. So, with this in mind, please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, I thank you for the raw materials all around us that have been provided for our creative use and sustainment. I thank you for a ship full of creative individuals who comprise a creative team--who devote themselves to creating daily to sustain our mission and lives out at sea. God, would you bless each within the sound of my voice with creative minds, hearts, and wills--that each might have the motivation and drive to create in productive and fulfilling ways, that all may benefit and enjoy the results. Father, thank you for this day you have created for us and for the night that now approaches. Lord, be with and sustain each Sailor, and particularly those on watch this night I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 10 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Today most of us attended one of the several Manila liberty briefs, and in fact, some of you might be sitting even now on the mess decks about to hear the final one for the day. I am always fascinated by the concept of a liberty area. In some ways it could seem that true liberty would mean freedom from any and all boundaries. One might ask, how can there really be liberty and still have boundaries or restrictions to certain areas. But indeed the boundaries are there to protect our real liberty: the freedom and momentum to remain unfettered from the natural consequences resulting from foolish choices. we might also ask ourselves, what does it actually mean to have liberty? Whether we are aware or not, our ability to do things at all on any given day pre-supposes that we have the capacity to accomplish those things. In our case, in order to move through a Wednesday on the Antietam we need to follow certain protocols, or rules such as, but not limited to: breathing, eating, getting at least a little sleep, walking, opening and shutting doors and hatches, turning on and off lights, being present for our watch and duties, etc. If we want freedom of action to do our jobs and go about our business then we need to follow these basics. Likewise, if we want to experience peace, or happiness, energy and momentum, there are certain rules or protocols we need to follow for such things. Truly, operating within the liberty boundaries is always the wisest choice! With this in mind, please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, as we wrap up another day at sea I give thanks to you for the freedoms we all enjoy. Thank you for life and the opportunities to make choices. As we engage the rest of our evening and our day tomorrow, I pray you would give us a sense of awareness regarding the importance of honoring time-tested guidelines for living. I pray for all those who are seeking self-improvement through making healthy choices, that they might see the results of following correct principles and guidelines. And Lord, for any who are struggling, I pray you would lift them and strengthen them. I offer all of this in your blessed name, Amen.

#### 11 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. I appreciated the notice in the POD indicating the LuYang DDG 170 as worst space for the day. As we were cleaning up during the fresh water wash down, I couldn't help but notice the pesky 170 hanging out continuing her more than 30 day shadow of us during our time in the South China Sea. I know there are many on board tracking her presence, but maybe some of us have become so used to seeing her out there that it has become almost routine to have her as our shadow. Perhaps a little too routine. I know for me, and maybe others, even something as abnormal as it is having a Chinese warship follow us around, it can become in a way normal. Perhaps there's a metaphor here--maybe there are abnormal things in our workcenters, relationships, friendships, families, personal habits, that unless we stop and recognize them for what they are--proverbial DDG 170s in our lives--we may be in danger of complacency. Especially, when that shadow has been lurking in our lives for some time. Taking regular time to self-assess, look around ourselves, and step back to view our surroundings, to notice the DDG 170, will be extremely important for maintaining a clear picture of our own wellbeing. I recommend regular self-reflection and introspection, so as not to become over-familiar with shadows following us. Becoming aware will also lead to feeling more alive and

connected with ourselves and others. With this in mind, please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, I give you thanks for life this day and for your preservation of our lives out here at sea. As we go through this evening and begin a new day tomorrow I pray you would inspire us towards a deeper understanding and awareness of ourselves and our surroundings. God, may we each see through our own blind spots and overcome complacency if we sense it. Lord, tonight I also pray for any who may feel ill or overly concerned with life's challenges. May your strength and enduring love remain with them in their struggles. Bless all those on watch this night and be with our loved ones back at home, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 12-17 July Manila PVST

##### 18 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. Earlier this morning as we were transiting out of Manila bay I was standing with another Sailor and looking out at the murky brown water of the bay, comparing it to the waters we soon would encounter as we made our way further out--you know, the clear, crisp, almost translucent waters of the open sea. The contrast between these two sea environments is vast and stark--the murky Dingie of the bay water, compared to the deep-colored and clean open ocean. Please note that it took effort and some basic guidance from a local pilot for us to begin making our way from murk to clarity. Many of us may be experiencing certain levels of murkiness in our lives right now--areas of unclarity or uncertainty--perhaps due to our own choices or maybe these are things that are completely out of our control. We seek clarity and refuge from the dingy stagnant Manila bay waters. We seek in some cases help from others to transit out of those waters and into greater clarity and understanding. So, with this in mind let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we now find ourselves back out to sea I thank you for the time we had to recharge and reset in many ways. Lord, as we go into this evening and prepare to start a new day tomorrow I pray for your courage and strength to be with any who may be trying to leave murky unclarity and seeking illumination and solidarity. God, walk with us through life's uncertainties, to include the confusion and perplexities of grief some of us are going through right now. Would you bless each who feel burdened with this pain. I pray you would accompany all who suffer at the loss of our Antietam shipmate and friend. Finally, as we go into our RAS tomorrow and follow on operations, would you watch over us with safety, clarity, and sound execution. Guide us with your clear light of discernment I pray in your holy name Amen.

##### 19 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. I want to invite everyone to take a moment and recall the craziest roller coaster or amusement park ride you've ever been on in your life. Can you picture sitting down in the ride and the security harness is lowered across your chest and you are locked in, awaiting the unknown path that lies ahead. As the coaster makes the staggering climb to the initial drop-off, do you recall what you would feel? There may be part of you that wished you had some sort of control, or maybe you have complete trust in the coaster designer, or maybe

you're genuinely worried about your safety, but certainly you wrestle with the unpredictability of the twists and turns that lie ahead. In all of the anticipation of the ride, then the actual execution of the ride, there is at least a clear sense that this experience is bound by a beginning and an end, that at some point, after several drops, twists and turns, the ride would come to an end and you will be permitted to leave the area to carry on with your day. Perspective is key in these scenarios. But not only in these--life also gives us twists and turns, ups and downs, sometimes loop-de-loops, drop-offs, unforeseen bends in the path we did not anticipate etc. In all of these, it is also helpful to maintain a perspective that all things are temporary, that the ride will not last forever, that there will in fact at some point be an end. Indeed, perceiving life's unforeseens through the lens of a greater perspective can help us get through pretty much anything! With this in mind, please let me offer a prayer. Heavenly Father, I first of all give you thanks for the safety we experienced today during our UNREP, and continued operations out here at sea. Lord, as we continue our patrol there are certainly moments that fall outside of our control, and operational drop-offs or twists and turns that we did not anticipate. In it all, I pray you would bless us with an insightful perspective, to see the temporary nature of it all--but also to sense our own roles in the big picture. God, give us strong minds and bodies, and May we find strength in conferring and connecting with each other as we fight alongside one another. Finally, I continue a prayer for safety as we conduct our South China Sea mission tomorrow--bless each watch stander with keen minds and perceptive instincts. Be with each of us in whatever tomorrow holds now Father, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 20 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. As we all know, there were several Sailors who joined our crew in Manila, 18 to be precise. Each of these 18 represent a variety of different ranks, rates, backgrounds, perspectives, likes, dislikes, tolerances to sea-sickness, family stories etc. etc. Regardless of these varied backgrounds, each of you 18 have in common that you are starting something new; this is a new beginning. New beginnings can be exciting because they present an opportunity to start fresh, to define oneself in the form of attitude, work ethic, drive, determination, and perspective. This can sometimes be a liberating feeling--to begin anew; to make a fresh start. It's like there's a clear path ahead; hope for potential growth and development. But, does this new, fresh perspective only apply to those new on the ship? I don't believe so. In fact, there is something new that happens every 24 hours, a new day begins. Now, with underway life broken into watch sections, turnover to this new day might seem a little confusing, but each of us can probably point to that time in our various schedules that signifies the beginning of a new day. A new day is one we have never lived before. One we are creating on the fly. We are improvising and creating and responding with the materials we have on hand. Each day presents us with an opportunity to reinvent or refresh our own perspective on life's path. Each day presents us with opportunities to choose just how we will approach our given circumstances. If you're looking for something you can control, here it is! It's all about to happen in another new day coming up in just a few short hours. With this in mind, let us pray. God,

thank you for our safety on this Saturday at sea, and I pray you would continue to be with our watchstanders during our current mission. Lord, as we prepare for a new day, I pray the newness of tomorrow's opportunity for choices and personal development might settle in our hearts and minds. Please give us a sense of awe and wonder at the chance to create something unique and meaningful with the time we've been allotted. God, while there is much out of our control, I pray you would help each of us find hope in the chance to start fresh tomorrow in our own way, and may we find satisfaction in that prospect, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 21 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is the chaplain. Recently there have been a few times when we've heard the announcement to standby for heavy rolls as the ship comes about. Shortly after this announcement we can almost always count on a massive shift in weight, and a movement of any items that were not properly stowed for sea. This process involves an action and a reaction--a cause and effect. In this scenario it is very clear WHY objects (including ourselves in some cases) move sometimes violently in accordance with the heavy rolls. We are reasoning and questioning beings--we humans more often than not look for the answer to WHY. If you've ever known a 2 year old, you know that from a very early age human beings begin asking WHY. Through the ages the WHY questions have led to great discoveries of science and thought. But, despite our best intentions and most fervent efforts, there are still some WHY questions that remain unanswered. Some of these are very personal, not discussed with others. Some of these are shared universally or at least collectively as a crew out at sea. Some of these find their way to the CO suggestion box! It seems in the WHY questions really what we are seeking for is the reason behind certain phenomena--we want to perceive the reason for something or some circumstance. Demanding or clinging frantically to the need to answer some WHY questions can lead to anxiety and unnecessary losses in mental energy. Perhaps there are some WHYS that ought to just remain a mystery. I have heard several of you lately provide one of the most salient answers to those WHY questions--the answer is: IT IS WHAT IT IS. Being OK with this type of answer could greatly alleviate some unneeded mental or emotional angst. With this in mind, let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for blessing us with another day of life, calm seas, and good weather. God, in the midst of our day to day routine out at sea there are many moments that uncover the need we have to know WHY things are happening, or WHY they are not happening. Lord, at times we find these answers, but at other times the answers are elusive. I pray you would give us discernment to know when to pursue the WHYS and when to just let them be. Especially Father, I pray you would carry the burden of the unanswered WHYS for us--fill us with hope and satisfaction that some things just are the way they are, and help us to be OK with that. I offer this prayer in your holy name, Amen.

#### 22 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain here. In the 80s, when some of the best music and film of all time was produced, there was a cartoon called Gumby Adventures. For our purposes, it could



also be called 7th fleet adventures. I'd like to read the theme song lyrics to this cartoon series. It goes like this: "Gumby Gumby, He's here and he will be sure to stay. Let's all see what magical games he can play. He can change into anything, With his pals, Pokey, Prickle and Goo, He will walk through the wall if you want him to. When you're sad, Gumby makes you glad, with all the things he can do. If he's in your heart, then he'll be part of you. If you have a heart, then Gumby's the pal for you!" Today, as I've walked around and spoken with many of you I have been so impressed with your willingness to be flexible. Several of you had pre-arranged activities and engagements planned for the original interpatrol period, some of which had significant personal or financial implications. Additionally, Flexing with the various schedule iterations and numerous mission evolutions has been nothing short of Gumby magical games like changing into anything or walking through walls! And we are not the only Gumby's around--there are the spouses, siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles, children, and friends back home who are also along for the ride. Tonight I wish to just offer a prayer of gratitude and sustainment for all of the Gumby's out there, both on the ship and back at home. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, tonight as we wrap up another day at sea I wish to pay respect first to all of those back home, or back in the states--all those who support the Sailors of Antietam. Thank you for their flexibility, support and understanding as we engage in a dynamic and ever-changing mission out in 7th fleet. God, I pray for them in their struggles, spouses who may be enduring illnesses or struggling with children. Parents who worry about their Sailor son or daughter. Would you comfort them and help them to rest in the knowledge that you have each one of us in the palm of your hand. Also, as we continue to flex and bend to higher requirements, may each Sailor be strengthened and blessed with patience and presence of mind--to flex with the schedule shifts, and with discernment and tact to know how to convey those to any at home who may need to know. God, watch over and protect Antietam and her crew, and sustain each this night with your power, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

### 23 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain here. As many around the ship have been preparing for tomorrow's Strait's transit, I have particularly noticed how the Air Det has been easing their flight schedule later and later into the night to prepare for the night bags, and especially to set the stage for re-aggregation with Ronald Reagan, where the Det and each of us will again be beholden to the mother ship. In a world of many last minute RFIs and to-do's, it seems most healthy to work step by step, line upon line, growing grace for grace if you will, towards a goal. In our dynamic lives at sea, this step by step movement towards a goal is not always possible, but where it is--and when it lies within our control--it is always nice to build little by little towards a goal. Parenthetically, I doubt our winners in last month's plank competition went from 2 minutes to 40 minutes in one day. Or, I know of no one who stepped on the ship and the next day earned their SWO pin or ESWS the next day. Step by step, day in and day out or night in and night out, steady treading the path will make all the difference. Sometimes that timeline has to be accelerated, but the same principle can be applied--building toward an end goal, step by step.

Please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, tonight I pray in anticipation of our Strait's transit tomorrow that you would protect us with your safety and security. I ask that you fill each watchstander with energy, focus, and endurance to sustain the various roles that make up our mission and team. God, while tomorrow does follow tonight, certainly the successes of tomorrow and every day don't just happen overnight. I pray that you would walk with each of us step by step as we move forward in the endeavors each of us has set for ourselves. Help us to see where we have progressed and to help others recognize their progression as well. Be our strong guide, light and protection I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 24 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain williams here. You've probably heard the old philosophical question "If a tree falls in a forest and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound?" This question inquires into the nature of reality, and what makes something real--whether things are inherently real within their own sphere, or whether reality is a creation of human perception. In any case, as most of us are aware, a crucial part of transiting the Taiwan Straits is keeping a record of what we experience during the transit, so that we may share the reality of this experience as we see it during our 18 hour journey. I have observed several members of the SNOOPIE team snapping photos, building story boards, and documenting intel collected from various sources onboard. This collection and documentation proves to those who are outside of the Taiwan Straits Forest that, even though they are not here, and thanks to the amazing documentation of our team, they can know that trees truly do make sounds when they fall! This is of course all metaphor, there are actually no trees out here at all! Nevertheless, I believe there is a lesson to be learned from this documentation process. In our relationships, friendships, and other human connections, it is vital that we document and share our realities with each other. In order to maintain a healthy relationship with a marriage partner or significant other, we need to find ways to talk about our lived experiences with one another. Of course it is sometimes easier to just experience parallel individualized lives, observing our own trees in our personal forests, without sharing the story with the other. I would like to encourage building our own life story boards and sharing those in our own ways with those to whom we are connected. You may never know just how important this really is to the maintenance and sustenance of your important relationships. With this in mind, let us pray. Heavenly Father, first and foremost, thank you for our safety thus far along our transit. We have been blessed with calm seas and beautiful weather. May it continue to be so. God, as we experience life, and particularly out on patrol away from many to whom we are intimately bound, I pray you would aid us with ability to communicate, to share, and connect in ways that can build and deepen our relationships, even while geographically separated. Lord, in some cases there may be relationships in need of mending. I pray you would bless those who feel that way, that you would give them insight and strength to know what to say or what not to say. Father, please be with us all in our experiences and in the sharing of those experiences, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

## 25 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. If you have made either a casual stroll or serious hard look through the ship store over the past few days you will have noticed--amongst the other assortment of options--the prawn crackers. These crackers feature a bright and flashy bag design with a picture of a giant prawn with its tentacles, tail and all displayed on the front. Today on multiple occasions I heard mention of these cracker chips, and I have come to the conclusion that, while there are some things in life that you can be on the fence about, that is not the case with this snack. I have found that people either love these things or they despise them. There appears to be no gray area when it comes to this food item. In a world that is packed to the brim with proverbial ship store items to choose from, activities, behaviors, uses of our free time on the ship or on liberty, what do we choose? Do we operate in the gray or do we have a clear sense of what is best for us, those around us, and what will build us in the long run? Whether you like prawn crackers or not, I have found most have made a decision one way or the other. Likewise, it may be even more important to make decisions NOW that will help you know how to operate with more confidence when gray situations present themselves later on. I would like to encourage each of us to reflect on how we will take a stand, make a choice and stay committed, regardless of the gray all around us. With this in mind, please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, after another day on patrol I pause to thank you for our lives, for our safety during our recent straits transit, for the food many of us have partaken of, and for the strength you bless us with. Lord as we daily find ourselves presented with choices, I pray we might engage in these with clarity of mind, honesty of heart, purity of purpose, and integrity of intent. May we be strong in choosing those things that will improve ourselves and those around us. I pray also you would continue to watch with our watch through this night and into a new day tomorrow. I pray in your holy name, Amen

## 26 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Today during one of the integrated training team drills we heard ACE introduce himself over the 1MC as the Damage Control Training Team Trusted Agent. I especially was intrigued at the title "Trusted Agent" and began thinking about what it means to be a trusted agent, and in particular, what it means to be trusted. How does one gain another's trust? To become a trusted agent literally means we can act on behalf of another. Representation is not something that is lightly delegated, and therefore to be a trusted agent certainly is a sign of respect, understanding, and confidence in the abilities of the person who grants the trust. What can we do to become trusted agents in our various workcenters and lives? Perhaps the answer lies in living with integrity. Doing what is right no matter what--something that none of us has perfected and something that takes some serious dedication to develop. Writer Stephen Carter describes integrity as a characteristic which "demands a difficult process of discerning one's deepest understanding of right and wrong, and then further requires

action consistent with what one has learned." Surely, someone working with this mentality could and would be a trusted agent. In light of this, please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, we pause this evening after another day at sea, in gratitude for the lives we've been given and the responsibilities we hold. God, I pray we may take a moment to reflect on our own sense of integrity, our own adherence to principles and values, and identify where we stand with those. May we continue to live as men and women of integrity. Father, at this time I offer a special plea and prayer. Over the past few months we've traveled many nautical miles, often in directions we hadn't planned on, and we continue to do so even as we speak. Lord, while it certainly is our mission to be ready, we can't fully be ready without the assistance of replenishments of parts, fuel, and food. I pray you would open up paths for us to receive these replenishments, and ask that you bless our crew as we try and make do with what we have on board, as difficult as that can be at times. It is with faith in you as our trusted agent that I pray, Amen.

### 27 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good Evening Antietam, it's chaps here again with a word for you all. Lately I've been so impressed with the many uses of water onboard Antietam. With all of the millions of dollars we have to spend on ship parts, isn't it amazing and wonderful we don't have to pay for water (other than if you buy bottled water or la Croix from the ship store or vending machine). Many of us were out today during the fresh water wash down, and even before that there was the countermeasure washdown. And even before that, and during that, the spy techs have been very busy pumping the forward skid with water from the RO and humping DEMIN water down the p-ways to the aft SPY skid. Also recently our ability to flush the toilets in parts of the ship was restored due to expert manipulation of water. Mother Nature also wanted to join the water party and dumped a natural fresh water wash down on us earlier this afternoon. Water is truly a gift, although it is an ironic gift, because there are also times when we don't want water. Excessive salt water out on the weather decks creates cumbersome puddles and has to be swabbed or swept away. It also corrodes exposed gear and causes rust on our equipment. It seems even with water, a healthy balance needs to be struck. Too much or too little of this amazing commodity could constitute a serious issue to our capabilities in so many ways. Striking this balance reminds me of the importance of balance in our lives. Life balance has to be proactively protected and takes effort. Just like swabbing a substantial puddle of water takes effort. Each of us will need to decide and figure out what elements make up balance in our own lives--it may be different for each person. It may be useful to take a step back and consider how balanced we are right now, and then establish a path towards regaining balance if it is lost. So, tonight I'd like to pray for greater balance. Heavenly Father, as we wind down another week of patrol, I thank you for the gifts you give us daily--sunrises, sunsets, food to eat, water to drink. God, in all of that goodness, we are sometimes presented with the challenge of trying to balance our lives and incorporate the many responsibilities and desires we have for living each day. In this pursuit I pray for discernment and understanding. Additionally I continue to pray for your guiding hand to help deliver the parts and replenishments so many of us need. Lord, would you enable that process

and speed, so that we might subsist and thrive as we fulfill our mission. I ask all of this humbly in your holy name, Amen.

#### 28 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. Today during the FAS break away I happened to be standing on the flight deck and as usual was fascinated by the great forces of physics exerted on the ship and my body as we executed a complete 180 degree turn. Within just a couple minutes we were heading in the exact opposite direction of our FAS ship, and just a few minutes after that we were leaving them in our wake without slowing to look back. There were many reasons why we made a U turn...the most likely reason being to go in a different direction, and to get onto a new course toward our desired goal. Had we not turned around we likely would not have been able to come to our correct course, which would certainly lead to mission failure. Isn't this the case in other areas of life as well? Each of us has likely set out to accomplish some personal goal, and struggled to get there because we keep traveling in the direction we've been going! We may need to flip a U-ee! Are there goals or waypoints we are trying to reach that require such a maneuver or even a breakaway, or perhaps an emergency breakaway? My recommendation is, don't wait any longer. Use tonight to consider what it will take to do a 180, or maybe it's not that drastic, maybe a 90 or 120 will do. Regardless, as soon as we initiate that move we are on our way. With this in mind, please join me in a prayer. God, this evening I pause to express gratitude for full fuel tanks and for those who made that possible for us. Additionally, as we start a new week I thank you for watching over us with safety this past week, and ask for your continued support this week. Lord, there may be some of us thinking about changing course, or maybe even in need of a 180 turn. Would you encourage and empower us to decide and do what it takes to move in the direction we need to? May we see clearly the direction that is best for us and have courage to pursue that. Finally, Please continue to sustain those on watch tonight and those we love who have the watch at home. I pray this in your holy name Amen. Chaps lights out!

