

# MANUAL OF CEREMONIES OF THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY Revised 2020

## Foreword

This manual provides examples of suggested ceremonies for Unit meetings and special occasions. The use of ceremonies in the form presented here is not required by any official action of the American Legion Auxiliary National Organization.

Ceremonies may be altered in accordance with the occasion; however, great care should be taken to ensure that no ceremony is objectionable to persons of any religious denomination.

## Unit Meeting

### Opening the Meeting

Auxiliary meetings may be opened in the following manner:

The Unit President shall seat the members with one rap of the gavel, officers shall take their stations and the doors of the meeting hall shall be closed by the Sergeant at Arms.

*Unit President:* "The meeting will now come to order."

*The Unit President shall give three raps of the gavel and the members shall rise.*

*Unit President:* "The color bearers will advance the colors."

**Note:** *Optional; a set of miniature flags may be used for the pledge, but they are never advanced or retired.*

*In place of the following prayer, the Chaplain may substitute one of the same length and general tenor:*

*Chaplain:* "God of our faiths, we pray that You guide our work in this meeting and in all our days. Send your peace to our nation and to all nations. Speed the fulfillment of your promise of peace that shall have no end.

We pray for all those who serve the people and guard the public welfare. By Your blessing help them to discharge their duties honestly and well. We pray for our members. Help them to

observe the strictest justice; keep alight the fires of freedom, strive earnestly for the spirit of democracy, and preserve untarnished our loyalty to our country and to you.

We especially ask your blessing and comfort for all those who are suffering from the ravages of war. May our duty to them be ever alive in our minds. Finally, we remember lovingly before you our departed heroes. May their splendid example guide us, now and forever. Amen.”

*Alternative Prayer #1*

“Lord, we come together looking toward the future of our organization. Be with us as we express our varying opinions and help us to have uppermost in our mind the needs of those whom we serve as we look toward a new direction for the American Legion Auxiliary.

As we discuss areas of change, allow us to illuminate, and to be open to the vision of others. Help us find greater clarity and purpose for our organization, a renewed commitment and a deeper appreciation of each other’s diversity and its importance to our overall mission. Help us to remember that it is in working together as one, and with Your help, we can accomplish great things. Amen.”

*Alternative Prayer #2*

“Lord, with open minds and hearts, we come together for the betterment of the American Legion Auxiliary. We remember the experiences and knowledge from the past, with gratitude for Your leadership and guidance. Help us to remember that in striving to help others we work best as a team—not as individuals. Guide and direct us to do that which is right for our community, state, and nation. Keep us committed to the overall mission of our organization. Help us to not only use what we have gained from the past, but to plan and prepare boldly for tomorrow. We move confidently into the future with you by our side. Amen”

**Note:** *Additional prayers may be found in the Appendix under Prayers.*

*Unit President:* “In memory of our dead, let us stand in silence.”

*It is not necessary to have music, but if you do, the standard entrance and exit music for presenting/posting the colors is the Trio section of the National Emblem march by Edwin Eugene Bagley. (www.thedrillmaster.org) The members shall salute the flag of our country as it is advanced and placed in position.*

*Unit President:* “You will join me in pledging allegiance to the flag” or “We shall sing one stanza of our National Anthem *The Star Spangled Banner.*”

“You will join me in repeating the Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion Auxiliary.”

“For God and Country

We associate ourselves together for the following purposes: To uphold and defend The Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations during all wars; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state, and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom, and democracy; to participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion; to consecrate and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.”

*One rap of the gavel by the Unit President shall seat the members.*

*Unit President:* “I now declare the meeting of \_\_\_\_\_ Unit No. \_\_\_\_\_ of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of \_\_\_\_\_ regularly convened.”

### **Sample Order of Business**

1. Call to Order
2. Advancement of colors (optional)
3. Prayer
4. Pledge of Allegiance or National Anthem
5. Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion Auxiliary
6. Roll call
7. Reading and approval of minutes of previous meeting
8. Reports of officers, boards, and standing committees as called upon by the presiding officer
9. Reports of special committees
10. Special Orders – elections/officer installation/new member initiation
11. Unfinished business
12. New business
13. Announcements
14. Program – service project (mission) or educational and entertaining (optional)
15. Closing prayer
16. Adjournment of business meeting
17. Retirement of colors (optional)

### **Closing Ceremony**

Auxiliary meetings may be closed in the following manner:

*Unit President:* “Is there any further business to come before the meeting? If not, the Chaplain will lead us in prayer.”