#### 29 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. I have noticed how each time we have a RAS, the deck division sets out the life jackets in the quarterdeck. They stack them in a very organized fashion, prepared and ready for the handful of Sailors who will serve the next day--in this case tomorrow--on one of the lines. Additionally, there are lots of other preparations that take place for such an evolution, like walking the fuel alignment, rudder swing checks, supply inventorying, weather and navigational planning, etc. And much more. Taking the time to prepare for an event--whether its a RAS, a board, or anything for that matter, requires having a vision. Being visionary, in many ways, seems to be a choice--we choose to imagine things a certain way, and then we go about setting the stage to turn that into a reality. This of course takes foresight, imagination, research, and lots of coordination. I believe this is what happens every time we come together as a ship to conduct an evolution like tomorrow's. The vision is what fuels us to prepare to fuel the ship! It's been said before that where there is no vision the people will perish.

Learning to develop a vision for ourselves, and those we lead is imperative. Envisioning this, please join me in prayer. HEavenly Father, tonight we come to another close of another day at sea and I express gratitude for the chance many had to rest and recover today. Thank you for the calm seas and safety of operations. Lord, I pray each one of us might reflect on our vision for our lives, our actions, and for the various areas of responsibility we own. Would you help us have clarity of mind and foresight to see clearly what we can work towards, and how to get there. Help us also to have the right words to convey that to others as well. Lord, guide us with your vision, safety and protection this night and through tomorrow's RAS I pray in your holy name, Amen. GOOD NIGHT ANTIETAM.

### 30 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Much of what we do out on a ship requires some level of physical stamina, whether its manning one of the UNREP lines, firing a 50 cal, walking endless miles as a sound and security watch stander, or hefting numberless boxes of canned goods towards the end of an UNREP working party. I've heard it said CG54 is in some ways like a professional sports team, we have 3 hots and a cot, showers, a team form of transportation, commraderie, esprit de corps, a few different gyms and work-out spots, and we even have a variety of athletes both young and less young! No matter where we go we have a place to stay and our basic needs are covered so we can focus on being a winning team. While there are many things in life we think we need, sometimes it can be helpful to just step back and take note of what we have. Finding contentment in the present can be extremely liberating and satisfying. But it can also be challenging to achieve, when we maintain a grass-is-greener-on-the-other-side mentality. Maintaining a discontent attitude will conversely lead to a discontent mood. Choosing to be discontent is like maneuvering the ship directly under the single dark rain cloud in the sky prior to an UNREP, not that that's ever happened! The challenge for each of us to explore is, how do I remain content when things are out of my control or don't go my way? This can be really, really, really hard, and none of us will be perfect at it all of the time. But, I believe the key is going to be working within the realm of our control, and simultaneously focusing on the blessings we currently experience: the breath we breath, the meals we eat, the water we drink, the racks we have, the air conditioning we can enjoy, the gyms we can workout in, and the support we can provide to one another. Choosing to be content rather than discontent will lead to feeling content. Now, let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for a safe day in which we were able to get more groceries and more gas. Thank you for the shelter we enjoy on the ship, that keeps us safe from the elements, the wind, rain, excessive heat, and storms. God, though it can at times be easy to ruminate on those areas of our lives that seem to be out of place, I pray you would strengthen and lead us to find contentment in what we have and what we've been given. Through that may we find rest for our minds and hearts. Lord, thank you especially for the gift of life, and I pray you would guide ours each new day, and sustain the lives of all we love back at home. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

### 31 July 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. Lately I've noticed a few different Sailors who have extremely shiny boots--when I look down and see my reflection in their boots I am amazed and inspired, and a little embarrassed, I must add because my boots are in need of a good shine. So, I was reading the different words and directions on my kiwi black polish and noticed this phrase describing the polish: "renews, nourishes, and protects black leather." This sounds too good to be true! Why would I not want to apply this to my boots, and often too! When something is renewed it is made as if new again, or re-made new again. IN other words, my gray cracking leather boots can become new and black again. Furthermore, when something is nourished it is revitalized, fed, and injected with nutrients. The leather on my boots can be fed and made healthy again through the nourishing polish. Finally, the polish protects--certainly this is important for day to day operations on a warship, where, depending on our job, our boots can really be in danger and need protection--particularly if you are in the deck and about to enter the paint locker! Let me take this further--if there is a leather boot polish that will renew, nourish and protect our boot leather, I can almost guarantee there are certain activities we can engage in that will do the same for our hearts, minds and general well-being. What is the polish for us? It could be different for each person, and I think most of us know what that is, the challenge is just taking the time regularly to apply it. We need personal renewal, nourishment, and protection on an ongoing basis. I'd like to encourage us all to take a gander at ourselves and consider if it's time for a polish, or perhaps just continue maintaining that shine you already feel you have. With this in mind, please join me in a prayer. Dear God, tonight as we prepare for the close of another day I thank you for your presence and protection. I pray for safety as our air crew retrieves our parts and returns later this evening, that all may go well on their mission. I ask a blessing on each of us to be able to identify the cracked areas that need renewal, nourishment and protection, and would you strengthen us in those areas. Now, tonight as we wrap up another day I pray you would renew us with energy and strength for tomorrow, nourish us with hope and bright perspective, and protect us with continued safety on our mission. I pray all of this in your holy name, Amen.

#### 1 August 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. Something that seems to hit the top of the majority of our most wanted things list is the desire for consistency in our lives. We clash with this from time to time as we flex with our mission, we roll, or sometimes pick ourselves up off the ground from life's punches--and try and shake ourselves off. In the grand search for consistency however, we need not look any further than one another--one thing we all hold in common and therefore remains a constant is that we are all human beings. Being human is something we are each practicing and learning in real time as we go. Depending on what you believe, the general consensus is that we are all doing this for the first time, which can make things raw and messy--sometimes our human learning bumps into the human learning of other fellow humans. On any given day, like today August 1st 2019 some of us may be elated about something, while others may be disappointed or in grief. Some may be fulfilled at work or in relationships, while others lack purpose and feel disconnected. Each engages life as it comes into our human wheelhouse of

experience. It seems one key for us--as fellow members of the same human race--is to find ways to connect, to communicate, to commune, and to support one another through human experience, through the wins and losses, the triumphs and periods of growth. Tonight I'd like to pray with this in mind. Heavenly Father, tonight as we wrap up another day, I'd like to take a moment to pray for each member of our crew in whatever they may be going through or experiencing at this time. Certainly, the human experience is vast, and each person lives it as it comes--fast and furious, joyful and jubilant, or sometimes disappointing or even distressing. God of peace, I ask that you would meet each person in these experiences. I also ask that you would empower us to be supporters for each other, whether to rejoice with, grieve with, or rally--God, we need each other in our human family. Would you strengthen us all this night and as we start a new day tomorrow. I pray and ask this in your holy name, Amen.

### 2 August 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Earlier this afternoon I was walking up near the focsle and had the opportunity to witness several SRF BRAVO sailors learning and practicing mock take downs. It seems one of the keys to getting stronger and better at mock take downs is to practice it over and over. And this also means someone has to practice falling down and getting back up over and over. Recently I found an old Japanese saying which reads: "fall seven, rise eight". Falling and rising is something many of you have practiced in SRF BRAVO, and it is something we each practice in our daily walk as well. In fact, it's something we learn early on as young children learning to walk, often stumbling around on wobbly legs, then falling hard or soft into various pieces of furniture, but ever determined to get right back up and conquer that walking thing. That determination, grit and will to persevere is something that defines us as humans--we fall but we get back up. Much like today's rising and falling of the sun, and the rising up of our mock take down personnel, we too can rise after falling. Doing this over and over weaves a fabric of toughness, resiliency, and inner strength which positions us to move more efficiently through life's stumbling blocks. Fall seven rise eight. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, tonight we underscore a very important principle of our lived experience, the uniquely human phenomenon of falling then rising. Lord, certainly each of us experiences falls, not just physical but emotional, professional, psychological, and spiritual. Some of these falls hurt worse than others, but father I pray you would strengthen us all the more when we do fall, that we might rise back up--even stronger and more prepared than before. Bless each of us with peace and perspective to see the hope ever present and possible as we resolve to get up again and again. Thank you for your constant patience with us as we learn and develop into who you already know we are. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

### 3 August 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. Lately there has been a bit of a cold that's been traveling around the ship--several have been infected by the sniffles, the cough, and some sore throats and things. It has always been amazing and I guess in a strange way, fascinating to me how germs



travel. While we can't see the transfer of germs with the naked eye, we can observe and even experience the results the germs have on the body. It's strange that the germ transfer is so quiet and unceremonious, while the manifestation of the germs growth in the body is so bombastic, and at times overbearing. I don't know anyone who likes to be sick, and that's a fact. Like the silent transfer of germs around the ship, which, interestingly is transferred by mouth through coughing or sneezing, the WORDS from our mouths, and the way we communicate with others also has the means for spreading feelings, and generating mass attitudinal perspectives around work centers and divisions. The way we communicate can either lift or lower our morale and esprit de corps, it can inoculate us with positivity and perspective, or infect us with disdain and despair. I challenge each of us to reflect on our own communication--is it generally positive, or is there room for improvement? Certainly there are times to expose the areas of infection, discuss the concerns, wash away the infection, and allow for healing. May we all take pause to reflect on what type of message we are spreading with our communication. In light of this, let us pray. Dear Heavenly Father, tonight I thank you for our safe travel so far through our current straits transit. Thank you for the great dinner we were blessed with and the chance to prepare for a new week. God, as we begin a new week, I pray you would help us see the various patterns of our communication, and help us understand the impact of how we speak with one another. Though we may consider our words innocuous Lord, would you help us notice if they are in any way infectious? God, finally, I pray your words, your strength, and your hope may continue to rest with us, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 4 August 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain here. Today our sea state changed quite a bit. Perhaps it was fitting this happened on a holiday routine--providing many the chance to try and ease into the change. A stanza from Lewis Carroll's poem titled "A Sea Dirge" seems fitting for some who are getting their sea legs today. It reads, "Who invented those spades of wood? Who was it cut them out of the tree? None, I think, but an idiot could--Or one that loved the sea. It is pleasant and dreamy, no doubt, to float with thoughts as boundless, and souls as free. But, suppose you are very unwell in the boat, How do you like the Sea?" Thanks to modernization we no longer sail in wooden ships with sails, but the medium upon which we sail--the ocean itself--is still just as vast and mysterious as it has always been. Countless poets and story tellers through the ages have waxed eloquent in trying to describe the sea. I find the convergence between ship and sea quite magnificent--it is our livelihood! And yet, that union of hull and H<sub>2</sub>O also contributes to a wide variety of unknown human responses and conditions. Some of us are in fact surprised to discover we either do get sea sick or we don't. And I'm not sure if there's a rhyme or reason to it. Perhaps there is. In our attempt to manage the vast power, mystery and enormity of the sea, perhaps the most appropriate response to it all is awe. In the busyness and endless to do lists, making time for awe can be healing and invigorating--to observe the ocean's undulation, or the pastel smears of the sun's rays across the horizon at sunrise and set, or the translucent sparks of sea algae dazzling on a starlit night. My invitation to all, is to take moments--even brief ones--to be in awe of this

body of water all around us. It's in fact quite humbling. Please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, thank you for delivering us safely through our straits transit today. God, as we all manage through the change in sea state--some more smoothly than others--I pray we each might take moments to notice the grandeur of what is around us. May we take time to ponder the miracle of our lives, and the beauty of your creation around us. As we do so, I pray you would inspire each with a deeper sense of satisfaction and meaning, and awe, and a drive to progress in their lives. God, be with all who may feel overcome from the sea state, I pray also for healing to all who may be feeling sick in any way. BE with those who have the watch this night and sustain those we love at home, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 5 August 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. For the past several hours there has been a lot of shadowing and countershadowing going on between us and our Chinese constituents out here in the South China Sea. I am impressed with all of the watchstanders who understand our role in the process and make sure we keep things safe and professional. Shadowing another ship really seems to employ a wide variety of techniques and tactics, to include communicating through cues when needed. Believe it or not, shadowing also occurs within the skin of the ship. In fact, in some cases these shadowing experiences are formalized into mentor and mentee relationships. In other cases, shadowing is more informal, where we may observe another from a distance with an eye of respect or approbation, trying to mimic the things we see this person do. And furthermore, there may even be some individuals who have multiple shadows, or a following of people who admire or revere--and want to emulate the character of the one they shadow. So, what do we look for in someone whom we choose to shadow, someone whom we choose as a mentor? These are very important questions, because the answers to these will determine where we place our allegiance and who or what we hope to become. Conversely, if we know we are someone who may have a shadow or two, how does that influence the way we communicate or behave? Being shadowed means accepting the fact that others watch what we do, what we say, how we behave and interact, and the attitude we portray. This is a serious responsibility. Certainly choosing whom to shadow and being one who others shadow are activities worth reflecting on. With all of this in mind, please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, tonight as we navigate in concert with the strike group and move in and out of various shadow and countershadow operations I pray for your guidance and protecting hand of safety. Please steady our minds and hearts to act in the confidence and consistency which we possess. God, also as we attempt to follow or lead others, may we be ever aware of our own actions, so that those watching may be steadied by what they see. I continue to petition you for safety as we continue operations into the evening and start a new day tomorrow. And would you overshadow us with your peace and presence, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 6 August 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. As we bring this day shortly to a close and prepare for another day just around the corner, I've been thinking today about acceptance. As we all know the Chief season is in full force, and we've seen many of our selects getting around the ship with great pep in their step. Soon, if they pass the rigors of the Chief Season, they will be accepted into the fellowship of the Mess as brothers and sisters. Acceptance is also something that Naval leaders work with on a regular basis--for example, in today's navigation brief the Navigator detailed the level of risk involved in tomorrow's evolution and presented to the Commanding Officer an ORM assessment and a recommendation on how much risk he would accept to engage the evolution. During routine spot checks and other space inspections, those inspecting determine what they are willing to accept when it comes to cleanliness or its inverse. During recent murder and actual boards, board members decide what level of knowledge and understanding is considered acceptable, and based on this judgment either pass or fail the candidate. But there is one form of acceptance each of us must face on a daily basis--that is the acceptance of things as they are, or the reality of the present moment. Sure there are things we can change, but like the sea state and Reagan's movements, there are many things we can't change. I appreciate the quote: "unacceptance of reality causes suffering". Not sure about you, but if there's a way to minimize unnecessary suffering in my life I want to embrace that. And it comes through choosing to accept the reality of the present moment, rather than wishing it away. The present moment may actually have much to teach us, if we will just accept it and learn from it. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, tonight I express gratitude again for safety in our shadow and countershadow operations this day. And especially I thank you for strengthening each of us to fulfill the tasks that lie in our paths. God, though it may be easier at times to wish certain things gone from our day, week or even lives, may we have eyes to see and accept the present moments for what they are, and may we learn and grow from them. As we choose to accept rather than rue the moments, I pray we might be embedded with peace, and notice details of the moment heretofore seldom noticed. God, please continue to be in our details, and bless our team tomorrow with continued safety as we make our way into port. This I pray for in your holy name, Amen.

7-10 August 2019 Manila Part II PVST

11 August 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, CHAPS here. Today as I watched the harbor pilot climb down the ladder off the starboard midships side of the ship I was impressed with the ferocity of the sea as it caused the tug to bob up and down quite dramatically. Due to the sea state the pilot had to wait a few moments at the bottom of the ladder prior to disembarking in order to keep himself safe. After a couple tries on his own to get off the ladder and onto his tug, he realized he actually needed to rely on his two line handlers to support him on his way off the ladder. Finally, he reached out to them and they grabbed his hand and pulled him to safety. I was struck by how important it was to have two of his shipmates there to help pull him to safety and realized again how vital it is that we both BE the shipmate that can pull another person to safety as well as

allow others to pull us to safety when we need it. Sometimes it appears easier to go at things on our own rather than reach out for support. Additionally, we may not want to impose on others by offering a supportive hand--thinking they'd prefer to be left alone with their struggle, when in all reality, it is our help they desperately need. The fact is, in this business we call life--and particularly life at sea--we each need one another. It's a team sport. Perhaps it would be useful to consider this concept now as we begin another underway period. Please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, we are now underway again and heading back into open ocean. I pray you would go with us with safety and protection Father, that you would guide us in our decisions and deliberations. God, especially I ask that you would give us understanding eyes and ears to sense those who may need a hand of support or help. Also, give us the humility to receive the hand of support offered to us at times. Bless each Antietam Sailor in their new watches, and may we all be energized for this new week we now begin. I pray all of this in your holy name, AMEN.

#### 12 August 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaplain Williams here. Maybe some of you have noticed the vegetable display on the messline that has recently spruced up and beautified the serving line. Ever since joining the navy I have been impressed with the CS way of creating amazing displays out of vegetables and fruit to enhance an otherwise mundane environment. Making the choice to do something like that--an extra added touch to improve ambiance or customer satisfaction--goes a long way. While it's not always easy, and it definitely takes effort, going the extra mile in our various areas of responsibility makes a huge difference in the grand scheme of things. Sometimes it's just small added touches, like a genuine expression of gratitude, or a comment of encouragement to another, or maybe a tactful word of advice or mentorship to one who is attempting some career milestone you've already completed. My hunch is we all have vegetable display moments available to us each day--moments in which we can put forth that extra effort that will enhance the wellbeing of those around us. I encourage us each to look for the these vegetable moments around us. With this in mind, please join me in prayer. Dear God, tonight we wrap up another underway day and give you thanks for our safety in our many activities today. As we are beginning this homestretch of our patrol, we seek your continued guidance and hand of safety in all that we do. God, additionally, and particularly as we now dig deep to push to the end of patrol, I pray you would give us strength and energy to find or even create opportunities to accentuate our surroundings; to give the added effort needed to support those around us; to lift another or bless one another in our daily walk together. God, I pray you would sustain those on watch tonight and give us physical strength and safety tomorrow in carrying out the scheduled RAS. I pray for your presence and support and do so in your holy name, Amen.

#### 13 August 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. Years ago Forest Gump shared his mother's advice to the world in his famous statement, life is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're going to get. Today, we could alter that statement: life is like a box of parts, you never know what

you're going to get! There were several moments during today's gargantuan VERTREP where curiosity got the best of me, and maybe some of you as well--wondering, "Is that the long anticipated SPY part?" Or "is that the pump I was waiting for?" Or maybe, "Are those the tools I need to finish the job I started several weeks ago?" Thankfully, it sounds like by tomorrow evening many of us will have discovered the answers to these questions and maybe more, as you go to town unwrapping and opening brown paper packages wrapped up with string or strong packing tape. Not knowing what you are going to get is something that can be both exciting and dreadful, depending on how much emotional capital you invest in that thing. Taking the unknowns from the perspective of hopeful optimism, but healthy acceptance of whatever happens may be less emotionally debilitating than demanding a certain fixed outcome. All or nothing thinking can lead to the "sad and mopey child on Christmas morning syndrome". You know, the kid who for days preceding Christmas had imagined with pristine clarity the toy he wanted and then didn't get that one. Life is full of boxes with unknown contents. How will we approach them? Seeing how you all approached today's plethora of boxes informs me that our Antietam Team will approach life's boxes with determination, energy and poise. Please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, today has been--and continues to be a very, very full day. Lord, I thank you for our safety thus far and ask for your continued protection as we persist in evening flight operations. God, as we face tonight's and tomorrow's unopened boxes--both literal and figurative--I pray for your strength and presence, help us to maintain poise and perspective as we receive what's inside these boxes. May we also be blessed with positive control in life's areas that we can do something about. Bless all on watch this night and sustain our loved ones at home, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 14 August 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Over the past couple days since departing Manila you may have had the opportunity of spotting a very capable and important tiger team on Antietam. Made up of some of Antietam's finest, this team has as its primary mission, the job of replacing all of the non-skid ladder steps across the ship. Knowing how often we all use the ladders on the ship, this is a very, very important job. Particularly because the durability of these ladder steps can have a great impact on our wellbeing and safety. Thanks to this tiger team, we have already seen new steps installed in different areas around the ship, paving the way for our enhanced safety and security. Paving the way for a fellow ship ladder user is an important job, but we all can serve as way pavers for one another in different ways. Turnovers of all sorts take place on the regular as we hand off and receive new collateral duty assignments, divisional or work center responsibilities, or even just leaving a space cleaner than we originally found it. We pave the way as we set positive examples for those who look up to us, both at work and in our families. We pave the way by how we communicate to our watch replacements. We pave the way for a happy reunion with friends and family by the way we communicate while we are apart. Certainly There are many many more methods for how we pave the way. So, when we climb the steps that have been paved for us, let us also consider how we pave the way for others, since, as

fellow human beings and Antietam teammates that is a tiger team we all belong to. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for another day of life, of opportunities for growth, learning and betterment. Lord, I thank you for the many amongst us who labor diligently to pave the way for others in so many ways; ways that are both visible as well as hidden. I pray you would enable us with opportunities to pave ways in our own domains, and would also help us see, recognize and show gratitude to those who have paved the way for us. Finally, thank you for paving our way this day and I ask for your continued support to those working through this night. I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 15 August 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Surely we've all met those people--and certainly there are several onboard Antietam--who we would characterize as having a certain DEPTH to them. Or maybe you've met someone or heard a person speak and noticed a certain DEPTH to their thoughts. Maybe you've tried to solve a problem and met with a group and someone suggested the need to GET TO THE BOTTOM of the issue, or to FIND THE ROOT CAUSE of the issue. In other cases we may also find ourselves speaking about more surface issues (and I am not talking about the CIC watch station) vice underlying issues. Additionally, and most apparently perhaps over the past four days as a ship we have engaged in daily DEEP CLEANING, in an effort to fight mold and other sickness-causing malefactors. The ship certainly does smell cleaner as A result! So as we all know, in our commonly held vernacular we often equate things of depth with quality, or associate going deeper with greater exhibition of effort. After all, in many ways most of us serving in this FDNF setting know what it means to dig deep while sailing the great deep! And notice even with that use of the word, we hardly ever say scrape deep or dabble deep, it's always dig deep or search in the depths. Digging deep is not a passive activity, just as deep cleaning stations in the vestibules does not just happen coincidentally. Effort is required. Choice is required. Digging deep has different meaning for each of us. What does it mean to you? Perhaps there's a lesson for each of us in this, if we are willing to dig deep to find it. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for blessing us with another safe day at sea. Thank you for your steady and unwavering presence in our lives, whether we are aware of it or not. God, tonight I pray for any who may need a little extra strength to dig down deep in any way, to search out something or have the courage to continue with a good habit, or whatever it is. Bless them father and may they have access to the depths of your loving and compassionate presence I pray in your holy name. Amen.