*The Unit President shall give three raps of the gavel, and the membership shall rise, and stand in silence.*

*Chaplain:* “O God, from whom all holy desires, all right counsels, and all just works do proceed, give to Your servants that peace which the world cannot give; that our hearts may be disposed to obey Your commandments. With the fear of enemies being removed, may our times, by Your protection, be peaceful.

O God, who protects the nations who believe in You from being overwhelmed by any peril; allow others to accept the offerings of we, Your servants, that in Your mercy You may grant peace to all people and make them secure against all their enemies.

O God, the author and lover of peace, to know whom is to live, to serve whom is to reign; shield Your people from all assaults, so that we who trust in Your protection may fear no foe. We ask this through God’s Name. Amen.”

*Alternative Benediction #1*

“Gracious God, as we go our separate ways, keep us mindful that we are still together in spirit and in purpose. Though we may differ among ourselves, help us to demonstrate our unity about that which is most important to our organization. To this end, help us to commit our energies and talents. Dismiss us now with Your blessing. Amen.”

*Alternative Benediction #2*

“As we depart, we thank you for the opportunity to renew our pledge of service to You, our nation and to our great organization. May we continue to make a difference in our communities through our dedication to others.

Grant us the necessary strength, wisdom, and courage to continue our efforts with renewed enthusiasm and determination. Remind us that our duty to others does not end as we depart but continues throughout our daily lives. Bless us and keep us until we meet again. Amen.”

*Alternative Benediction #3*

“God, we ask that you give us pure hearts that we may see you, humble hearts that we may hear you and hearts of love that we may serve you.

God, as we depart, allow kindness to rule in our hearts and compassion in our lives. In our journeys to and from--direct us; in our happiness and pleasure--bless us; in care, anxiety or trouble--sustain us; in peril and danger--protect us. Go now with us, in peace. Amen.”

**Note:** *Additional prayers may be found in the Appendix*

*The first stanza of “America” or another patriotic song may be sung by the membership.*

*Unit President:* "Till we meet again let us remember that our obligation to our Country can be fulfilled only by the faithful performance of all duties of citizenship. Let service to the community, state and nation be ever a main objective of the American Legion Auxiliary and its members. Let us ever be watchful of our organization and ourselves, that nothing shall swerve us from the path of justice, freedom, loyalty, and democracy. The color bearers will retire the colors."  
(optional)

*Members shall salute the flag of our country as it is retired.*

*Unit President:* "I now declare the meeting of \_\_\_\_\_ Unit No. \_\_\_\_\_ of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of \_\_\_\_\_ adjourned."

*The Unit President gives one rap of the gavel.*

### **Initiation Ceremony for American Legion Auxiliary Units – Long Form**

Initiation of members is an important function of the officers of each Unit. As important as the initiation is to impress the member of responsibility, it is NOT mandatory for membership.

*Materials:* A table covering may be used on the Unit President's table. Four candles in uniform holders represent the four great principles of The American Legion and Auxiliary. It may be desirable to provide new members with a poppy and copies of the Constitution and Unit Constitution, Unit Guide, Flag Codes, informational brochures, small American flags, Auxiliary pins, or other helpful materials. An emblem light, if available and gavel add to the effectiveness.

*Setting:* Chairs should be placed in the front row for the candidates. If there are more candidates than can be seated in the front row on both sides of the center aisle, enough room should be left between rows so that the Sergeant at Arms and Assistant Sergeant at Arms can present materials to each candidate at the appropriate time during the initiation.

Any officer or member other than those designated may be assigned to parts in the initiation ceremony.

*Dress:* No formal attire or uniforms are necessary.

*Procedure:* Before the meeting begins, the Sergeant at Arms should have a list of candidates' names. The candidates should be lined up for the processional with instructions on the appropriate time for their entrance time in the initiation ceremony.

When the Unit President has asked that the candidates for membership be presented, the Sergeant at Arms and Assistant Sergeant at Arms will lead the procession of candidates with the Sergeant at Arms on the left and the Assistant Sergeant at Arms on the right.

Candidates will be conducted to reserved seats in the front row(s) on the right and left. Candidates should be informed that the ceremony of initiation is of a serious nature. Any light or humorous aspects of the Unit's initiation tradition shall be kept separate and apart from the formal initiation. Candidates should be told to remain standing during the initiation until they are told to be seated by the Unit President.

*Soft music may be played during the initiation.*

*Unit President:* "We shall now proceed to the initiation of new members. In order that we may impress upon the candidates the serious and sacred obligations of Auxiliary membership, all present will conduct themselves in a manner befitting such ceremony. The Sergeant at Arms shall ascertain if any candidates for initiation are present."