#### 16 August 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Often when I walk past the messline during popular mealtimes I notice several sailors passing the time by playing games on your phones--some of these I've noticed are different types of puzzle games. Others I know like to challenge their minds with the TIMES crossword puzzle, or various games of sudoku to really exercise the brain. And yet, there is still another class of puzzle solvers out there amongst us. These are the

chosen few who have as their task, along with their various leadership responsibilities, to solve the puzzle of the watchbills. I have witnessed leaders in many levels in various stages of solving these puzzles and my hat goes off to them. Theirs is the mind bending task of juggling all of the schedules and sometimes personal requests and other inputs and piecing it all together to form a variety of watchbill configurations to ultimately keep the command functioning. Kudos to them! You think this weeks TIMES puzzle is difficult, these real-life puzzles are a different level. Parallel to this though is the reality that every one of us has puzzles we are trying to configure, or maybe your struggle feels like a rubix cube at times. Solving the puzzles or challenges of our day to day life is not always as easy or even as fulfilling as crushing a row of candy. But it is more important, and it is possible to do. And we don't have to go at it alone. The watchbill puzzle is too big for just the SWO to solve on his own, he needs the others from the work center supe on up. Likewise, we don't have to go at our problems or solving our puzzles alone. We have a team, our chain of command, and colleagues or peers to walk with us through the challenges. Let us lean on them for support! With this in mind please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, though the weather and seas are stormy, we express thanks for safety today. As we engage and move through the various problems and puzzles ship life present us, I pray we may see those around who are willing and ready to be our teammates. God, bless each with courage to be at times vulnerable if need be, to avail ourselves upon the able assistance of our fellow puzzlers. And May we also lean into helping others with their puzzles when we sense a challenge or problem is afoot. Continue to watch over each sailor and their families this night I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 17 August 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. If youve recently stood back aft on the fantail and looked out at the ocean you will notice the Antietam's wake etched clearly into the water. I've been fascinated at how long that mark in the water lasts, and it's especially apparent when the ship comes about. For several minutes the ships Mark, or wake remains--that white frothy trail engraved in the ocean showing clearly where we have been and how far we have come. The wake is a very clear indicator of Antietam's mark left on our surroundings and a visible reminder of the impact a Ticonderoga class cruiser has on the environment. As I looked out at the wake this afternoon the word that came to mind is legacy. What kind of wake, or legacy am I leaving for those around me, or for those who are observing me? What does the pattern of my personal wake indicate about my legacy? And perhaps furthermore, how long will my legacy last? It also made me pause to think about what I am doing to create my own wake and am I going in the right direction. It's ok if we need to come about sometimes and if our wake indicates that at times, we all need course corrections, and perhaps it's good for others to observe that in our legacy! My invitation tonight is for each of us to stand on the fantail of our own minds and hearts and observe our wake, and notice what type of legacy we are weaving. Please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, tonight as we come close to concluding another day at sea I thank you for the safety and commraderie we've enjoyed. Thank you for support and kindness. God, I pray you

would help us go I to our own minds eye and perceive the wake trailing us, to notice what kind of legacy we are establishing. Lord if there are course corrections needing to be made, may we be guided in those and come about when necessary. In that redemptive process, may we also be able to help others do the same. God, bless and sustain our lookouts and all others on watch this night. Strengthen all who may feel tired or distressed. I pray all of this in your sacred name, Amen.

#### 18 August 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. As most of us with public school attending children know, the first day of school is just around the corner. And, one of the first things each teacher will attempt to do is to teach the kids how to get in and stay in a line. From the start, even pre kindergarten kids are taught about lines, and if you're like me with a W last name, you find out pretty quickly that you automatically were at the end of the line. Things haven't changed much now that we are in the military, we have all sorts of exposure to several different types of lines. Many of you were on refueling lines this morning, a good number of you have served FSA duty on the bev or serving lines, others labored today on the P&D line, others shot lines over to the richard e byrd, many of you stood in the messline this evening for dinner and some may stand in a line for the ice cream social. Lines serve in large measure to connect, organize and provide direction. Perhaps there is a thing or two we can learn from the nature of lines. Certainly we know that some lines require our patience, but result happily in a bowl of ice cream or a refueled ship. Staying in line requires faith in the direction of the line, as well as hope that the result at the end will be worth the wait. One thing is certain, whether we are handling a line, connecting on a phone line, or working on the serving line, we each need each other to make up, and sometimes make it through that line! Lines truly bespeak connection, support, strength and unity of purpose. With this in mind please join me in a prayer. Heavenly Father, thank you for sustaining us yet another day at sea and for the safety we've enjoyed. I also give thanks for the food and protections we enjoy while on patrol. Lord, on any given day at sea we associate in many ways with lines, and most particularly these engagements involve the connections we maintain with one another. Would you please strengthen each of us and bless us with patience and fortitude as we make up and work on lines. As we do so I ask that you would bless each of us with a sense of purpose and unity as we focus toward a common goal. Finally, as we push to the end of this patrol, I pray you would empower each of us, lift those who may be struggling or sensing the line to be heavier than usual in their hands. God, also please continue to sustain and bless our families and loved ones at home as well. I pray this all in your holy name, Amen.

#### 19 August 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. As was mentioned earlier by the captain on the one MC, and has also been indicated in the POD, football season has begun, whether you like the patriots or not! Perhaps one of my favorite aspects of the sport is watching some excellent receptions--diving or sprawling catches in the end zone for a win, or even the heroic and interruptive



interception receptions, and even better when run back for six points. Though we didn't get to watch football today, many of us were able to observe the Rex torp recovery, a literal Touchdown pass from HSM 77 and received by our very own Antietam small boat team. This was an excellent reception, and deserves to be on any highlight reel! This got me thinking about what it means to receive something. Often we get really good at giving, or passing the ball, or dropping the figurative Rex torp, but what about receiving? What about accepting compliments or constructive feedback? What about receiving gifts from others? What about receiving assistance in all its forms? Or how about receiving new sailors or friends into our circles or friendship communities? There are many ways and means we have daily for receiving. Perhaps it would be useful to consider some of these for ourselves. With this in mind, let us pray. Heavenly Father, I express gratitude to you for all we receive from you on a daily basis. Today we have again been blessed with immeasurable safety and I thank you for that. Tonight as we reflect on the reception and recovery of the Rex torpedo, May we also consider other opportunities we have to receive from those around us, or ways we can receive those amongst us. God, while it is sometimes difficult to receive I pray you would empower us to grow in this skill, and through this growth may we also become more grateful for how much we receive on a regular basis. Finally I ask a blessing on each crew member to receive your strength and support this night, I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 20 August 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. This afternoon I came through the aft starboard Decon door, traversed down that pway and entered the torpedo loader room pway, expecting a clear passage but nearly running into several sailors dressed out in protective gear in the middle of a serf bravo drill. They looked armed and dangerous. Although they could have possibly seen their chaplain as a potential and formidable Threat, I think I was more shocked to see them dressed out in their gear and armed with their blue weapons. In the end, what propelled us through the initial shock of meeting one another there in the pway was our healthy and appropriate communication and conversation that ensued. I inquired into their wellbeing and they conveyed the same to me. We exchanged smiles and interacted briefly, then I got out of their way so they could continue their mission. Perhaps there's a lesson in this for some hearing my message tonight. We all experience loader room shock moments--events or occasions that take us off guard or cause the heart to skip a beat or two. Sometimes these shocking moments evoke fear or instability. Other times they just make us freeze, or even fight or flee. But it seems that perhaps an even better approach would be to communicate, connect, converse and dialogue--maybe even briefly check in with the others in the pway, ensure their well being and then carry on with the mission. This may be especially appropriate as we prepare to come home. Transitions of all sorts can be shocking or unsettling, but communicating openly and often with all parties involved is always the best practice. Moving onto the same page with one another, even just for a brief moment, then carrying on will help each of us carry through. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we come to the close of another day at sea I thank you again for your safety

and protection. Lord, certainly the events of this patrol and the occurrences of our lives highlight the unknowable nature of every coming moment. As these events unfold now and upon our return to home port, I pray that any shock or trepidation may be replaced with fortitude and openness. Father bless each within the sound of my voice to continue to maintain the mental and spiritual toughness they've displayed these past three months underway. And God, bless all those who have the watch this night and early tomorrow morning. I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 21 August 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Here in seventh fleet we are always looking for how we can get things to be more consistent, more reliable and fixed. It is only human nature to want things to remain more constant and set, which in turn makes it easier for us to trust in discernible outcomes. We want to plan on things and have those things come to pass. Well, we have such a thing on board our very own Antietam--some of you take part in this thing, or process day in and day out, at least three times a day. And if you find yourself in the messdecks pway towards the end of every meal you will observe this happening. Without fail, 100% of these times our Sailors currently serving FSA duty can be seen hefting large, and sometimes heavy to the point of explosion bags of trash down to our equally consistent pulp room engineer, who disposes of our refuse in accordance with proper policy and procedure. While not glamorous or desirable as a duty, those heaving our trash masses are an example of consistency and dedication. Consistency aside, the act of throwing out trash on a regular basis may be a metaphor in and of itself for our use and application. It is likely the case that we too accumulate trash during the course of a day, a week or even a patrol. Unwanted personal refuse or internal material baggage that just fills our life with clutter and may even stink at times. Perhaps now as we prepare to return to home port would be as good a time as any to evaluate if it's time to take out the trash. Is it? Consider, are there a few unwanted habits or traits i can do without? With this in mind, please pray with me. Heavenly Father, what a beautiful day you blessed us with today! I thank you for the hours we had to be creative, to practice our craft and to help one another succeed. Lord, in the course of today, or this past week or during the patrol it is likely we accumulated some unwanted baggage. I pray you would give us the courage and even strength to throw things out that need to be thrown out, to discard things that may be disruptive to our wellbeing. God, at this time as we find ourselves transitioning, I pray for the command leadership, and for each sailor to continue in the strength of mind and heart they have continuously displayed. Would you now be with us as we continue the mission tonight and throughout the day tomorrow I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 22 August 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Today i observed several of you on the 9mm gun shoot. Most everyone is familiar with this course of fire, but at the bare minimum we are all aware that when shooting you want to hit the target, and preferably towards the center of the silhouette. For most, Learning to hit the target is something that takes some practice and even

some trial and error. Learning sound weapons handling basics through familiarization is important but can really only get you so far in the experience of firing a weapon. In the end, really if you want to hit the target then, as we all know, you're going to have to aim and pull that trigger. Taking aim and pulling the trigger takes some faith and trust in the weapons system and the safeties on the course, but really when it comes down to it, after aiming, pulling the trigger just takes...well...pulling the trigger! Every day we are faced with decisions, both large and minuscule, situations where we need to decide either right now--like in a board or an operational situation, or in the near future, like what I'm going to do on leave or what maintenance will my division focus on during the WOO. But when the time for decision has come the trigger must be pulled. I wonder if there are some decisions we know we need to make, but have been letting them simmer on the back burner for a time? Are there things we can move onto the front burner and pull the trigger on, thus freeing up more space on the back burner for things that still need simmering? Pulling the trigger often takes courage. Many of you have pulled the trigger in countless ways during this patrol--in fact I am consistently in awe of your ability to trouble shoot and pull the trigger on both small and large decisions, Some of which have considerable consequences. I would like to encourage us to continue to notice areas in our lives where perhaps it's time to pull the trigger, in order to hit the target we're aiming for. May we have the courage to do so! With this in mind, please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, tonight we again find ourselves out to sea and homeport bound. God, thank you for again another day of safe travel and calm seas. Lord, as we consider the many decisions regularly required of us, I pray for courage and firmness of mind to pull the trigger when the timing is right. May we also have wise judgment and discerning aim in the execution of these decisions. Please continue to bless those on watch this night with focus and energy, and sustain our families and loved ones at home. I pray in your holy name Amen.

### 23 August 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Today I was standing out on the starboard midship quarterdeck area when the first morning tanookie flyby happened. As they flew by I was impressed with their confidence, speed and just sheer will power and mechanics to defy gravity and stay in the air. It struck me, and continues to strike me, all of you are like that bird--these past 3 months you have persevered and overcome gravity-like inertia to accomplish the mission even when the schedule became a constant moving target. It is truly an honor to be a part of a team like this and I'd like to pray with this in mind. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we are so blessed in many ways and I thank you for it. Though there certainly have been challenges during this patrol, I wish to express gratitude for the collective strength and tenacity exhibited by the Antietam crew. Their strength is a direct result of their willingness to face rather than flee difficulties and challenges; to courageously step into adverse and even undesirable situations and not only excel in every way, but become stronger for it. Father I pray that as each of us reflects on the flyby of our patrol we might see how much stronger we all have become. Thank you God for being our rock and sure strength I pray in your name Amen.

## 24 August 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. It was recently said that the events of our lives, and particularly a life in the operational navy is made up of transitions, both large and small. Today we transitioned between watches, meals, meetings, maintenance, maybe some PT, and likely several other items. We are about to execute a transition in tomorrow's sea and anchor detail. And after the word is given many will conduct a most significant transition in the form of stepping off the brow. Whether there is family waiting in Yokosuka or not, the transition from life at sea to shore life is significant. Like a sea and anchor detail, we need to be aware, alert, and attuned to elements of change that can influence our wellbeing and safety during the transition. We also need each other's support more than ever during these times. With this in mind let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we round the corner on the final evening of this patrol I express the deepest gratitude for our safety and protection these past months at sea. As we now transition home I seek a blessing for your forceful backup Lord, that we may be aware and sensitive to the changes awaiting us. Guide us into sound and wise decisions and protect each sailor with the strength of your power no matter what their situation, I pray in your holy name Amen.

## 19-2 Patrol

## 15 September 2019

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. As indicated with the delivery of HSM77 cheeseburgers, 19-2 has begun. So far on two different occasions today, sailors approached me to tell me how excited they were to have fixed two pieces of very important downed gear. As they shared their wonderful news I couldn't help but rejoice with them and I stand in awe of their sense of pride in caring for their gear, and doing their part to keep our ship operational and mission capable. In both cases Herculean efforts had been made to repair these parts. As I ponder on these efforts it made me think of how additionally important it is to care for the the human wellbeing of ourselves and others around us as well--after all we the people are the ones operating the gear and executing the mission. We the people. Because we are people, human beings coming from all walks of life and varied backgrounds, it is understandable that some amongst us, or some we know may struggle at times. Just like the gear we operate, we the people may at times also become out of commission or have degraded capacity. Now, i ask for your brief attention as i discuss a very serious matter. Though it may not be pleasant to consider, sometimes when things get extremely overwhelming or seemingly unmanageable it is possible some of us may have thoughts of suicide. We are not ignorant to the fact that the majority of us knows someone who has either suffered from suicidal thoughts or completed suicide--this could be a close friend, a CO-worker, or maybe even family member. This is a tragic reality. Life is precious and we can celebrate it by always taking seriously someone's indications they may be thinking of ending

their lives. As many of you may be aware, September is suicide prevention and awareness month. Keeping this in mind, I would now ask you to join me in a brief moment of silence as we recognize the sanctity of human life, ponder the memory of those whose lives have been taken, and consider how we might support those affected by deaths resulting from suicide.....

Thank you Antietam, and have a blessed night.

16 September 2019

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. If you're like me, you're probably feeling some normal physical and maybe mental wear and tear as you get used to being underway again. Then, when you add some waves and the constant movement of the ship it can leave you feeling at times a bit unstable! During today's Ring of Fire all inclusive gun shoot I think I found an answer to these issues. As I watched the mount 22 CIWS gun prior to the shoot I noticed how it moved up and down in the opposite direction of the ship's roll, maintaining its horizontal position regardless of the ship's movement. Later I asked the CIWS experts about this and they explained this concept is called stabilization. 3 gyros inside the CIWS dome sense ship's pitch, roll and yaw and adjust the gun barrel accordingly to maintain its precision aim. Stabilization is something not only necessary for our equipment, it is also necessary for us! Taking time to identify our own inner gyros will be an important piece to establishing stabilization and balance as we embark on this patrol, and attempt to stay fixed amidst the constant movement of life. Tonight I'll pray for stability as we set out on establishing patrol balance routines. Heavenly Father, thank you for your presence and safe protection over us as we begin this patrol. As we start on our way some may be feeling tired or even a bit overwhelmed to be back at sea or out for the first time. I pray you would help us identify ways to maintain stability in the midst of the many moving parts. God bless Antietam's sailors with strength, toughness and stability as we courageously and boldly take on our mission. Lord, also Bless our families and loved ones with health and safety and sustain those on watch as well I pray in your holy name Amen.

17 September 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. As human beings we have an affinity for commemorating and memorializing, for recalling and reminiscing on important dates and past events. All you need to do is look in the POD and a plethora of dates and historical moments are brought into awareness, to include our own personal historical dates--our birthdays. Today happens to be a very important day in antietams history, it being the 157th anniversary of the battle of Antietam, the bloodiest day in our nation's history. Reflecting on the soldiers grit, determination and perseverance on both sides of the battle, we can be emboldened to develop and incorporate such values and characteristics into our own lives. In fact, taking time to reflect, as we do on each of the important anniversaries of our lives, whether birthdays, wedding anniversaries, and even important battles, we gain a deeper and more founded assurance and solid conviction of what truly matters along our life's journey. And so, tonight I would like to

offer a prayer of reflection as we wrap up another day at sea. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, tonight We reflect on the solemn events of that bloody battle so many years ago. And in the same vain Lord I pray for each Antietam sailor this night with clear minds, sharp discernment, and dogged determination. May they often take moments to reflect on their values and priorities. May each of us reflect on what it means to defend our great constitution from all enemies foreign and domestic. And God, may we ever reflect on the great and immeasurable blessing of being citizens of our great nation. God, bless our magnificent ship and faithful crew I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 18 September 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Lately there have been conversations about naming some of the ship's GTMs. I'm aware this has generated some important dialogue and maybe even debate as names are recommended and considered. Yesterday we reflected on the name of our ship and what that means. If you talk to any of the pilots they can tell you about their inherited name, or call sign. And, we can't forget our own names--surely some of those, or the names of our children have certain meanings or significance. Truly names carry with them meaning. When we name something we imply a relationship of connection and respect. We honor that thing and imply an expectation for respect in return. It is a helpful and supportive relationship. I have noticed the past several months a growing general respect and pride for our named organization, the mighty Antietam. Of course it's not perfect, but my sense is there is a culture of respect, commitment, integrity and honor associated with the name of our ship because of her crew--each of you, and this ship is both our home at sea and a symbol of democracy and power around the world. May we continue to honor that name as we fulfill our mission. Let us pray. Heavenly Father tonight as we continue our mission we express gratitude for our safety thus far. Lord as we consider the power and meaning of names, and the importance of living up to our names and the other names of significance, I pray for each of us that we might continue to live with honor in weaving a culture of respect and integrity on the Antietam. I ask for your continued blessings of safety and protection as we prepare ourselves for a TST and follow on South China Sea operations. God bless as well all those other names of those on our hearts and minds this night I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 19 September 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaplain Williams here. Recently I was speaking with one of our bery capable OODs and it was additionally confirmed by engineering that Antietam weighs in over 10 thousand tons. Here at the outset of our patrol when many of us are trying to shed a few pounds this will help any of us feel better about our weight! But, as we've all noticed the past day or so, Antietam's weight seems to be practically insignificant in comparison to the vast forces of the sea. Maintaining a healthy awareness of our aquatic vulnerabilities is what leads us to do things like securing for sea and securing our rack straps before sleeping. Without an appropriate level of knowledge of our weaknesses we cannot be truly strong. Perhaps by embracing and accepting

our weakness can we in all actuality become strong. Acknowledging weakness is not weakness, but rather strength and is commonly known as humility. Perhaps regularly taking a moment to look out at the vast watery expanse can also help us recognize our own puniness in the grand scheme of things. Please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, first of all, though the seas have been rough we pause to thank you for our ship which though aged as she is, protects us daily from the oceans dangers. In the same breath though Lord, as we look at the sea and the vastness of your creation we are humbled by your great creation and thank you for giving us a spot in it all. I pray this night that where we may feel weak, through you we can become strong, especially as we prepare for the TST and flight operations through the early morning and day tomorrow. Bless us with safety on the sea and with your presence I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 20 September 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Today during the straits transit and actually at all times there are a handful of sailors who, by virtue of their watches, are required to look out across the sea, or at the sea, or into the sea, or even up to the very edge of where the horizon nearly dissolves into the sea. One would think that looking at the ocean might become boring or even commonplace. Not so. While of course when on watch the looking is more directed towards observing contacts or watching for anything falling over the side, for those watching the ocean at other times, it seems even a casual look at the sea reveals a delightful and even mesmerizing set of patterns, ripples, textures, and themes. Based on the sea state there can be white caps, broken up by deep troughs. At other times the water is as placid and calm as a newly groomed ice arena. Despite our busyness I would like to encourage us each to find opportunities--even 5 minutes--to look out at the sea and allow its properties to yield their calming and soothing effects. Please join me in a prayer. Dear God, we pause this evening very briefly to thank you for our safe passage today through the Taiwan straits. Thank you for giving energy to those with long or extended watches due to our mission requirements. God, in the midst of all of our work, I pray we may find the time to look, to observe, to reflect and to rejuvenate. As we do, I ask that you would renew our souls and energize our minds. Be with each this night with regeneration for another day at sea tomorrow I pray. Amen.

#### 21 September 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. Two weeks ago several of us joined in with the all hands working party to on-load an undisclosed number of boxes of la Croix, and other essentials. Who would have known then that this singular act would have enabled the movement we are seeing unfold this week. I can guarantee that few if any--not even our very own intelligence specialist and cryptologists could have foreseen the future which is now the present. But, the stage was nonetheless set then for what now takes place most evenings at 1800 in the classroom and classroom p-way. For me, and perhaps others it begs the question of how are trends set? And an observation: we as human beings have unimaginable potential for both influencing others and to be influenced by others. Whether it's buying plantain chips at the ship

store, getting into a good workout routine, being honest and forthright with our PMS, or cracking open an ice cold la Croix with others, learning to be aware of how we influence and how we are being influenced by others is vital to our wellbeing. Choosing to be a healthy influence and join in on ethically and morally sound endeavors will lead to peace of mind and builds trust with others. Please join me in prayer. Dear God, tonight I give thanks for our safety and prosperity this first week of patrol, and I pray your hand would continue to guide us. I pray Lord at this time that we may each take pause to consider the impact of our influence, how our words, actions or behaviors impact others, and may we ever be found doing those things that influence others for good. I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 22 September 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaplain Williams here. I noticed the POD note today asked a very poignant question. It is "what are your deployment goals?" As we round out week one of the patrol and enter week two there is perhaps no better time than now to respond to this question--whether it's directly to a member of the POD team, to an accountability partner, a friend or maybe just to ourself. On a more general sense, responding is something we on Antietam know how to do and do well. Each of you works in a job that requires response in some fashion, whether it's the air det and flight deck teams responding to emergency flight quarters, spy techs responding to early morning casualties, engineers working tirelessly on 1 bravo GTM, or just responding timely to email requests! On another note, we all work together to respond to each other when we notice someone's affect change, and this month in particular we are highlighting suicide prevention and response. In fact, tonight in around 15 minutes any of you who are free can respond to a 22 push-up challenge on the focsle in memorium of those 22 veteran lives daily lost to suicide. So my prayer tonight is for strength to respond. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, tonight I express gratitude to you for another safe day at sea, and ask that you would continue to watch over every sailor and their activity along the course of this patrol. Lord, I also thank you for the opportunities we have daily to respond in many ways. May we each have the discernment and strength to respond accordingly and timely. Thank you for your consistent and constant response in our lives I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 23 September 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. As most of us are aware, we have now reaggregated with the strike group. If you're like me there are some words you never used prior to coming into the navy--like the word reaggregate. Although I know what it implies I looked up the word and found this definition: to bring back together; to collect into one sum, mass, or body. Coming back together implies there has been some sort of de-aggregation in recent past. Which for us happened prior to the Taiwan straits transit. Though we love and thrive off our independence, being united in one mass or body as a strike group projects more power than any one particular part of the mass could project on its own. On a human level, each of us belongs to various bodies or masses--families, relationships, divisions, departments. How aggregated do you feel to these



organizations? Perhaps some reaggregation could be helpful in some areas of our lives; some coming together; some forgiveness of hard feelings, or letting go of anger or resentment. Sometimes reaggregation just requires opening up channels of communication and reconnection. Please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, as we find ourselves another night at sea I thank you Lord for your protective safety. God, though there are certain circumstances at this time that are out of our control, I pray for each of our sailors as they rise to the occasion, as they continue their regular stellar pattern of exemplary performance. God, I ask a special prayer on all those who may feel disaggregated in any way from their loved ones or close friends, or even work centers, that they can find a way to reconnection and community. Father finally I ask you to continue to bless all those working to repair broken parts both on Antietam and elsewhere, and be with all who stand watch this night I pray. Amen.

#### 24 September 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. Today as boxes were being passed back and forth during the UNREP working party, there were a few moments when single words were yelled out by the one up ahead who could see what was coming. "Eggs!!" He yelled at one point. Whenever I hear eggs I immediately think "ok it's time to be extra careful--this is precious cargo!" Other times someone might yell out "open box!" Or "cans...." each of these words have different implications and trigger certain responses. The reason these words are effective is because as sailors on a small boat, we all take part in these activities and understand what these words mean. We have a common language and understanding. We are on the same page. I wish to highlight how good and satisfying it feels to all be on the same page--it is satisfying to work side by side towards the same mission. Helping and communicating with one another feels good and is good. If we ever get off track, the sooner we can get on or help another get back on the same page the better. I'd like to pray tonight for help in being unified. Let us pray. Heavenly father, today has been a full day, and we pause to thank you for the safety and protection we've been afforded. We were blessed today to get replenished at sea, and especially that it was a safe event. God, just as we were all united in that endeavor, I pray in our own lives, relationships, work centers, and other connections we might be united; that we might be on the same page. Lord I pray now for continued safety and that you would also watch over our loved ones back at home wherever they may be. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 25 September 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaplain Williams here. It seems no matter where I go on the ship I find someone who is trying to qualify in some new watch station or qualify for some new PQS. This is a wonderful process the navy instituted long ago to ensure our professional development and career progression. Officially this process is called under instruction. I love how being under instruction is an even playing field--it doesn't matter if the qualified watch stander is 20 years old and the UI is 35--under instruction means just that--a person is in learning mode. To be in learning mode requires receptivity and teachability. It requires watching, listening, observing and

practicing. As I watch a JOOD learning from an OOD, a PAC UI learning from the PAC, or a new CS learning from a seasoned first class, I am inspired to learn more myself! In fact, im reminded that I can be a lifelong learner, even while acting as teacher in other areas. Tonight I'd like to pray for all those under instruction or studying to qualify in any way. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, first of all I thank you for the calm seas and safe pax transfers to and from RONALD Reagan. May your presence and blessings go with each of them and their loved ones. Lord, I pray at this time aslo for those who are studying PQS to pass various boards in the coming days. Bless their minds to be clear and active, responsive to what information they store up and the wherewithal to retrieve and use that information when needed. God, additionally I pray that each of us might remain teachable, humble and receptive to all types of learning as we engage under instruction in all its forms. Bless those on watch and our families back home I pray in your sacred name, Amen.

#### 26 September 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. This morning, and most mornings, afternoons and evenings on Antietam there are many many events happening simultaneously. Often there are drills, actual casualties, flight quarters, inspections, watches, and a multitude of other activities occurring which require an extremely high level of awareness and coordination to keep things running smoothly, not to mention the extra toner needed to print the elongated POD in the CIC. More often than not, things do run smoothly--thanks to the fighting spirit each of you exhibits day in and day out. Today as I was riding the bike in the gym I saw sailors--some of you--pushing yourselves to your limits. What is it, what is that drive that propels is forward to juggle all we do and thrive the way we do. Perhaps it is different for each of us, but I am truly in awe of your fighting spirit! I know it can be difficult out here, it can be lonely or exhausting at times, but we continue to fight on--together. Tonight I'd like to offer a prayer for our fighting spirits. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, today has been another full day on patrol. We have been blessed again with safety and I offer thanks for that. Lord, for whatever it is that motivates, inspires, drives, or propells each person on this ship, I give you thanks. May each sailor be strengthened with fighting spirit, the will and morale to persevere even when it gets tough. God, be with each who fights through the night on watch, bless them with strength, awareness and tenacity to rise to any occasion they meet. I pray gratefully in your name Amen.

#### 27 September 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. Yesterday in the evening prayer I talked about fighting spirit. Tonight I'd like to highlight flight Spirit. This refers to all those who, whenever flight quarters is called they respond with urgency and determination. They respond with the sole purpose of helping our birds take flight. Responders are part of the air det, they are sailors chosen from all over the ship wearing the colored shirts of the flight deck and refueling team, and they are sailors serving on watch in combat--each working around the clock to make sure the helos are ready to fulfill their mission. This is flight spirit but is also a helping spirit. Helping the

birds get airborne and stay airborne is no small task. On a different spectrum I have seen many other occasions today where some of you were helping your shipmates take flight in different ways--like quizzing someone in their esws notes, or leaving what you're doing to just sit and support a sailor going through a rough day. If we are observant and aware, there are flight quarters moments every day for us to respond to; moments we can help others take flight. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, again we find ourselves rounding out another day at sea and I thank you for our safety and protection. God, today--like everyday--we had a lot going on all over the ship. I pray at this time in gratitude for the many occasions where sailors helped each other, where someone recognized another and helped them take flight in some way. Lord thank you for this helping spirit which becomes the lifeblood to our existence and gives meaning and purpose to what we do. May that helping spirit continue and grow within each of us as we begin a new day tomorrow. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 28 September 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam chaps here. For the past couple days we have had very calm seas--today's seas were actually so calm it appeared at times we were on a lake rather than the massive South China Sea. Have you noticed though, that when the seas are calm we are much less prone to talk about the seastate than when they are rough--likewise it is substantially easier to notice the overwhelming, and the traumatic, the disasters and our own personal mistakes than it is to notice the successes, achievements, victories and our personal accomplishments. Just as noticing and focusing on the negative is a choice, noticing and focusing on the calm seas of our lives--even if the calmest thing we can find is to notice we are still alive and kicking. Taking regular and reflective time to notice calmness in our day will help us cultivate more of it. May we take that time and be blessed by it. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we are truly grateful for the calm seas and safe ship evolutions this day. God, bless each of us with a propensity to notice calm moments and thereby cultivate more calmness in our lives. I pray for those less than calm situations both on board and with family members back home--I ask that your calming presence will override any storms in motion and those on the horizon. Bless those on watch with calm response and mindful presence as they hold down their stations this night. I pray in your sacred name Amen.

#### 29 September 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. You've heard the adage don't judge a book by its cover, well in an UNREP we could change that to don't judge a box's weight by its size. Have you ever been on the working party and received several heavy boxes in a row, when all of the sudden a similar sized box that is half the weight comes into your hands. Accustomed to the previous boxes you judge the light box to be the same and grab it, only to thrust it straight into your face! This happens to the best of us. But perhaps what happens even more regularly is when we misjudge ourselves and the great potential we have for succeeding in something, even if we've tried, tried and tried again without any luck. Just as we continue moving heavy box after heavy box, the

next one--though it looks heavy--May actually be light; that next try after failing multiple times in a row just may be the success you are seeking! The key is to keep going and don't give up. Trust that success is just down the line! Let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we now start a new week of patrol we pause and thank you for caring for our safety and wellbeing. Thank you for taking account of the fine details of our lives. Lord, as we go through the challenges and adventures of each day, there are definitely times when we feel like we've failed in certain ways and this can weigh heavy on us. God, give us the determination and grit to get up again and again until we succeed. Bless and empower each this night to stand with courage to try and try again. I pray in your faithful name, Amen.

### 30 September 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam this is Chaplain Williams. Earlier today there was great excitement when the mail orderlies were invited to muster in the mail room with LS2 valaroso. Likely many of you had great anticipation as you waited to see if you received anything from yesterday's delivery and today's retrieval. Most of us like to receive things in the mail, unless it's a bill or some negative legal statement, receiving care packages from those we love is very satisfying. I thought for a moment what it is that is so satisfying about receiving a package, and it seems the key is the insertion of change into one's regular routine--whether it's treats, new electronic gadgets, or maybe some new wardrobe piece, these additions can be like breaths of fresh air from the outside world. Perhaps mail call reminds us of the importance of allowing regular and healthy change into our regular routines. One change many of you can come enjoy is tonight's i scream to care ice cream social, 1930 on the mess decks. In recognition of the final day of suicide prevention and awareness month. With this in mind let us pray. Heavenly Father, though we thrive off of and seek continuity and consistency, certainly it can be good for us to incorporate some change into our routines. Lord I pray you would help us see needed change in our routines, and give us the strength and determination to make these changes. Finally, i pray you would continue to watch over our VBSS activities this night with safety and protection. I pray in your holy name Amen.

### 1 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. Today I was on the fantail with a few of you observing the small boat operations. We noticed how the two boats went around and around in the same patterns over and over in a repetitive manner, rehearsing and drilling their various approaches and other training points. As I said yesterday periodic insertion of change is healthy and beneficial, but repetition is also extremely valuable and helps build habitual behavior. The old adage practice makes perfect should actually be practice makes permanent. When we repeat something over and over it becomes a part of our routine, a part of our behavior and eventually a part of our culture. What sorts of things do we repeat? Are those things we want to repeat? Are there some things we want to repeat more of or less of? Perhaps it could be instructive to take a moment to reflect on what it is we are repeating. Please pray with me. Heavenly Father, in light

of the value of repetition, I want to repeat again our expression of gratitude for safety throughout all of today's evolutions. They were many and varied for sure, and I thank you for being there for us every step of the way. God, though there may be some mundanity in the sameness of our day's events, I pray we may recognize the value of repetition in certain areas, and in the repetition I pray we might garner increased strength and tenacity. God, bless each Antietam sailor, especially with the new watch rotation I ask you to strengthen and sustain those on watch tonight. I pray in your holy name Amen.

### 2 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaplain Williams here. The past couple weeks we have witnessed the CS burger challenge, wherein some of our outstanding CS's competed in crafting the perfect sauce to top off the burger. I'm sure many of you, like me have a hard time choosing a favorite when the competition is so tight! What I want to highlight though is that through the means of this competition effort was made to go the extra mile. Despite the popularity of burger Wednesday, it makes sense that over time the meal can almost become commonplace. Surprisingly, you may even hear yourselves or others say, "well, it's just another burger day...." but the thing about the sauce is now just another burger day turns into a "brand new burger day!" The difference? It's in the sauce. Well we are not all CS's but we each have the capacity to add some sauce to "just another day in CF, or CM, or ERO9, or fill in your shop's name." What kind of sauce can we make to spruce up or add flavor to what we do? Are there ways we can go the extra mile? It's in the sauce. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for continued safety in our vbss, flight schedule, and integrated training team exercises. Every day there are so many moving pieces and we appreciate you watching over us. Lord, as we get ready to wrap up this day or when many of us wrap up the next watch I pray we may reflect and consider how to improve our efforts in our craft. May we ever strive to improve ourselves and add sauce to the daily grind. Father, in it all, I pray you would add to us and strengthen our resolve to keep pushing forward together. Bless the Antietam and her crew this night I pray in your holy name Amen.

### 3 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, this is Chaplain Williams. If you happen to take a walk around to the different work centers during cleaning stations or sweepers on any given day you will witness a cacophony of sounds; almost every genre of our human musical spectrum is represented on personal wireless speaker devices or phones, and not to mention the vast world of non publicly heard music broadcast on numerous wireless headphone devices. What is behind this almost universal need or desire that most have for listening to music, and in particular, listening while working? Maybe it's because music is a medium that can either help shape, or can give voice and expression to a pre-existent emotional state. And all of this with very little effort on the listeners part. In short, music has a way of helping us feel! After all, life without feeling is like yesterday's sauce minus it's amazing flavor! Perhaps next time you listen to your music, take a moment to

notice your feelings--and recognize the importance of being mindful of our feelings and how they influence us. Let us pray--Heavenly Father, thank you for another safe day--for keeping your protection and sustainment. God, as we persist in this patrol and in our lives in general, I pray you would help us recognize and find healthy ways to express our emotions. For any who carry emotional weight I pray you would help them find healthy ways to find relief and understanding. Continue to bless us with safety this night I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 4 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. Today we again successfully executed another underway replenishment. Just prior to shotlines being fired I was up near the starboard bridgewing and observed our approach. As I watched the many moving parts and the communications between so many of you it struck me just how important that approach is. Without a properly executed approach we would have no shot lines, not spanning wire, no fuel hookup, no pallet exchange, in short: no replenishment. A proper approach is paramount. It made me think about the importance of approachability. Today's UNREP ship, the Carl Brasheer was very approachable, in fact she communicated with us when we got close, she explained she was prepared to receive our lines, and then she gave us supplies. We too can learn to be approachable, we can be available for those who wish to come connect with us in some way. Sometimes, just like our UNREP ship, that just means being available, receptive and giving. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, I express gratitude for a safe evolution in today's UNREP. Thank you for all those who practiced their craft with skill and determination to make that possible. God, may we each take a lesson from today's approach and the approachable nature of our UNREP ship--lord May we also strive to be available, receptive and giving when it comes to interactions with each other. God bless each sailor and their families this night I pray in your holy name Amen!

#### 5 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. For the past year and a half I have been so interested and impressed with the engineering departments vernacular. Whether I'm down in the main space and hear the orders relayed from CCS across the net, or observing ERO operations in main 2 and again hear some talking across the net--there are two things I can always count on: 1. I can't understand what is being said, and 2: the engineer on watch does understand. I'm thankful for this! And there is another amazing phenomena, during Evs and drills it is often the case that the command will be given to set condition 2 DC, but only seconds later we hear "this is the engineering training leader from CCS, do not set condition 2 DC, I repeat do not set condition 2 DC!" Thankfully in both of these and countless other scenarios there are those who understand the words passed AND understand which voice to listen to. It got me thinking, how did they learn to understand these voices, and these commands? Furthermore, how do we each learn to understand any of the voices around us? Understanding is something that takes effort, practice and patience. Learning to understand others' voices is something we can each do--as we make the choice to do so. Perhaps each of us can take a note from our engineers and learn to understand

better. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, this evening I express thanks for your protection through today's drills, OC spray, flight quarters and other events. Lord, there are so many times when we need understanding--while we know it is impossible to understand everything, I pray for a blessing of understanding--of each other, of ourselves and of situations we may not yet fully comprehend. God be with each of us and help us understand those things that are needful I pray in your sacred name Amen.

#### 6 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Our position in today's photoex reminded me of most times when I join my family for photos, or when I get pictures taken with large groups--"all those who are tall, stand in the back!" That typically includes me, so I'm usually in the back. While there were really only two rows of ships, the reverse was the case here--the big decks were in front and the small boys in back. Despite being smaller, however, we will still stand out in the photo when all is said and done. In fact, it also reminded me of those family photo moments where the photographer reminds us to sit or stand up tall. Standing tall is not just something we do for photos, but rather it's something we can do daily--we can stand tall knowing we are serving our nation and upholding the constitution. We can stand tall no matter what our job is. We can stand tall by being true to our convictions staying committed to treating everyone with respect. No matter what our position in the photoex of our life or time onboard Antietam, let us each stand tall and do our best! Please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, again I thank you for safety and protection this day. Lord, no matter where we find ourselves on the positional spectrum, may we be strengthened to stand tall and be filled with confidence as we try to give our best efforts in all we do. Bless each sailor with a sense of assurance and courage to stand up tall for what is right and good. I pray in your sacred name Amen.

#### 7 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. This morning in addition to being extremely impressed with GM1 hurts rescue swimming capabilities, I was intrigued by a couple things. First, the distance he had to swim to rescue OSCAR which was amazing, and second, with that kind of distance and the sea state how important it was for him to keep looking up and not keep his head perpetually down. Looking up regularly gave him a more clear and accurate perspective and increased his advantage in reaching Oscar in a timely manner. This simple act is--of course--not only applicable for Saar swimmers, it is helpful and vital guidance for each of us! Sometimes it's easier to just look down, noticing the negative and dwelling on the insufficiencies of ourselves and others. I recommend we try looking up more often! Look up and see the bigger picture! Look up and if we've lost sight of our goals relocate them and set a new course in their direction. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, I thank you for another day of life, which affords us countless and varied opportunities to make choices. God, as we wrap up the day in the next few hours I pray we may pause to reflect on the position of our focus. In areas where we sense a downward perspective please empower us to find ways to process this and then move our gaze upward. As

we do so, I ask that our perspectives and moods may be lightened and that we might gain strength to reach our goals. Bless each this night to look up I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 8 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. There is one thing that unites every single one of us-- something in addition to our common humanity, in addition to our common naval sea faring occupation, and even in addition to our almost ubiquitous love for taco Tuesday quesadillas, and that is our daily United efforts to fix broken things. Whether you're a doc trying to help mend a deep abrasion, or a MM trying to fix machines in PWP, or engineers trying to fix Hpac's and engines, we ALL want to fix things. We are truly united in this. We are a team committed to fixing things and solving problems. Because we are so committed it can be frustrating when the broken things don't cooperate how we want them to, or when it seems that our drive to keep fixing even seems to be breaking. My encouragement tonight is that no matter what is broken, we are in this together, and that cannot break. It will not break as long as we don't let it. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, tonight I thank you for another day to live, to breathe and to make choices. Lord, as we come close to finishing this day I ask you to strengthen each sailor physically, mentally, and spiritually as they work to fix things. Lord bless the hands that configure circuitry and turn wrenches, the hands that fix consoles and converters, and the hands that work on our engines. Lord, especially as we greet each other daily and shake hands or pump fists, May we sense our connection and unity together in the process of fixing. I pray all of this in your holy name Amen.

#### 9 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. As most are aware, Antietam has a very strong culture of health and physical fitness. For those who do some heavy working out, you are aware of how sweaty and hot it can get, and consequently how vital it is that you cool down a bit before showering off, unless you want to stay sweaty. This got my metaphorical mind going. As the captain said earlier in quoting CMC, it is also a central part of Antietam culture to work hard to prevail over any challenges we face. We work hard! In the process of working hard we may inadvertently get overheated, step on one of our shipmates in some way, causing some hot debate or even altercation. In these cases like cooling off from a workout, perhaps we can also learn to cool down before we communicate with those whom we have a disagreement. Taking the time to cool off will put us in the right frame of mind to communicate and come to understand each other better. With this in mind please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, thank you for all the hard work and dedication of so many to fix and repair our most vital ship equipment. Thank you for safety and calm seas this day as well. Lord I pray in those moments when we overheat with anger, judgment, or any hostile feelings, that we might find time and space to cool off, to find respite and singleness of mind, so that we might better see eye to eye with one another. Please continue with those on watch this night I pray in your holy name Amen.



### 10 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Many of you are aware that today we had an exchange between some of our Sailors and some of the Sailors and Marines from the Boxer. At one point I personally witnessed our TRAINO shepherding some of the Boxer Junior Officers out of the Ship Store. it is very likely that for some this was their first time on a small boat. Exchanges such as this are important because they broaden perspectives and help develop the understanding. While not all of us had the chance to exchange today, we each take part in other exchanges every day! We connect with and exchange greetings, stories, e-mails, verbal communications etc. As we exchange with one another we can grow in understanding and appreciation of each other--and ultimately we become healthier and more adept human beings. With this in mind, let us pray. Heavenly Father, on this day of exchanges, I thank you for the opportunity you give us daily to exchange in so many ways with one another. Lord, as we do these exchanges and connect with one another, may we be open and receptive to learning and growth, as well as take the opportunity to provide truthful feedback to others when it is needed. Lord, finally, I pray for energy and strength to be with each Sailor this night and as they start a new day tomorrow. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

### 11 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. As is commonly the case in life, and life on the ship is no exception, there are often occasions where we have to re-do certain things. This is because we are all constantly learning. I'm sure even now each of us can think of a time we had to redo something, maybe a qualification board, a paint job, a drill scenario, a comms transmission, an overly brash email message, or maybe an overly idealized workout routine. Whenever we redo something that's a pretty good indicator that we are learning. And learning is good! Perhaps redoing is less about a mistake made and more about the natural learning process we each go through in our attempt to grow in knowledge and wisdom. Please join me in prayer. Lord, tonight as we transit through these beautiful waters I thank you for our safety as we've engaged in several different activities and projects. God, certainly while it can be uncomfortable at times to make mistakes and redo things, we also recognize it is part of learning and growing. I thank you for the chance we have to redo things from time to time, and in the case at hand to wrap up one day and get a shot at another tomorrow. Please bless and sustain each sailor with courage and patience in all of our redoing. And God, I pray for the safety of our families and friends back in Yokosuka as the typhoon hits early tomorrow. Please protect and watch over them all. I pray in your holy name Amen.

12 October 2019 redo of 11 October evening prayer....

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. So due to last night's IMC issues, and in light of yesterday's prayer theme, I am redoing last night's prayer. It is now even more applicable. As is commonly the case in life, and life on the ship is no exception, there are often occasions where we have to re-do certain things. This is because we are all constantly learning. Although there are things like the OC spray experience many of you would never want to redo, I'm sure each of us can think of a time we had to redo something, maybe a qualification board, a paint job, a drill scenario, a comms transmission, an overly brash email message, an evening prayer, or maybe an overly idealized workout routine. Whenever we redo something that's a pretty good indicator that we are learning. And learning is good! Perhaps redoing is less about a mistake made and more about the natural learning process we each go through in our attempt to grow in knowledge and wisdom. Please join me in prayer. Lord, tonight as we transit through these beautiful waters I thank you for our safety as we've engaged in several different activities and projects. God, certainly while it can be uncomfortable at times to make mistakes and redo things, we also recognize it is part of learning and growing. I thank you for the chance we have to redo things from time to time, and in the case at hand to wrap up one day and get a shot at another tomorrow. Please bless and sustain each sailor with courage and patience in all of our redoing. And God, I pray for the safety of our families and friends back in Yokosuka during the typhoon. Please protect and watch over them all. I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 13 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Today many of us were down on the messdecks celebrating the birth of our navy 244 years ago today. I really love the tradition of the youngest and oldest sailors cutting the cake together. Both holding a knife it almost seems they are symbolically carving a path together, rooted in mutual respect towards the roles of both mentor and mentee; trainer and trainee; guide and protégé. For any of us, working together is an engagement we don't want to take lightly. Whether it be in our roles as customer servants or of grateful benefactors, we can figuratively take the knife together and carve our way towards greater understanding and connection. Sometimes it is hard to connect with others though, when the metaphorical or actual age gap comes in the way and rather than confront one another directly about our issues or concerns, it seems easier to flee the scene. My recommendation is to take up the knife together, unite in our differences and cut the cake! Let us pray. Lord, tonight as we finish up another evening following a wonderful meal and navy birthday celebration, I thank you for our many rich blessings. God, despite our differences, I pray you would give us courage to approach those with whom we may have concerns; give us words to say or in some cases ears to just listen, that as we do so we all might feel united and together carve out a more connected future. Lord be with each sailor both young and old this night I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 14 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. When I was young my family and I would often go visit my grandparents for the holidays. In particular what I remember most were the mouthwatering

smells coming from grandma's kitchen. I recall images of her in her apron scurrying around the kitchen pulling out fresh baked rolls and testing the tenderness of turkey or roast beef. What I don't remember is the hours and hours of planning and preparation she did prior to those moments and then the ultimate moment when we gathered around, said grace then dug into the feast. I don't recall the hours of chopping veggies, kneeding of dough, and churning of homemade ice cream. Looking back, I know I felt so grateful for what she was doing and all the amazing food she was making, but i do wish I had expressed more gratitude. Taking time to say thank you doesn't take much time! Sometimes when caught up in the middle of our own work or personal struggles, it can be easy to forget to say thank you. But you'd be surprised at how learning to express gratitude can actually propel us out of many of these challenges. With this in mind, please join me in prayer. Lord, thank you for our safe travel today. We've been blessed with calm seas and beautiful weather, thank you for that. God, I pray you would open each of our eyes to notice the many good things around us, and fill our hearts with gratitude Lord; and May we find chances to express that to one another, freely and often. I pray this in gratitude in your holy name Amen.

15 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. As you are aware if you happen to turn the tv on to channel 9 you'll likely see the Major League Baseball World Series airing much of the time. For any Washington Nats fans, I'm sure you were happy for your team today, and sorry about St. Louis! I'm fascinated with how methodical and rudimentary baseball is. Pitch by pitch, run by run, catch by catch, every single play adds up to yield either a win or a loss. The reason we all love homeruns so much is because in one play we can skip all of the small plays typically leading to a run, and get home faster. Sometimes we may feel that way in our day to day life walk--we may want to skip certain basic steps to hit that proverbial home run, but most of life doesn't work that way. In fact, most days we are just doing the rudimentary basics, the daily life maintenance which leads to good upkeep overall. Basic, simple everyday acts, consciously completed will build a life foundation upon which we can establish a game winning performance and even a winning season. Please join me in prayer. Lord, I thank you this night again for your protection and guidance as we transit towards Singapore. God as we finish this day and prepare for a new one, I pray we might see the value in the basics; the seemingly insignificant yet fundAmental and routine acts which build greatness over time. I pray as we execute the basics of tomorrow's RAS and other scheduled events that you would watch over us in safety. I pray in your holy name. Amen.

16 October 2019

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Perhaps you, like me, at around 1500 today felt completely energized as LSSN audino announced the commencement of his half hour of cleaning power. Somehow his exclamation rallied my inner senses and drive to move with more purpose. While his voice was very charismatic and heralding, I'm especially interested in the word power. What

exactly is power anyway. Of course there are different types of power. There is spy array power, there is ships power, there is the power to prevail which I believe each of us develops while underway doing hard things. But there is also personal power--the power each of us learns how to use to some degree or another through our lives. Are we aware of the power we carry, based on our position, physical prowess, or even just personal charisma? How do we use our power? Do we use it to humbly and confidently lift, mentor and sometimes correct, or do we use it to manipulate, denigrate, or subliminate others--attempting to diminish their perceived or actual status, while boosting our own? It has been said, with great power comes great responsibility. Let us consider and contemplate our understanding of our power and use it wisely. Join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, we bless your name Lord for our safety and protection this day. Thank you for empowering the many sailors who participated in today's RAS. Lord as we consider the power we've been afforded, whether through position, title, or personality type, may we reverently respect this power, and use it to build our organization into a unified force of protective power. Bless those on watch during tomorrow's sea and anchor with focus, poise and your power I pray in your holy name. Amen.

17-29 October 2019 Singapore PVST

21 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. For any of you who were stationed outside this morning on the sea and anchor detail you can likely relate when I say it was HOT out there as we waited for underway. Standing your watch in the stagnant heat of the Singaporean sun and humidity is enough to metaphorically take the wind out of your sails, but speaking of wind there was none to begin with, until....after being tugged out we did all engines ahead for 4 knots and then....then the wind came and made everything better. Despite the heat of the sun, as we moved forward the wind began to blow and the temperature decreased. It's amazing how moving forward made such a difference. Likewise, moving forward in other ways can make a difference for us as well. Sometimes when almost everything seems out of our control, the best advice for any of us: move forward. When presented with tough situations, or waiting for a decision from higher: move forward. Do what we know how to do. Create and stick with a routine. Move forward and feel the cool breeze. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for our time to recuperate in Singapore and also for our safety in getting underway today. Lord as we face so many unknowns, may we have the clarity of mind and mental stamina to move forward in the direction we know. I pray your guiding hand will be with and strengthen each of us and our families at home as we all move forward. I pray in your holy name Amen.

22 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. I was outside earlier and happened to notice some birds gliding off our port beam. As i watched them i noticed they would fly along next to the ship for a short time, then they would take a dive toward the water--i assume in an effort to catch a fish.

Every time they hit the water they left a mark where they landed; a circular ripple of water around them where they had impacted. Even though the ocean is vast and they are small, they left an unmistakable impact in that water. Today I was talking with a few of you during sweepers and I was so impressed with the choice many of you are making to be positive even when there are so many unknowns. These types of choices, as well as the alternative choice of negativity, all leave impacts. The question is, what kind of impact are we leaving? Both positivity and negativity are contagious. Which contagion are we going to spread? What kind of impact will we leave on one another, our work center, or the command? Please join me in prayer. Lord, this evening I express gratitude for our ship and crew and for the families in the rear who support us unwaveringly. God, as we wrap up this day and are presented with a new one tomorrow, may we choose to leave a positive impact in all of our relationships and actions. And May the collective effect of these impacts become the fuel that propels us through anything that lies ahead. And finally, Please sustain and bless all those on watch this evening with alertness and strength. I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 23 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. While in Singapore I gained some new appreciation for the Singaporeans, their way of life and especially their toughness. Rising from the complete depravity and destruction of world war 2, these people built Singapore into one of the most successful city states on the planet. It surely took ingenuity, dedication and hard work, but it also took very focused and visionary planning. Many of the public street systems of today were actually planned over 50 years ago, and much current city planning is done with the distant future in mind. This foresight is ingenious. We are not so much different. Beginning today and in the coming days, we are experiencing an increase in training and drills, all with the goal of better preparing us for the future. While it can be exhausting at times, preparing now will help us be ready to excel in the future. Seeing the big picture and maintaining perspective will give us clues into how to prepare for the future, to include being ready for a time change in the morning. If we do not fail to prepare than we will be prepared not to fail. Let us pray. Heavenly father, again we near the end of another day and I thank you for our safe and smooth transit. Lord, as we engage the many events and challenges each day presents, may we each be blessed with perspective and the presence of mind to prepare adequately for the future. Bless each also with patience and persistence to see the preparation through to fruition. Finally, I pray for each watch stander this night that they might be prepared for their watch and whatever comes up this night. I pray in your holy name. Amen.

#### 24 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. The past few days we have been rotating in and out of various EMCON levels, working to limit the amount of emissions from Antietam as we trail the carrier through the Filipino archipelago and up to our rendezvous point. Working to reduce our emissions takes effort and responsibility on each of our parts by switching off Bluetooth when

necessary or limiting other equipment which may emit. As I consider emissions, I can't help but think of the importance of not only paying attention to what our Bluetooth devices are emitting, but what sort of messages, statements or vibes are we emitting to those around us by what we say or how we act. I have witnessed many very positive emissions as of late, kind or encouraging words, helpful guidance or direction, and even at times firm direction used to mentor or discipline. I wonder if we've paused recently to look in a mirror or just listen to the tone of our voice, or the words we use in communicating--these various ways we emit to the world around what is going on inside of us. Whether we know it or not, every one of our emissions leaves an impact--it is up to us to decide what that impact is like. Please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, as we come close to ending another day at sea I thank you for our safety and protection as we transit northeast. Lord, as we travel through our lives we have so many opportunities for interaction and association with others, and along the way we are trying to figure out how to communicate and express ourselves. I pray you would guide each of us strength and awareness, that what we say and do can be the means to strengthen, lift and build our team. And God I pray you would bless our physical and mental stamina as many stand the watch tonight and as we execute our fuel replenishment tomorrow. Sustain, nourish and empower each Antietam sailor I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 25 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. This evening I'm fully aware that for some of us this has been a tough day. For others it's been just another Navy day at sea, much like the past several. Because each of us comes from different families, walks of life, cultures and ethnicities, we each have a unique life experience which belongs only to us. While some of you may be aware of certain struggles or challenges your shipmates may be enduring, there are others we are likely blind to. Tonight I want to encourage each of us to take a moment and either join me in prayer for those or in your own way send positive, encouraging thoughts in their direction. Let us pray, Heavenly Father, tonight I'm mindful of some amongst us who have recently lost loved ones, or may have lost a marriage or close relationship, or may be enduring overwhelming financial burdens. Lord, there may be others haunted from past traumas or worried about a family member's illness. I pray at this time for all who are concerned in any way that you would reach out to them--even if it is through us Lord--and comfort them in their anguish. God, be the buoy and the shining light house in the raging storm for them. Lord, lift, bless, sustain, and nurture those who suffer, and may we each find opportunity to do the same I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 26 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Lately there has been a lot of inventory going on in different spaces--checking of gear and noting what works and what doesn't. Taking inventory is also a means for discovering what we have on hand. If you brought snacks on 19-2 you may have recently taken an inventory of what you have left. S-3 always does an end of month

inventory. Every division does regular inventory of gear and equipment. Every six months most of us take inventory on our physical fitness in the form of a BCA and alternate or regular PFA. In addition, it's pretty important that we take inventory on our own wellbeing. Being out at sea for lengthy periods of time, and operating in an information vacuum at times can take its toll. I know I need to regularly take inventory of my mind and heart--am I overly focused on things I can't control? What do I spend my time thinking about? Are there some things I spend my time doing that could stand to be thrown out or retained on station? Taking inventory is vital to our wellbeing. Please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, I'm grateful to you for walking through another day with us on Antietam. Lord, through the ups and downs of life, I pray you would afford us time to take inventory of the condition of our hearts and minds. Where there is sorrow, would you fill us with hope. Where there is resentment, fill us with forgiveness. And where there is grief, please bless us with healing. Finally, Bless each sailor and their families this night according to your omniscient inventory and love. I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 27 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain here. Today as I was walking up past the O-3 and up to the O-4 level outside I passed by a few sailors working out. I really enjoy working out in that location because it is outdoors and less claustrophobic to me. As I think about working out there though, I recall some physical pain I endured a couple weeks ago doing burpees. I also recall pain I felt doing kettle bell lifts with a couple chiefs. Come to think of it, there is often pain involved when getting a good workout. So, why is it that we seek this discomfort? On one hand it doesn't make sense, to willfully subject ourselves to pain. But, then again growth is unlikely to happen without placing ourselves in uncomfortable positions requiring us to deal with tension and adaptation. We have opportunities daily to do hard things, some of which are painful in certain ways. Facing that person with whom we have an issue, reaching out to a family member to whom we have become estranged, or choosing to speak kindly to someone who has not done so to us. But doing hard things that are good for us--just like welcoming the pain of a good workout--will help us develop toughness, which is the bedrock of healthy morale. Please join me in prayer. Lord, thank you for another day. Thank you for the challenges we face on any given day. It's not that we seek the pain God, but we know as we face difficult things we can become stronger. I pray father for your strength, in which we can then do all things. Bless, sustain and lift us as we face hard things. I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 28 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Fellow shipmates, sometimes there are those moments when no metaphor comes to mind, but a desire and prayer of my heart--and maybe some of your hearts--does come to mind. It has to do with the grave and solemn responsibility that rests with all who make decisions that determine the fate or consequences of others. There are many of you that know this burden. There are some off the ship in high and lofty positions with whom great decision making power rests. My prayer tonight is for all who have decision making authority.

Let us pray. Heavenly Father, it is the case that the power and authority to make very important decisions rests with some of us on the ship and some off our ship. Lord, I ask that your spirit and discernment will rest with each and every one of them; that they may make wise and prudent choices regarding the allocation of assets such as our ship and others. And that in their own way they might consult you for guidance. I pray for Antietam decision makers, bless them with sound understanding and clear foresight to choose courses of action which align with your desires and will. God, in the wake of any and all of these decisions I pray for your presence and strength for the crew to be able to unite in engaging whatever course is chosen. Please continue to keep our loved ones in the hollow of your hand, and bless them with patience and peace. Be with us all this night I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 29 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. This morning when many of you stepped out of the hatch and saw the weather, I'm sure somewhere deep inside of you there were some conflicting thoughts: I want to turn around and go back inside! Or, why me or why today if all days?! Or maybe ok, it's foggy, cold and rainy, but it will dry eventually! Sometimes there are those days, when the fog descends and the rain comes down, and you have to go out into it. That takes character--like the character I saw exhibited by each of you today. The fog can descend on us in a variety of ways--perhaps you have lost drive and motivation for your job, or maybe you struggle terribly with your boss or a subordinate, or maybe you just feel exhausted. The fog can descend in so many ways and can become distracting or even disruptive to our progression. My recommendation is turn fog around and you get the acronym GOF, which in case you don't know what that stands for is GO ON FORWARD. That's what we as a ship did this morning, that's what we are doing now, and that's what we can do individually. We can go on forward trusting in the path we've started. Please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, tonight as many of us continue to dry off, I thank you for our safety during the RAS and today's journey. Lord, I know there are some traveling through their own fog right now, and I pray you would strengthen their resolve to go on forward. Lift and strengthen them God, and bless them to persist until that fog lifts. I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 30 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaplain Williams here. The past few days you've probably noticed sailors walking around with mismatched uniforms--or maybe you've been one of those sailors. The service dress blues top and the coverall bottoms make for quite a sight. Under normal circumstances that combination of uniforms would warrant an instructive or guiding word from another shipmate, or would at least cause someone else to notice the difference and inquire with the mismatched individual into what's going on. Thankfully, we understand this week cruise book photos are being conducted so it's no big deal. It caused me to wonder though, there are likely times when some in our work center or spaces, or around the ship are feeling a little mismatched in some way--due to a variety of reasons. Especially as we round out the set of 19-



tack patrols. Perhaps we could take note and gently confront those who may seem a little off kilter or a little misaligned for some reason. An outstretched Hand may be the key to helping these realign or even recover. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, tonight we round out another day at sea and I thank you for the gorgeous weather and safety throughout all of our operations. I pray now Lord you would open our eyes to see the needs and concerns of others around us--and in some cases to look beyond our own to see from others perspectives. God, I ask you to continue with us with safety and openness to lean on and receive support from others if we need it. I pray in your holy name. Amen.

### 31 October 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam this is Chaplain Williams. It is highly likely that many of you received a piece of candy from GM1 Riedesel as he played the role of Halloween Santa today, moving amongst sailors on the messdecks and through other spaces in the ship wishing us all a happy Halloween. That simple act was very thoughtful and put a smile on my face. Speaking of face, one common characteristic of Halloween is the use of masks. There is something about wearing a mask that seems to lower the inhibitions and invites spontaneity. But there's another side of a mask, where sometimes it becomes a facade to block our real vulnerabilities. We each wear a mask at times, even on non-Halloween days, and that's not a bad thing! It can help protect us or even give us strength. The key is, do we know when to take it off? Learning to be vulnerable requires humility, but will lead to greater approachability and more authentic living. Please pray with me. Heavenly Father, I thank you for another safe day at sea. As we start another night and prepare for a new day I pray that we each might be humble, teachable and vulnerable in positive ways, to grow in personal authenticity and development. Additionally, Lord would you bless all who are working to repair engineering and other casualties this night, may the masks of their understanding come off and may they be blessed in their work. Lord be with us all this night I pray in your holy name Amen.

### 1 November 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Have you ever really really hoped for something and maybe even prayed for it, and it came to pass? Because I'm human I'm also aware of and familiar with times when things didn't go according to what I hoped and prayed for, but since we are now into the month of November and this is the month of thanksgiving, I'd like to consider the value of gratitude for what we have. If you're like me, there are likely things that we experience or enjoy on a daily basis, for which we can be grateful. We often get so busy we don't have time to consider these things--or maybe we don't prioritize gratitude expressing time. Strangely both ingratitude and gratitude take effort. Both also encourage or engender consequential emotions and behavior. My recommendation is to begin this new month with a mindset of gratitude. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we begin this new month I express thanks for hearing our prayers and journeying with us through the unanswered questions many of us still have. Lord, I pray you would open each of our hearts and minds to see more clearly the blessings we enjoy, to complain

less about deficiency and spend time increasing our gratitude efficiency. Lord, thank you for this new month and the opportunities it brings us. Thank you for all those who have worked around the clock to repair our ship in various ways and for those who stand the watch. Bless them and sustain them, and be with our families at home I pray in your holy name Amen.

### 2 November 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. I am continually amazed at the effort expended to do a shipboard man overboard recovery. The efforts of communication, coordination between The bridge, deck and engineering teams is always impressive. Perhaps the thing that sticks out most in my mind is the fact that we bring a massive warship completely around to go locate a single person. Would you do the same with your work center if there was one person not drowning in water but drowning in personal or work related struggles? Are there some amongst us who may have proverbially fallen overboard and could use an entire workcenter recovery? What would that look like? Noticing if someone is struggling is probably a good place to start. Figuring out how to rescue the man or woman then requires nuanced and caring leadership, and engaged participation from all hands. Through this combined effort we can come about and help support any who may be drowning in any way. With this in mind let us pray. Heavenly Father, I thank you for this evening and a successful day of learning and drilling. God, as we go throughout the day tomorrow i pray for discernment and wisdom to see those who may need some support or even recovery. Bless us with understanding, compassion and patience as we reach out to them. Finally, Lord continue with us this night, sustain those on watch this night and early in the morning. I pray in your holy name Amen.

### 3 November 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. The past couple days many of us have taken good advantage of the lighted cell phone lamp, getting music back, calling family and friends, or just updating apps and things on our phones. Perhaps while talking with a loved one the ship shifted or changed position, which degraded the signal. It took some great restraint for some I'm sure, but after waiting for a moment we came back into range and the signal strengthened. Moving back into proper cell range position dramatically increased the likelihood that you could stay connected with your loved one. In fact some right at this very moment might be asking "can you hear me now?" As you try and move into position. To hear and be heard--this is also known as communication, requires moving into position! Effective communication is an active process that requires proactivity and effort from both parties to have a productive connection. This might mean you have to move into a different position to either speak more clearly or listen more intently, or both. The key is to be proactive in our attempts. With this in mind please join me in a prayer. Lord, in our communication there may be times where we sense a lack of Connectivity or connection. God, i pray each of us might know how to adjust or adapt, or proactively reach out so that much needed communication might become a reality. I pray it might be so in your holy name Amen.

#### 4 November 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. For anyone who follows football even casually, you know at this point that the New England patriots lost their first game of the season today. For some Bostonians out there, unlike their baked beans, this loss may be hard to swallow. But it's only one loss and that's still pretty amazing when you think about it. Many if not most of us are like the patriots record, we seek perfection, and when it comes time for game day--or in our case these days--assessment day, we are ready for perfection. More often than not we sure come pretty darn close, but no matter how hard we try there will always be some area or thing we can improve on. Remember, one or two or even a couple more losses in a season, is still a winning season. While we still shoot for perfection, because that's what we do, we would do well to cut ourselves some slack every once in a while--give ourselves some grace from time to time. With this in mind let us pray. God, though many or most of us shoots for perfection, we know it is not possible, but Lord I pray that in that we might not be discouraged but rather encouraged as we allow some grace for our shortcomings at times. I pray you would fill us with hope and renewed perspective as we try our hardest in all that we do, and though there are those days when we take a loss--give us the drive to move on to next week, maintaining a positive vision and sensing your grace along the way. I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 5 November 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. For the past few days if you've been out on the O-3 level you've probably seen CTT2 Runner at his workbench cutting out PCMS tiles. He and the other CTTs are preparing us for tomorrow's RF assault, and they are doing a phenomenal job of making us ever more inconspicuous. Use of these panels can reduce our footprint on an enemy's radar picture, making us look like something other than a warship, maybe something more like a little fishing vessel. We've all heard of the concept of growing thick skin, usually in the context of when the going gets tough the tough get going. But, growing thick skin can also apply to the notion that we need to be prepared to make healthy choices when moments of decision arise. Whether underway or in home port, we can be faced with incoming RF, presented with various decisions where we have an opportunity to choose either wisely or poorly. I recommend we apply our own PCMS tiles and make wise choices that will yield healthy outcomes. May we remember this as we prepare to return to home port tomorrow. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we come close to rounding out this patrol and return to home port I thank you for the safety and protection we've enjoyed. Thank you for empowering each of the sailors and giving them energy and drive to fulfill whatever mission they were tasked with. Lord, as we pull in tomorrow and spend a few days in port I pray you would give each of us sound and wise discernment and understanding to make choices that will enable progression and momentum in our lives. Bless all on watch this night and tomorrow and continue with us in safety I pray in your holy name Amen.

## 6-10 November 2019 Yokosuka PVST

### 11 November 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Today we were about 5 minutes into the navigation brief when all of the sudden everything went dark! For a brief second there was silence, then the casualty was called and sailors responded the way you always do on Antietam, with a fighting spirit. While it's not easy or desirable to go back underway after making a port visit in our home port, we still did it--I know any of us could go on and on with the list of things we have to do but don't want to.... and we do them because they are the right things to do. Going out into the dark to find and fix an electrical casualty and getting underway take effort, fight and persistence. These qualities are hallmarks of the human fighting spirit. My prayer tonight is that we can allow that fighting spirit to have full sway in our lives and especially as we start this underway. Let us pray. Dear God, tonight as we get underway again after a few days of rest--though never long enough--i pray that the rest we did receive might sustain us as we fulfill our duties. And Lord, as we are faced regularly with hard things I ask that you strengthen the minds and hearts of our crew, with resolve and positive hopefulness. Also Lord please Guide our decision making and mental focus, and bless those who have the watch this night I pray in your holy name Amen.

### 12 November 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Have any of you ever done something for someone else because you knew it was good for them, but they didn't really see the benefit or benevolence in your actions? It can certainly be difficult at times for a caring individual--as most of us are--to do something for another and not have them appreciate it. Most parents within earshot can relate to this. And there are those times when you do something for another that is for their greater good, but it's very hard for the recipient to see that greater good--think flu shots and our amazing HMs, who, for several hours the past few days stuck needles into our arms in a relentless effort to save us from contracting the flu virus. Administering this preventative treatment is vital to our health, and it is the right thing to do. Doing the right thing, or providing the right advice to another, even though it may be hard, is still the best practice. Thanks for teaching us this lesson corpsmen! May we each have the courage to take up the proverbial syringe and do the right thing even when it may be difficult. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, tonight I thank you for the good and conscientious care of our medical division, and the efforts they make to help keep us healthy! Lord, as we each move through a given day may we be filled with courage to do what is right and necessary, even when it may be difficult or scary. Lord, also I pray for your continued safety in all of our underway evolutions--particularly as we engage in the RAS and continued flight operations tomorrow. Sustain and bless each Antietam sailor i pray in your holy name Amen.

### 13 November 2019 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. One tell-tale sign we have entered the East China Sea is the drastic increase in fishing and cargo vessels. Smattered across the sea, the presence of these ships certainly increases the requirement on each of us to be vigilant on watch. But it also requires one to figure out how to creatively and calmly manage the chaos. When ships are coming from every which-way, it can certainly become tense, stressful or even concerning. I am so impressed with how you all cope with these and other stressful operational situations. What about coping or managing other stressors presenting themselves on life's proverbial East China Sea. Often there are so many life elements and items we try to juggle and balance--relationships, children, parents, grandparents, siblings, financial problems and debt, illness, or career challenges. These items can sometimes crowd in on us and muddy our own surface picture. Tonight I'd like to pray for each of you dealing with any of these or other stressful issues. Please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, tonight I pray on behalf of each sailor who may be struggling or wrestling with some of life's challenges. Lord, where they feel the chaos crowding in, I pray you would shore them up and provide strength in place of weakness, and clarity in place of confusion. God, walk with and strengthen each of us with your power and love, and let us also have the opportunity to lift each other in these challenges, I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 14 November 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. As we continue our TST approach and prepare to head north to begin our East China Sea operations, I found it particularly comforting to hear our relief the Shiloh is on track to take over in about a weeks time. Relying on a timely and punctual relief is something most watchstanders can relate to. After all, who appreciates standing 4-6 hours of watch but then tack on another 30 minutes waiting for a late watch relief? Just as we don't want Shiloh to be late, we wouldn't want to be late relieving our fellow watch stander. This is because we depend on one another. Dependability is the bedrock of trust, and shapes the foundation of reliability--making us someone others can count on. Being dependable takes effort, planning and proactive connection with others. My prayer tonight is that we may grow in our own personal dependability. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, as we finish this day and move into tomorrow would you strengthen our minds and bodies to be even more dependable, more filled with foresight and perspective. As we work together bless us lord with clear communication, and when there are concerns may we handle those with deference and respect. Bless all on watch and each of us who relieve our fellow watch standers afterwards. Lord we depend on you and thank you for your steadfast strength. I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 15 November 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. Recently at the end of the damage control and engineering training team exercises I've noted the statement instructing participants to re-stow all gear. This process is of course of utmost importance because it ensures that all gear and equipment is put back to where it belongs and will be in a state of readiness should we need it for another drill or actual casualty. I'm sure most of us know how frustrating it can be to go to retrieve a piece of

gear in the moment of need and find that it has not been re-stowed! Putting things where they belong is necessary not only for peace of mind but for maintaining the highest level of readiness to fight and win. I suppose a good question to ask ourselves is, might there be things in my own life that need to be re-stowed? Do I need to put things back in order somehow? Taking some time regularly to inventory and re-stow as needed could be the key to finding more happiness on a regular basis. Please join me in a prayer. Lord, at times we can be so scattered and cluttered, just due to the regular life routine. I pray you would empower each of us with insight to re-stow any things that may be causing clutter or adrift in our lives. Guide us Lord with safety and continued sustainment as we persist on our mission and watch over our loved ones I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 16 November 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Today has been and continues to be a full day--not only within but also outside the ship's lifelines. Through it all, watchstanders and controllers have been kept very busy. Tonight I'd like to just offer a simple prayer of safety and added strength. Dear Lord, I take a moment to invoke your presence and power upon Antietam and her sailors. As we fulfill our current tasking would you please increase our efforts and multiply our mental stamina, that we will be ready to anticipate and ready to act. God, bless each within the sound of my voice with courage and determination, and with will power--yes, the will power to do the very best we can in whatever situation we may face. God in all that we do, I pray you would bless our sailors and our ship with safety from harm--as we maneuver through our current mission. Finally, I ask that you would lift and bless any who may be wrapping up boards or tests today and in the coming days. Help them to recall and remember the things they've studied. All of this I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 17 November 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Last night we had another awesome ice cream social. I don't think I'm alone in expressing how wonderful those events are. Ice cream has a way of curing what ails! It seems to have the perfect combination of sugar, milk, and fat to create the ideal dessert. However, all of that goodness will be useless if the ice cream melts and loses its firmness. To retain its optimal state the tub of ice cream has to sit in a tray of ice--to keep the ice cream firm for the period of the ice cream social. Perhaps we feel at times like that tub of ice cream--a little out of our element. Never fear, there is a tray of ice nearby to jump in, cool off in and retain our wellbeing. This tray of ice might be hanging out with the sundowners club, or the la Croix boys, or maybe talking with someone you trust, or sending a message to a family member. Or just Seeking connections with others who are also going through something similar. With this in mind Please join me in prayer. God, thank you for another safe day at sea. God there may be some among us who feel out of sorts for any number of reasons. Lord, I pray you would strengthen them through those around them and through other means. Bless them with renewed

hope and vision as we start a new week and press forward together. I pray for your sustaining power to rest over Antietam this night, in your holy name Amen.

#### 18 November 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. These past couple days, and today in particular there have been several interior paint jobs taking place around the ship. These sailors I refer to as modern day divincis or picassos. Though the quarterdeck ceiling is a far cry from theistine chapel and the radio pway bulkhead much different than the walls of the Louvre, these sailor artists who paint in these areas also leave their mark for generations to come. In fact the brush strokes we each make on a day to day basis leave an impression or mark on all of those around us and those who will come after us. Perhaps we can ask ourselves, what am I doing to paint a masterpiece in the area of my responsibility? Or how do I exhibit pride or satisfaction in what I do--even if nobody is there to see it? We are all artists in our own right, and my encouragement tonight is to practice our art to the fullest and with integrity. Let us pray, Heavenly Father, tonight I pray a blessing on each sailor as they fulfill their various assignments around the ship. Bless them with energy, strength and purpose as they paint or cook, or sweep, or type, turn wrenches, and lead others--encourage them Lord and help them to see the beauty in their creations. Help them to recognize the positive impact they make on those around them and the ship itself. Father, give them physical stamina through long days and short nights, and lift their spirits as they keep all things in proper perspective. I pray for your continued safety and presence and do so in your holy name Amen.

#### 19 November 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Throughout any given day we hear many announcements on the one MC, the very one I'm speaking on right now. This evening when we heard the BMOW announce flight quarters he added on the end that the smoking lamp was out on the fantail, then he repeated the exact statement verbatim one more time. I've always been interested and many times grateful that announcements are typically made twice, because there have been those moments I didn't hear the announcement the first time. Sometimes repetition can be the key to not just getting a point across but actually connecting with another in understanding. Sometimes when we aren't feeling listened to or heard from another, we may need to approach that person in private and express a second or even third time what's on our mind. This repetition can be the key to connection. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, tonight as we wrap up a birthday meal, I thank you for the rich blessings we enjoy. I ask Lord as we attempt to work and communicate with each other that we might be encouraged to use repetition when needed, particularly when trying to connect and work with each other. Guide these conversations Lord I pray and also seek a repeated request that you watch over our families and loved ones on shore, and energize those on watch this night I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 20 November 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Today i sat in some training about radar and learned from the very knowledgeable instructor about a part of the radar called the synchronizer. This part is solely responsible for determining if the radar is transmitting or receiving. This concept of transmission and reception is not only important for radars but for us people as well! These past few days many of us have taken part in a variety of events requiring large amounts of coordination and communication, transmitting and receiving of words and ideas--be it DEOCS focus groups involving verbal group communication, or eval debriefs involving more one on one communication, or perhaps email communication off ship with the intent to convey information for upcoming maintenance planning. Learning to synchronize our own communication process takes practice and dedication but it's worth the effort! Tonight I'd like to pray for our own synchronizer process. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, i give thanks for our safety and productivity this day. Lord it seems that in order to work effectively through a given day we need to learn to communicate with others in helpful ways. I ask that you would synchronize our speaking and listening, help us to know what to say and how to listen. Lord, I pray especially you would bless those who feel challenged with their communication in any way, that they can have clarity and courage. Please watch over us all this night I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 21 November 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Over the past couple hours you may have noticed we are moving again. For a short period of time, we were loitering in our prescribed box, waiting for the go ahead to move towards exiting the ECC and making our way southeast. Loitering can often be frustrating or monotonous. Likewise Sometimes when life gets mundane or overly repetitive, we may develop a sense of stagnancy, almost as if we are loitering in a space void of direction or forward movement. To get out of that we need to move in some way. Much like shocking our bodies to develop new physical dimensions, we may need to implement healthy change into our daily routines, or set some new goals to work towards. Movement, even if it is slow, is still movement, and nearly always yields more purpose than stagnancy. Please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, thank you for another day of safety and protection through our drills and other activities. Lord tonight I pray for any who may be feeling stagnant in any way--give them insight and direction on ways to introduce healthy change into their schedules. Bless them through this to find variety and purpose in life; movement beyond monotony. God, also as we prepare to return home in a few days I ask that you would prepare their minds and hearts for that transition and change. And give each sailor strength and energy this night I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 22 November 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. So this morning I was sitting in my office at my desk when the ship started really pitching--and as you know my office is quite far forward. As I sat there I felt myself rise up and almost float at one point out of my seat then land right back in my seat. Up and down it went, with me ultimately deciding it was time to get up and walk around the



ship. This up and down motion is certainly indicative of both literal and metaphorical experiences as a sailor in the United States Navy, and in life in general. And as much as we want to be able to control the elements, we can't. As much as we may want to we can't control the wind and waves! Up and down is here to stay in the navy and it's here to stay in life. But What we can control is how we respond to the ups and downs. We can get up and walk around--look for things to do that lie within our control. We can communicate with each other and stay connected as we go through the ups and downs together. With this in mind let us pray. God, tonight as we wrap up a day of environmental ups and downs I pray for each sailor as they engage their own ups and downs. Lord, give them strength and clarity in their boards tomorrow, sustain them in their watches, Guide them in their relationships, and endow them with positivity in the face of challenges. Lord I pray for your safety in tomorrow's fly-offs and May the weather cooperate with us in our efforts. God bless Antietam and her crew I pray in your holy name Amen.

23 November 2019 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Today I was standing down by the messline when "dinner for the crew was announced" and noticed a few different responses. From some of the crew the response was excitement to eat the traditional Saturday meal, and from the supply department sailors who prepared and would serve the meal there were some expressions of motivation, like "alright let's do this!" When events happen to us, whether planned or unplanned, how do we respond? Have you ever paused to reflect on how you respond? It might be a useful experiment to just take note how you respond when you hear an announcement--something either planned or unplanned. Once you observe your response patterns I urge you to consider whether these patterns are helpful or harmful, and choose the helpful route. With this in mind please join with me in prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, tonight as we make preparations for our return tomorrow morning, I thank you for responding to our prayers and needs, by just being present And available Lord. Now I pray that in light of what we know and what we anticipate for tomorrow and the coming days that we might respond in positive ways, and be encouraging to those around us as well. Bless us with a safe evolution tomorrow and please stand with all who stand the watch through the night. I pray in your holy name Amen.

2020 Evening Prayers (Ammo Anchorage, SWATT and COVID-19 Extension)

23 January 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. It's been a few months since I've had the chance to share some thoughts in an evening prayer. So, as we all know there's a lot going on--life on the Antietam is definitely involved--and so multifaceted. Today was a great snapshot into a day in our life--getting underway in the rain, slinging ammo, while simultaneously conducting and supporting MOB D LTT and all of it's associated evolutions. Now, aside from all of that each of us has lives outside of our ship life. We have families here and in other parts of the world--we

think about them and their wellbeing as well, in the midst of all that's going on here. Tonight I'd like to offer a prayer for each of you in your unique family and life situations. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, tonight as we sit at ammo Anchorage and hopefully have a moment to decompress a bit, I pray for any who may be concerned about situations either on or off the ship. Lord, lift those family members in areas of natural disaster such as Puerto Rico and other regions, walk beside those with illnesses or who may be experiencing grief and loss; god, bless those experiencing financial strain to find means of relief; and for any who may feel lost or just plain tired--I ask that you would give them energy and mental strength. Finally, I pray for your continued hand of safety to be with us during tomorrow's busy schedule and bless each with some rest this night I pray in your holy name, Amen.

24 January 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietaam Chaps here. Today at lunch i reached for the Mayo and began to squeeze it onto my philly cheese, but it just sputtered and gurgled instead, indicating it was nearly empty. Growing up my parents would have told me to put water in it and shake it up to produce more. Whether we like it or not, we live in a world and system of limitations. We have limited time to prepare for inspections, we have limited heads to use while at anchorage, and we have limited daylight for ammo handling. We may even sense our age or energy limitations. But in the midst of these, we may actually trick ourselves into believing limitations are dead ends, when in fact awareness of these may be positive triggers to helping us see other limitless possibilities. The adage is true, when one door shuts another opens. Rather than dwell on a narrow mindset of limitations, let us open our perspective aperture and see the countless opportunities around us. I'd like to pray tonight for perspective amidst our perceived limitations. Heavenly Father, thank you for our safety today in our many activities evolutions. I pray now for your guidance to see more clearly the bigger picture of our days work load, our week, month, year and life. May each sailor be filled with hope and patience as they navigate through limitations and discover the valuable and plentiful opportunities at hand. I pray in your holy name Amen.

25 January 2020

Good evening Antietaam Chaps here. Repetition is something we are all used to--in fact it happens each morning and evening when the sun rises and sets; it happens all day long as our heart pulses and our lungs pump; it happens at least three times a day thanks to our S-2 division where we eat a great meal like a Saturday pizza and wings night; and of course it is happening now as many of us take reps and sets with DCTT and flight deck drills. Though at times it may seem monotonous, Repetition can be extremely helpful as it yields the muscle memory to perform successfully under pressure. Repeating the right things over and over also builds character and fosters trust. Repetition is key to our wellbeing and that of our communities as well. I'd like to pray tonight for spiritual and mental stamina to keep repeating! Let us pray. Heavenly Father tonight as we come close to rounding out another day I thank you for guiding us through the many schedule changes and operational adjustments. God over the next few weeks

several sailors are pushing forward with some reps and sets--preparing for inspections and just keeping our ship running. Lord bless and sustain them in the repetition with mental, spiritual and physical strength. Help them see progression in their actions and look out for one another along the way. God be with every watchstander this night and continue to guide us in safety i pray in your holy name Amen.

6 February 2020

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. This has been quite a day and an evening, and I'm thankful everyone's ok and hopefully got some good chow. Actually tonight before the casualty as I walked down the p-way towards my office I passed many of you who were waiting in line to eat chow. Despite the luminescence from the red lights, the pway was still very dark and visibility was limited. I was struck at how this did not phase hungry sailors from pursuing your goal towards the serving line where ravenous appetites would be satiated. Likewise I have been in awe over the past few weeks, years actually, how you the crew of Antietam moves forward often through all kinds of low visibility, even like today as you worked through various casualties; you move with faith, faith in your shipmates, faith in your leadership, faith in yourselves and in your God. You understand that moving through the darkness--through the unknown--is the only way to reach your goals. Moving forward through drills and scenarios with faith like you are right now is the way to achieving your goal. Tonight I pray for all of you moving through the darkness towards your goals. Let us pray, Heavenly Father, tonight I lift up a prayer for every Antietam sailor, and especially those from our engineering department, the air DET and flight deck crew who are drilling tonight and tomorrow. Bless the watch standers with physical and mental stamina, bless the ETT and DCTT members with awareness and support, strengthen everyone to perform as practiced and to be filled with energy. God, sustain our entire crew this night, anyone who may be trying to move forward through the unknown, and please allow them to get rest when the time comes. May they have faith and hope I pray in your holy name Amen.

7 February 2020

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. One of the questions posed today in the COs suggestion box intrigued me--the question was "why is it so cold in the ship?" This question speaks to our real lived human experience. Part of that experience is discomfort--which most of us are understandably adverse to. When we experience discomfort--or even suffering--it's quite natural to wonder why it has to be that way. We are natural problem solvers. I've watched exquisitely smart sailors all day solving problems--trained surgeon-like technicians, you are asking questions to find answers about why certain pieces of equipment fault, or why certain processes don't align, why parts will not communicate with each other, or maybe even why do negative things sometimes happen in my life either at work or at home. Asking why with the intent toward proactive action is the key to solving problems. Ruminating or marinating in the why without taking action can cause suffering. Tonight I'd like to pray for strength in facing the many whys right now. Heavenly Father, thank you for our team, for the sailors and their tenacity and

perseverance. Lord certainly we have more than enough whys to go around. There are still so many unanswered questions from today's events. I pray in these whys that you would strengthen and empower us to see pathways to solutions, to understand procedures leading to resolutions, and to find peace in you despite the unknowns. God bless the hands of all technicians to be guided toward finding the answers we seek, and bless each who asks why with your supportive presence. Be with us lord I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### SWATT & COVID-19 Extension

27 February 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here again. Today as we were pulling out I was back on the fantail and watched as four sailors hoisted the flag mast and carried it up the starboard fantail ladder to the main deck, then maneuvered it around the 3 GEN stack and brought it to its resting point on the starboard weather decks. I happened to be going in the same direction as they were and for a very brief moment I'm ashamed to say that I thought "how did I get stuck behind this slow traffic!" But then I noticed the Sailors--people who had given their time--YOUR time, and YOUR freedoms and luxuries, to come out to sea. Not only that, but these four Sailors were working in perfect harmony--their movements synced up to get the job done well. This type of synergy happens all over the place in so many different areas on Antietam. With this in mind, let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for blessing us with safety in getting underway earlier today. I pray for continued safety and that you would bless our crew with energy, perspective and drive. Lord, as we work together over this next month I ask for guidance and insight that we can be in sync; that we might be able to work and communicate well together and support one another. This I pray in your holy name, Amen.

28 February 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. The recent announcement that our PRT has been waived due to operational commitments reminded me about how I want to get into better shape, not to mention also be ready for the BCA, which has not been waived. When I think of being in shape the word that comes to mind is stamina, or The ability to sustain prolonged physical or mental effort. You know, stamina is also the word that comes to mind when I see our Engineers and condition 2 DC watchstanders in action. Day after day, night after night, Hour after hour you keep pressing forward, pushing your mind and body to their limits to accomplish the countless tasks required to keep us safe and afloat. If you've ever wondered how to increase stamina, a quick google search suggests number one EXERCISE and number two YOGA and MEDITATION. Interestingly, caffeine is number 4. It seems the key to building stamina is to exercise both body and mind. Tonight I'd like to pray for each of us in pursuing increased stamina. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, I thank you for strengthening and sustaining our Sailors today as they continue to press forward in fighting our ship and honing their craft. Lord, each day presents most of us with challenges, but I pray as we exercise our minds, bodies and souls

that you would strengthen and sustain us. Father, Bless each Sailor with stamina, endurance, hope and health, and watch over those who have the watch this night. I pray this in your enduring name, Amen.

29 February 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Among the many successes in this mornings engineering drills, it seems the ability to maintain effective boundary control topped the list. Diligent and forthright boundary personnel enforced the boundaries like champs. I am fascinated with how important boundaries are for maintaining safety. I would venture to say that maintaining healthy boundaries in our lives can also lead to safety and greater wellbeing in general. Have you considered what boundaries are important to you? Or put differently, what type of self control measures are you currently trying to implement that will help improve your mental, emotional or even physical safety? Though they can come off at times as restrictive, clearly defined and maintained boundaries can help create clarity and confidence in our lives. With this in mind, please join me in a prayer. God, first of all I express thanks for the many answered prayers in helping us complete the assessment this morning. Thank you for the Sailors and their perseverance and commitment. Lord, may we each take note from the expert boundary setting exhibited this morning and do some of that in our lives, I pray you would help us see what is important for each of us and to stand up for that. Bless each Sailor with courage to set and maintain safe boundaries I pray in your holy name Amen.

1 March 2020

Guide evening Antietam, chaps here. When I was a very young boy I remember on Sunday afternoons my father would tell me it was time to go to my room to take some quiet time. This was supposed to be time to step away from the regular activities of the day and rest my body and mind for an hour or so. Today when the announcement was made for a Quiet Ship, I was reminded of the importance of taking regular time to step away from the busyness of our day to day activities and practice self care--however that looks for each of us--the main key being to actually do it. Caring and maintaining healthy care for self, our body mind and soul might look like setting regular physical activity time throughout the week, or increasing our meditation or prayer practice, or reading a novel, sending a personal email, or any number of things that help us breath and recharge. Finding quiet ship moments for our lives could just be the key we need to manage through the normal onslaught of loud ship times. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, in the midst of life's sounds and reverberations I thank you for the moments we are provided to find quiet. But Lord if there are some feeling over loaded or unafforded with quiet times, I pray you would guide them in the discovery of those times. May they find ways to carve out quiet time, reflective and regenerative space and thereby find relief and restoration. I pray I your holy name Amen.

2 March 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Tomorrow the plan is to have an underway replenishment. I have learned that One of the really important parts of refueling at sea and in general is to check the fuel for cleanliness. This process is conducted by collecting a sample and rotating the bottle creating a centrifugal movement to identify whether or not sediment exists in the fuel. I am struck by this spinning process and wonder if we all feel similar to this in some way at the beginning of an underway. Or in fact, maybe this is how we feel in the midst of life change in general? Some cosmic or universal engineering hand taking us and spinning us about--this can bring up discomfort or stress in many different ways, but it also has a tendency to help us identify unneeded or unwanted sediment contaminating our value system or self awareness. Perhaps it could be helpful to notice and welcome the spinning process and identify where our sediment lies, rather than ignore the fact that we are spinning. My prayer tonight is for insight towards perspective in life's spinning moments. Let us pray. Heavenly Father tonight we find ourselves on another evening of underway. As we spin along through our night tonight and day tomorrow I pray for your safe protection from harm, particularly as we replenish at sea. But lord I also pray for an even more keen sense of awareness of our own spinning and that if others around us. May we see the purpose in it and learn from our experiences. May your peace, understanding and hope fill our hearts this night I pray in your holy name Amen.

3 March 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. The last thing the captain said today after announcing the Guam situation was don't get discouraged. That word is an interesting one in that it contains the word courage but is slightly different because it has the prefix dis to the word. Certainly life's unknowns through plenty of dis words at us--disappointment, disgust, disregarded, or disturbed. These are natural responses to life's spinning events. But dwelling in these states for too long can lead to a disruption to our life flow. Displeasure could be the result. So how do we not get discouraged--in other words How do we gain courage? I would suggest it is through another dis word: discipline. Returning often to the activities or practices that breath life into us, engaging in regular courage and strength promoting behaviors will build courage and keep us calm. Discipline breeds inner strength. With that in mind I'll pray for us all. Lord, sometimes it's hard not to feel discouraged, and certainly that's a part of being human. But I pray right now for your strength to not BE discouraged but to be disciplined. Give your light to any who feel darkened Father, lift those who may feel down. Help each sailor to recall important activities that can build courage and instill hope. Above all, may we all be united together to support one another. Bless those on watch this night and all our loved ones in the rear I pray in your holy name Amen.

4 March 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. Today during the fresh water wash down I was again intrigued by how much easier it was to sweep the water off the ship when sweeping in the direction the ship was rocking. Trying to sweep the water off in the opposite direction is nearly impossible and overtly frustrating. Working in accordance with the way things are--focusing our

efforts on things we can control--is a relieving alternative to fighting the system or going against the grain. But the challenge lies within ourselves because sometimes our pride or ego points us toward this type of futility. The key is to connect with those tried and true principles applied through the ages by those who have gone before; like trusting its right to go with gravity rather than against it when trying to sweep water. My prayer tonight is that we might be humble and receptive to learning correct principles and learning to focus energy where we have control. Let us pray. Heavenly Father thank you for another day of safety and protection. Lord I pray for your continued presence to guide each of us to recognize true principles and to find peace and relief as we follow them. If there are any feeling weak, physically or mentally depleted I pray you would show them the way to healing and help. God bless any who may be concerned about family wellbeing or health, please watch over them with your care. Be with all of us this night as we do the best we can, I pray in your holy name Amen.

5-8 March 2020 GUAM Pierside Liberty PVST

9 March 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. Almost two years ago i had the chance to climb Mount Fuji starting at the 5th station. My wife and three oldest kids began hiking early in the morning around 0500. After an hour or so we came to the first major rest area, station 6 and stopped to get our walking sticks stamped. As we sat there we noticed how nice it was to relax at the station, eating our snacks and enjoying the limited view we had from that location. But something began gnawing at me--while it was nice to rest and relax There was actually a part of me that yearned to get up and get going! To get to the summit. Maybe some of you can relate after spending a few days pier side in Guam. Sometimes the best cure for stagnation is activation: to get up and get going! Please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father thank you for the brief hiatus we had in Guam, for the commraderie and teamwork we experienced, and for the rest and recreation some of us experienced. Lord, now that we are done with that, I pray for strength of mind and heart to get up and go, for energy for all watch standers and assessors, for peace of mind for all harborin worries or concerns and above all for safety in all our activities. God, now as we start out again be our light and sure foundation I pray, in your holy name Amen.

10 March 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. THis morning prior to the UNREP I was very impressed with nature's display, which featured a full moon on the port side and a beautiful sunrise on the starboard side of the ship. I found it interesting that sandwiched in the middle of those phenaomena was us preparing for the UNREP. While vitally important to our mission, the UNREP required things of many of you--getting up early, getting on station, wearing proper PPE, working together etc. Sometimes life presents us with difficult situations or scenarios, UNREP moments, but if we expand our perspective, and notice the moon and sun on our left and right, the awe of our sandwiched setting can expand our hope and loft our view. Lest we get

overly bogged down unawares in the work and challenge of the moment, let us become aware of the beauty and magnificence of life occurring around us. Please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, thank you for blessing us with safety today during the RAS, live fire and other events. As we finish up and start a new day tomorrow I ask you to bless each Sailor with perspective to notice the profound beauty of life all around us. Help us to sense and appreciate one another as well--to truly listen to and support each other. God, continue to watch over our families in our absence and may your safe protection go with us into another day I pray in your holy name, Amen.

11 March 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. Each of you who owns equipment understands that when looking at a piece of your gear it is not always immediately apparent if that gear is operable or inoperable. Sometimes it is obvious because of exterior corrosion or wear and tear, but other times the issues lie internally and so Troubleshooting is merited. This happened last night with my CAC reader. It looked fine on the outside but for some reason it wasn't reading my card. Thankfully I had a very smart and capable radio technician come down and help fix the issue. But what interests me is the dichotomy between the exterior and interior wellbeing. Is it not the same with most of us? We all have things going on beneath the surface--and they aren't necessarily always big things, but they are things. Isn't it nice when someone asks you genuinely how you are and then takes time to listen to the answer? Isn't this type of spot check just as important as a check on equipment or spaces? I challenge each of us to complete one of these types of checks today before the day is done. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, thanks for the beautiful day and weather today. Thank you for our safety and protection. Lord as we go throughout our evening I pray each of us might have the opportunity to check on someone else. For those who may be grieving the death of a loved one or worrying about a family situation or relationship, I ask for your presence and providence to accompany and strengthen them. Finally Lord I pray your presence will be with those taking the exam tomorrow. Go with each of them I pray in your holy name Amen.

12 March 2020 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. I've always been impressed with the powerful boom of the 5 inch gun. No matter where I am on the ship during a 5-inch shoot I can hear and more than likely FEEL the shots. I'm especially fascinated by the process and mechanism of how the firing system works. The part that really intrigues me is the process by which the spent casing is expended. After speaking with one of our exceptional GMs I learned how the extractor throws the spent case into the empty case tray, and then is ultimately expended out onto the deck of the ship by the empty case ejector. Once it is spent it is no longer of use and is expended. In the course of our day and life there may be events that happen, or have happened in the past that bring us concern or consternation. After we've expended our efforts to make things right from our end, we can do ourselves a favor and eject unwanted emotional burdens from our lives like



resentment or harbored hostility, or grudges--ejecting these spent emotional or psychological cases can be liberating. Let us pray. Dear Lord, thank you for your presence around each of us this day. I pray God that each of us may see clearly burdens or expendable items in our lives we can eject to find relief. I also pray for health on our ship and across the world with our family and friends, particularly in areas where corona virus seems to be spreading. Be with all of us Lord I pray in your name, Amen.

13 March 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. Tonight I'd like to speak to the issue most of us have been talking about and thinking about over the past day or so. Though limited as our connectivity may be at times due to our exercises and mission, news of the corona virus has literally metastasized through our lives. Some of our unaccompanied members were hoping and planning on family to come join them in japan--to finally live under the same roof. Others may have family members in locations in question. Still others may be anticipating a PCS or trying to attend an important school. Situations like this can be and often are stressful or challenging because of the diminished level of control we possess over the situation. It is during such times where holding onto pillars of strength, known entities we can rely or count on, becomes important. Focusing on what we can do Vice what we can't will be paramount to peace in troubled times. Please join me in prayer. Father God, thank you for another day of safety and success in our training evolutions. At this time of uncertainty I pray for any who may feel concern or worry--bless them with a sense of your awareness and presence, with strength of heart, with hope and endurance as they lean on you or others who can give them support. Shelter our families and friends all over the world and may our minds be firm, steadfast and centered I pray in your sacred name Amen.

14 March 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. So this afternoon I happened to catch a glimpse at the news and saw that stocks went up today. I know for many over the past month or so it's been a little disheartening or maybe a lot disheartening to watch our TSP or other investments plummet. But like most of you I've always heard it's wise to avoid fretting over the short term losses and very smart to keep a long term perspective. Perhaps this is good advice for us as sailors on Antietam! Like the stock market, events or even days on end May feel like the up and down roller coaster of the market. It can be so tempting to just pull out--to EGRESS as quickly as possible like today's exercise and abandon our investment. My recommendation, keep a long term perspective, understand that holding fast to true principles over time will be more fruitful in the long run. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, it's hard to believe another day is coming again to a close. Thank you for blessing our actions today and giving us energy to keep forward momentum. I pray your good blessings on each of our minds that we might have a long term perspective, that when the temptation arises to sell out early during trying times we can have the resilience to push on towards our goal. Again I also continue to pray for family and loved ones during uncertain times. I pray in your powerful name Amen.

### 15 March 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. For some today is known as the ides of March, or dividing point of the month of March. Others refer to today as the months hump day. No matter how we look at it, mathematically and logically today marks a dividing point in the month and in our lives, which is made up of lots of months. Division is something we are all familiar with--in fact most of us belong to a division. Division happens all over the ship every day--ammo was divided between gun shoot participants, the CS's divided the roast beef into small divisions or slices. Division is an important process in which we can organize our day and life for that matter. A generous application of division can encourage healthy balance in our lives, where our minds bodies and spirits are all nourished and activated. Please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, thank you for a beautiful Sunday and for our safe underway thus far. Lord I pray as we begin the second half of this month that you would guide us to find healthy dividing points in our day and life and May we discover a consistent and productive balance in our work life and self care. Be with all on watch this night and our families around the world, I pray in your holy name Amen.

### 16 March 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. I was interested during this mornings EMCON RAS in how we were still able to communicate with one another and the PECOS even despite the absence of radio communication. Through hand signals and other manual means, we were able to successfully complete the RAS. I think this ability to communicate at all odds highlights our basic human need and the sheer importance of staying connected. While out at sea staying connected with family and close loved ones can be a challenge, depending on access to a computer and the internet. And yet, it is so important. Along with our daily tasks and job requirements, Staying connected with others and meaningful life activities should be one of our priorities. My encouragement tonight is to make regular efforts to stay in contact with those we are close to. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, tonight as we wrap up another active day I thank you for the family and friend connections that sustain us out here. Lord, I ask that you would bless each of us with creative abilities to connect with family and loved ones. And as we reach out bless us with increased determination and grit to move forward successfully through another day tomorrow. God bless Antietam and her crew, I pray in your holy name Amen.

### 17 March 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Today you may have heard the alert to set HERO Condition. Hazardous Emissions and Radiation to Ordnance conditions indicate certain types of emissions that need to be limited or suspended to maintain safety around various weapons systems. For some of us this may mean giving up communications with emitting equipment for the greater good of keeping the ship safe. Giving up our own needs for the needs of another or for the greater good is sometimes difficult and may even require sacrifice at times. Steven Covey named one of his 7 habits after this concept: seek first to understand before being understood. I

saw this happen during last night's events on the flight deck and down in rep 5, which involved several who were sacrificing themselves in many ways for the safety and wellbeing of others. Perhaps HERO condition is not just an acronym, but a state of BEING exhibited by those who give up self for the greater good day in and day out. My invitation tonight is to be a HERO and seek to place the needs of others before our own. Let us pray: Heavenly Father, I express deepest gratitude for our safety last night and during today's evolutions. Lord I pray you'd bless each of us with insight and wisdom to hear and understand others needs before our own. I ask also for your continued safety and blessing as our Sailors continue their watches and SWATT evolutions. I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 18 March 2020 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Over the past few days we've received almost countless emails and messages advising us of various global and local activities or events that are suspended or cancelled. From the NCAA tournament to today's missile launch, and all things in between sooner or later we realize that life contains countless cancellations, some which are foreseen but many come as a surprise. How do we handle these cancellations? How do we cope with sudden change? My recommendation is to cling to stationary things. Just as we would secure personal and office items for sea we also need to secure ourselves to immovable truths, lasting values and true principles. These may be things like hard work, respectful interaction, or courageous confrontation. Amidst the world's many closures and shut downs let us open our minds to clinging to our values, those are things we can live out under any circumstance. Let us pray. Dear Lord in this world of closures and change I thank you for your steady presence and power. I pray for each of us that through all the cancellations we can see clearly what to cling to; what to hold to; what to embrace. I pray for continued safety, energy and endurance. It is in your name I pray Amen.

#### 19 March 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. This afternoon during cleaning stations I had the opportunity to use one of the most effective and amazing cleaning supplies known to the humanity. That is the sponge. This tool is so effective because when you place it in the cleaning solution, squeeze it, then let it expand it soaks up plenty of the solution and is ready to clean. The other fantastic thing about the sponge is that after soaking up the cleanser, its main job is to then release or share that cleaner with the surface, and in the process leave that surface cleaner than before. I love the metaphor of the sponge as it applies to each of us. We are all sponges in a way - soaking up information, or even more importantly awareness and insights into how to live optimally in an ever changing and evolving environment. Maybe we can borrow the example of the sponge and soak in the fluids of clean perspectives, true information and valuable human connections. Then we can dispense that to those around us. Please pray with me. Lord, on another Antietam evening I thank you for your presence and steadiness even as all around us is in flux. As we go through another day tomorrow may we each attempt to soak up good and

positive things we can then share with others. Bless our ship, our crew, our families and loved ones God, and sustain them all with health and peace I pray in your holy name Amen.

20 March 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here again. Have you noticed no matter what activity we are engaged in how our bodies naturally compensate for the degree to which the ship is rocking? Maybe you've been running on the treadmill or riding the stationary bike and when the ship rolls to one side you instinctively extend a hand or lean into the roll, all in order to maintain equilibrium. It seems we are hardwired physically to maintain stability amidst instability. I believe this extends beyond the physical into the mental and spiritual as well. Perhaps if we take time to notice the holistic status of our equilibrium we will notice what our body, mind or soul is asking of us to regain stability. Maybe we need more sleep, or less time wasted in non-essential non-important activities, or maybe we need to take time to plan our and set some new life goals, or eat healthier. If you pause even five minutes to reflect on your equilibrium you might be surprised at what is revealed to yourself by YOU, because you are the one who knows yourself best. Please join me in prayer. Dear God, here we are wrapping up another day and I thank you for traveling with us yet again. Lord would you bless each of us to sense our wellness and see clearly how to maintain or reassert our equilibrium, both physically, spiritually and mentally. God continue with those on watch this night and please overshadow us with safety I pray in your holy name Amen.

21 March 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. This afternoon I happened to be in the galley while lunch was being served and I noticed several CSs and FSA Sailors securing a massive layer of plastic over the countertop in preparation for tonight's pizza making. I am always amazed at how the S-2 team is constantly preparing for the next meal, even while a meal is taking place. Of course these preparations are what ensure their readiness to face the onslaught of sailors once the magic meal hour strikes. Of course preparation themes are seen all around us in our work and personal lives. I want to also point out here that despite the occurrence of this month's virus calamity, we are not unprepared to fight it. The Antietam has developed over time a culture of preparation through regular and thorough cleaning, fresh water wash downs and fist bumps. Despite the many unknowns the old adage still remains if you are prepared you shall not fear. It is now that we lean on our preparation and it is now that we continue to prepare. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for being with us again today and for attending to our safety. I pray that as we begin a new day tomorrow we might draw on our personal and collective preparations to execute safe evolutions. I pray for all those ship riders disembarking tomorrow that they will depart with your blessing of protection and safety. And bless our ongoing preparations I pray in your holy name Amen.

22 March 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. We all know the adage don't judge a book by its cover, but what about don't judge a box by its appearance? Every time we do an UNREP working party I'm almost always surprised by a box or two that appear small and easy to manage, but end up being butter cubes or a solid frozen hame, both of which are very heavy. And vice versa, sometimes a large box will come through and be very light. Either way, I have learned that unless I actually engage with the box by taking it and hefting it, I won't know for certain how heavy it is. I have found a similarity with engaging with people. Perhaps you've had the experience where someone judged you based on a pre or misconceived notion; or maybe you've judged another for similar reasons. I know I have. It seems a better way is to engage directly with one another; to give each other the benefit of the doubt. With this in mind please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, it's been a full day today and I thank you for the safety and protection we've enjoyed Lord. Now as we go into another night and a new day tomorrow I pray for each of us as we engage and interact with one another--let us take time to connect, to approach difficult conversations, to reach for understanding and perspective. Lord bless each Antietam sailor, ship rider, and all of their families I pray in your holy name Amen.

23 March 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. Like each of you I've been thinking a lot about the different impacts of COVID-19 on our lives and I'm particularly fascinated by the social distancing concept. For some more introverted types this might be a welcome relief, for others it's a great challenge. But it's ironically interesting that the opposite of social distancing, social connectedness has actually spread virally through social and regular media channels. It seems information, stories and social opinions are spreading multitudinous times faster than the virus itself. It reminds me how powerful an impact words and stories have. Through these means we can do anything across the communication spectrum, from raising alarm and mass pandamonium to quietly instilling confidence and hope. I recommend we use our social media connectedness to spread the latter, even as we persist in physical social distancing. Let us pray, God of hope and light, thank you for each other, for another day to act and plan, and for our health and safety. Bless us all with clear insight to know what to say and when to say it in the various forums to which we belong. May we always offer and receive words of strength, faith and hope I pray in your holy name Amen.

24 March 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. Today as I looked out at the sea and watched how the ship cuts through the sea I thought of the navy slogan "forged by the sea". As we all prepare to return to home port in the next couple days and most of us prepare to leave again very shortly perhaps it could be useful to consider what that word forged really means. To be forged really means to be shaped or deeply influenced by something. In this case the forging is done by the sea, or perhaps

even more specifically by life out at sea. Certainly there are many things we learn by virtue of being at sea, but I'm really interested in how we allow sea life to forge us? Certainly there are pros and cons to life at sea--things we can and can't control. Do we allow our minds to be forged and shaped by experiences we may qualify as negative or can we embrace some if not all of these as opportunities for positive growth? There is no doubt about it, the forging process feels quite raw at times, but each new day brings hope for renewal. Let us pray. Lord, the end of another day reminds us of your careful presence in our lives. As we begin another day tomorrow bless the Antietam crew with eyes to see positive growth in their lives. Lives forged by hard work, dedication, sacrifice and care for one another, all upheld by families and friends at home. Bless all those on watch and sustain our loved ones all over the world at this critical time I pray in your sacred name Amen.

25 March 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam, Chaps here. Tonight I know there's a lot on everyone's hearts and minds. Surely the emotions of today's and this past months events have swirled through our bodies with a rush of nausea, Adrenalin, inner explosions or just quiet avoidance. However these things are washing over us at this moment I wish to simply offer a prayer on your and your family's behalf tonight. Wherever you are and in your own fashion Please join me if you'd like. Dear God, I reach out to you this evening to ask a blessing upon the crew and families of the Antietam. Lord bless and sustain, nourish and watch over our many family members. Those in the United States and other countries who are in their homes on lockdown, those who have lost their jobs and are searching for alternative means, or those shouldering the burden of single parenting and managing the household. Bless those family members in Yokosuka enduring a roller coaster of emotions as we prepare to come near them but not to them. Lord, I pray for your healing and quieting spirit to rest upon our crew, that through this very difficult experience they can grow together in support to one another, to keep an eye out for their neighbor. Lord be near each of us and those we love I pray in your sacred name Amen.

26 March – 16 April 2020 Yokosuka Pierside COVID-19 PVST

17 April 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here, it's been a few weeks and I'm grateful to share some words and a prayer this evening. A lot has happened in our world and the world around us since my last evening prayer on March 25th. I know that COVID-19 has impacted and affected each of us, our families, and friends in many profound ways. And so on this first night of underway I'd like to pray for all with this in mind. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, this has been a very unique and in many ways difficult time. As we gather collectively this night and pause briefly I express first and foremost gratitude for the good health we have experienced these past weeks. Sadly, we are aware of many with whom that is not the case. I pray for them, for our families, shipmates and loved ones who are sheltering in place or hunkered down in isolated locations. I pray for your

presence to be with and sustain them in every condition. I pray for leaders of nations to make wise decisions in their efforts to curb the tide of this pandemic. Lord, in the vast unknown that lies before us, may we find refuge and relief in your stable and unmoving power. God, strengthen each Antietam sailor and bring hope to their hearts. Bless them with fighting and determined spirits, I pray in your steady name Amen.

18 April 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. Yesterday as we set sea and anchor I took note of the noisy yet intricate way in which the two tugs communicate using their horns. I noticed the name of one of the tugs is DEFIANT. I initially thought, "wow, that's an interesting name for a Naval vessel, part of an organization that is built upon the premise of order and obedience, Shouldn't it be called COMPLIANT?" But then I got thinking and have realized how importance defiance is in many of the circumstances we face. Of course compliance, or effective and appropriate followership is critical to our success, but there are cases where defiance matters. Now as we get back underway again, many of us have challenges, struggles, fears, worries or unresolved issues that may feel looming at times. My prayer tonight is for power to face and defy the temptation to be brought down because of these things. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, i thank you this night for your presence and protection. God as we now begin this extended underway period I pray for any who may be feeling overwhelmed or burdened by worry or fear. Would you please bless them with a spirit to defy anything that would bring them down or cause them to despair. Lift their hearts and souls father! I pray in your holy name Amen.

19 April 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. I'm always extremely impressed with how quickly you are able to adapt to new watch schedules and underway the routine. It's a true testament to the fundamental agility and resilience of human beings, and particularly sailors. I know for some it's meant now working through hours when before you would have been sleeping, and vice versa. It's all made me think about how right it is to be where we are supposed to be. But Sometimes we want to be somewhere else, right? Like me, when reading friends posts maybe it's crossed your mind a few times that hey, it sure would be nice to be there with them, sheltered in place. But--and rightly so--you and I are in the right place where we are supposed to be. Right here. I believe we can take great comfort knowing that we are in the right place where we ought to be. We are here, where we need to be. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we pause briefly this evening to just thank you for always being in the place where we need you! God, though it's often not easy to be in the right place--the place where we need to be--I pray you would bless our crew with peace and assurance that being right here is the right thing. God, continue to bless and protect our families and friends while we are here away from them. Sustain and energize those on watch this night as well I pray in your holy name Amen!

20-27 April 2020 Yokosuka pierside COVID-19 PVST continued....

28 April 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Today as we've gotten underway again I have found myself humming willie nelsons 1980 hit "on the road again". I wonder if some of us can relate to the second verse when he sings "like a band of Gypsies we go down the highway, we're the best of friends, insisting that the world be turnin our way, and our way is on the road again." Have you wondered what a band of Gypsies is like? From my limited understanding, they are nomadic people who migrate to many places around the globe. I guess the thing that fascinates me about this verse of music is the idea that nomads wandering have the power to insist the world is turning their way. We too are seafaring nomads right now--we are on the watery road again, a road filled with unknowns. But we still have our ability to choose! We can absolutely insist that the world is turning our way--let the rest of the world do what it may, but we can choose how we turn our world. Please pray with me. Father God, as we hit the road again I pray for your presence and strength. God, as many face mental and physical challenges i pray they might recognize the strength they have within to shape their own world, to focus energy and effort on self betterment and service to others. God, I again call upon you to bless our family and friends as well, with health and safety. Energize, enliven and empower each Antietam sailor now I pray in your holy name Amen.

29 April 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. This afternoon i was sitting on the exercise bike seeking some inspiration for this evenings prayer and I was fascinated and impressed by the runners. Each putting one foot in front of another, Some with the ramps inclined, some hiking up hill, some jogging, each had that determined look on their face, that no matter what, they would keep going; keep progressing forward. Of course every step of the way they had the option to push stop and get off, but they just kept going! I have witnessed many of you doing this kind of thing in the gym, but I also witness it day after day in your lives. This is pure grit and determination. And just like persistence in the gym, forward momentum in your day to day regardless of Reagan's plans, the weather, or any other outside factor, you will grow stronger and stronger; able to withstand more and more. You will feel the results in the form of positivity, hope, and a sense of purpose. With this in mind please join me in prayer. Heavenly Father, thank you for another day to live, breath, experience, and make choices. Lord, as we tread along in our treadmill of life, I ask that you strengthen our hearts to pulse with courage and persistence. Bless our minds to be resolute and firm in the things we can control. I pray for continued safety and endurance as the crew stands their watches and continues forward into another day. Bless them and lift them Lord i pray in your name Amen.

30 April 2020 evening prayer



Good evening Antietam Chaps here. Today I was intrigued by the use of the Backstreet Boys iconic song "I want it that way" for the setting of condition 2 strike. The song highlights something that we humans grapple with on daily basis--the wrestle between our one, or two or maybe 20 desires and the answer to why those things don't always happen. In effect, at different times during the day or week we may cry out in our minds or even audibly: tell me why!! Just as max Martin writes, "i want it that way"--often our life wrestle consists of us straining at the fact that things don't always turn out the way we want them to, and most naturally we want to know why! Asking why then is really just an attempt at trying to make sense of life's uncertainty, and that is for certain. Perhaps an alternative way to engage this uncertainty is to accept it for what it is and allow it to just be, rather than try to find a logical reason behind it. Accepting the present moment for what it is can lift a load of stress tied up with needing to know the why behind all things. Let us pray. God, may we have eyes to see and minds to accept the present moment for what it is. Lord, aside from understanding why it has come to us, i ask you to bless us with courage to manage ourselves wisely in these moments. Teach us to embrace and accept our authentic feelings and daily find healthy ways to employ our gifts. Bless our crew and their families I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 1 May 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. As you all are aware, it is May 1st, also known as May Day. Believed by the ancient Celts to be the most important day of the year, May Day was thought to divide the year in half between light and dark. Interestingly, this separation was often symbolically remembered through a fire ritual, celebrating the return of life and rebirth to the world. I'm sure they even had rep lockers staffed with firefighters ready to put out errant fires. Aside from the fires and the resultant smoke though, the idea of new life filling the air is definitely something you can feel if you were out on the weather decks today and the past couple days. The weather is improving, and with that brings hope for new things. Tonight I'd like to pray with this in mind. Heavenly Father, as we begin a new month I pray first and foremost in gratitude for the way you are blessing the crew with tenacity, determination, resolve and commitment. And Thank you for sustaining our families and friends in our absence. God as we now start a new month may we all be filled with the hope of the pending spring, the joy of creation and rebirth. Be our strength and firm rock Lord I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 2 May 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. A great writer once wrote: There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance. This afternoon, thanks to S-2, MWR, the Chiefs and First Class Messes, the FSA Sailors, and other volunteers, we had a time to be glad for sure. From my perspective everyone I saw took Master Chief's invitation seriously to have a fun time! The writer continues: "I know that there is nothing better

for people than to be happy and to do good while they live." I believe today's shared commraderie and these wise words go hand in hand. In all seasons, we can find reasons to rejoice and be happy. Let's keep that going! Please join me in prayer. Dear god of all seasons, I thank you for this moment and the blessings we enjoy and safety you provide. Thank you for great commraderie and support from one another--and May that support continue. Lord I pray you would help us to see clearly the goodness around us, and to find happiness even in this season of uncertainty. Bless those on watch this night and our loved ones far away I pray in your holy name Amen.

### 3 May 2020 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Have you ever noticed what one of the most consistent daily ONE MC announcements is? It occurs three times per day 365 days per year. Tonight it was announced as "dinner for the crew". In the morning it will be "breakfast for the crew." And on and on. Like you all, I am grateful for these announcements! Isn't this a gracious call? The meal of the day announced, followed by "for the crew." It is something offered for the crew--for us! Interestingly this 3 times daily gift is actually something offered for the crew FROM the crew. On behalf of all of the crew, thank you to all who set up for these meals, make these meals, then clean them up afterwards, day after day. Perhaps there's a message for each of us in this "for the crew" concept. Finding ways to do something kind for another crew member will bring a deep sense of satisfaction and even joy, as you witness another's happy reaction. Let us continue to find ways to do things for the crew. Please join me in prayer. Dear God, thank you for what you do day in and day out for the crew. Thank you for our Sailors who serve in each of their rates for the crew. Lord, give us awareness to see anew opportunities to serve one another and bless each other. May we have a servant's heart and helping hands to make life a little better for those around us, the crew. I pray now father for the crew, that you would strengthen them in mind, body and soul, in your holy name i pray, Amen.

### 4 May 2020 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. I think we can all agree that one of the most important activities we do on the ship is separate our trash. And Nowhere on the ship is this more apparent then in PWP, where tireless and fearless Sailors work and have worked for the good of the crew to process paper, food, plastic and metal, day after day. Most of the time the garbage comes to the pulper room nicely sorted in the requisite fashion, which is a big help to the Sailor managing the pulper duties. Just as sorting trash is important, other things in our lives may also need sorting. If you've ever felt overwhelmed with the many topics occupying your mind, you might consider applying the sorting principle. I recommend taking a few moments daily to do some mental sorting; take note of what thoughts are weighing on you and place them in different categories. You might consider 3 categories: things you can control, things you can't control, and then things that just aren't important and can be discarded. Who knows, this sorting process might bring some relief to your inner pulper! With this in mind, please join me in prayer.

Heavenly Father, Thank you for another day of safety through our many drills and activities. Lord in our individual sorting efforts, I pray for each Sailor to have clarity and discernment in managing the many mental weights they carry. Father, truly bless them with peace in this process. Again, I ask you to sustain our loved ones wherever they are and be with our crew throughout the different watches this night I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 5 May 2020 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Because we have a seasoned and salty ship, as we are all aware, there are from time to time casualties requiring attention. Corrective maintenance, to include parts replacement are often part of the solution. But even before that, perhaps the most important part of all is the initial response to the casualty! Have you noticed, for example how Sailors move with extreme purpose when responding to a casualty? To me, this is a sign of pure tenacity and toughness--devoting all of one's energy and momentum, both physical and mental, towards solving a problem is a hallmark of Antietam Sailors--each of you! Herein lies a very important principle: when we are presented with challenges--other forms of casualties such as frustrations with a fellow shipmate, or obstacles to leadership, or maybe even difficulties at home--we can also apply the same concept of a timely and direct response. Direct communication with those involved, listening and working towards developing understanding empathy might be the answer. With this in mind, please join me in prayer. Dear God, tonight we wrap up another day at sea. Thank you for guiding and sustaining us. Thank you for the amazing Taco Tuesday for Cinco De Mayo. And thank you for opportunities we have to respond rather than recoil from challenges. Strengthen and bless each Sailor in the casualties or challenges they face daily. Walk with, lift, and illuminate their hearts and minds with hopeful solutions I pray in your holy name, Amen.

#### 6 May 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Today I observed some of the clearing procedures the surf bravo class was practicing. I was particularly interested in how pairs of two entered the starboard focus break and worked together to maintain the physical safety of their surroundings using different commands. Having a two deep approach to safety in a real scenario could mean a matter of life and death. As we persist in our mission and maintain our bubble as has been discussed, we are in another sort of scenario, a real scenario which requires each of us to look out for one another. There are other threats like exhaustion, imbalance to our general wellness, or mental fatigue caused from excessive worries or fear. Just like the surf bravo sailors today, we can look to port and starboard and work together to help each other stay strong. With this in mind let us pray. Heavenly Father, this evening I thank you for each other, those to our left and right who stand with us in our current fight. God, it's just plain hard sometimes and some may feel at times pretty overwhelmed. I pray you would continue to bless each sailor to stand with and sustain each other; to sense ways to lift one another and together become even stronger. Be our rock and true strength Lord and continue to lift our families, spouses, children, and parents

who certainly are feeling the strain as well at this time. We turn to you now God for sustainment, I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 7 May 2020 evening prayer

Good evening Antietam Chaps here. Today turned out differently than some of us imagined. But what's new right? Today wasn't the first time something out of our control happened that changed our schedule. So what to do when things change? I walked past the galley earlier this afternoon and was inspired by how S-2 handled the change. What they were doing reminded me of a tradition my mom introduced when i was a kid. There was a summer in the 80s in my state, the state of Utah, where there was a terrible drought. That summer i remember my mom trying to help us through some challenges and she suggested that whenever it rained she would make cinnamon rolls for us. I loved that tradition. Today as i walked past the galley at one point They were baking bread. Maybe that's a slogan worth adopting: when change happens bake some bread! In other words, be creative, do something unique for yourself and others, focus on our innate capacity to improve and create in our own ways. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, despite today's weather, I thank you for our safety. God thank you for the creative gifts, the bread baking abilities each sailor has been endowed with. I pray you would help them unleash this in powerful and productive ways to strengthen themselves and those around them. Continue to bless them with perseverance father and protect and nourish our families at home. I pray in your holy name Amen.

#### 8 May 2020 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Today I was speaking with someone and at the end of our conversation I wanted to wish them a happy day of the week and for a moment I couldn't remember what day it was. I'm sure this has never happened to anyone else right? By the way, in case some of you really can't remember what day it is, it's Friday. In all reality though, because of the repetitive and routine nature of our sea-fairing lives, remembering certain things can become a challenge. But, remembering is an important part of being a healthy human being. For example, today is my 10 year old Ruby's birthday and it's always meaningful to remember the births of my children, or recall transformational moments from my past, or even remember the why behind what I do for a living. Furthermore, actively trying to remember important details of conversations we have with family or fellow ship mates, then purposely recalling those details later can build a trusting and reliable relationship. So, my invitation to each of us this evening is to remember to remember!. Please pray with me. Heavenly Father, this has been another very full day at sea and we were truly blessed with safety the entire way. Thank you for that, and may we remember this blessing. Lord, as we engage another day tomorrow, despite the fullness of schedule would you help us stay keen of mind, impactful in our efforts, and especially sharp of memory. And God, I ask you to remember our families, spouses, children, nieces, nephews, grandparents and parents, all those who we remember and are constantly on our minds. I pray in your holy name, Amen.

## 9 May 2020 Evening Prayer

Good evening Antietam, chaps here. Before I forget, since last night I spoke about remembering, just a reminder that tomorrow is Mother's Day. So, as you know today's UNREP was the first we've had in a couple months. Replenishment is a fascinating word. According to Dictionary.com, it means "to make full or complete again, as by supplying what is lacking or used up, etc." I appreciate the idea of replenishment being to make something complete again. While today we made our stores and F-76 Fuel levels complete again, there's a lesson in this for each of us. We ought to take inventory from time to time and consider areas where we may feel incomplete. Are there parts of our lives where we feel something missing or feel deficient? Maybe it's a certain aspect of our job, or a relationship, or maybe just a sense of physical energy? Maybe it's time for a replenishment, a new set of goals aimed at increasing our own sense of personal wellness and completeness. I highly recommend a personal replenishment at sea. You can start anytime! Let us pray. Heavenly Father, Thank you for the safety we enjoyed during today's UNREP and for your presence in the daily details of our lives. Where any of us feel incomplete or depleted in any way, I pray you would guide them to find ways to replenish their bodies, their minds and their souls. And in that replenishment I pray they can find increased energy, purpose and motivation. I pray all of this in your holy name, Amen.