*The Sergeant at Arms proceeds to the anteroom. Returning, the Sergeant at Arms stands just within the door and addresses the Unit President:*

*Sergeant at Arms:* "Sir or Madam President, there are (number of candidates) who are qualified for membership in the American Legion Auxiliary and are waiting to be presented."

*Unit President:* "You will conduct them into the meeting hall and place them properly before the flag of our country."

*The Sergeant at Arms proceeds to the anteroom to call for the candidates. With the Assistant Sergeant at Arms, the candidates are conducted to the seats reserved in the front of the room where they remain standing. When the candidates are in place facing the Unit President, the Sergeant at Arms faces the Unit President.*

*Sergeant at Arms:* "Mr. or Sir or Madam President, I present these candidates for initiation into the American Legion Auxiliary." The Unit President gives three raps of the gavel.

*Unit President:* "The Chaplain will offer prayer."

*The Chaplain approaches the Flag of our Country, standing beside the Flag and facing the candidates.*

*Chaplain:* "Let us pray. Father of our Faiths, as we participate in this initiation service, we express our pride and satisfaction in welcoming these new members of the American Legion Auxiliary. Help us to be a good example of the principles of our organization so that they may learn, and to make them a valued part of our service to others, so that Your Name may be glorified. May the full significance of the emblem of our organization, justice, freedom, democracy, and loyalty, be exemplified through our service to our country and to You."

Bless The American Legion as it charts our course and the American Legion Auxiliary as we carry out our program of service. Grant that all of us may seek Your guidance throughout our lives. Amen.”

*The Chaplain returns to the chaplain’s original position. The membership is seated by one rap of the gavel and the Unit President then addresses the new members.*

*Unit President:* “We are indeed pleased to receive you into the American Legion Auxiliary. Your desire to associate with us is a source of satisfaction to the members of this Unit. Your membership will represent additional strength to sustain the principles for which we are organized. We shall now travel spiritually with you as the officers explain the philosophy of life that unites us. The American Legion Auxiliary cherishes four great principles: Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty. Before you are asked to assume the obligations which they entail, you will hear them explained. Sergeant at Arms, conduct the candidates to the first Vice President who will instruct them in Justice.”

*On desk or table have a bowl of poppies and sufficient copies of the Constitution for each candidate. Copies of the Constitution may be procured from Department Headquarters or Flag & Emblem Sales at a nominal cost if Unit Constitution is not available.*

*The Sergeant at Arms conducts the candidates to the designated position in front of the First Vice President. The First Vice President rises.*

*Sergeant at Arms:* “Sir or Madam Vice President, I present these candidates to you for instruction in Justice.”

*First Vice President:* “Justice is the highest code by which humanity is governed. True Justice makes no distinction of persons. Justice recognizes neither rich nor poor, the classes nor the masses. Justice transcends all boundaries of race and creed. Justice is not weak but merciful. Justice views all sides impartially, without anger, without malice. Foster with all your energy a spirit of Justice, for Justice is the guiding star of life and upon it rests the future of our nation.

These poppies are the official flower of The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary. They are in memory of those who gave their all that Justice might be supreme. Never forget their sacrifice. May your actions forever bring credit to our organization, which is a living memorial to the veterans who fought in order that Justice, the divine right of man, might ever endure.

I give you a copy of our Constitution, in which you will find a practical application of the ideals of Justice.

Sergeant at Arms, conduct the candidates to the Second Vice President, who will instruct them in Freedom.”

*Have on desk or table the gavel, bell, and sufficient flags for each candidate. The Sergeant at Arms conducts the candidates to the designated position in front of the Second Vice President. The Second Vice President rises.*

*Sergeant at Arms:* “Sir or Madam Vice President, I present these candidates to you for instruction in Freedom.”

*Second Vice President:* “Freedom is, among all the rights of mankind, the one held most dear. Freedom is an ideal of surpassing strength for which men and women throughout the ages have willingly fought and died. Freedom is the power of self-determination.

In the War of the Revolution, Freedom was won for the people of the United States as in all wars. Freedom was the torch that led our men and women through the darkness of the conflicts; and again, Freedom will be the torch which will lead us to victory.

You must guard well the Freedom of this Unit. You must keep the American Legion Auxiliary, a free organization, faithful to the ideals that made it possible. Above all, you must prevent anything being done to prejudice the people of the United States, whose foundation is the rock of liberty.

This bell, a reproduction of the Liberty Bell, which in bold and clarion tone rang out the Freedom of a new nation, is to remind you that you must never forget that America is the cradle of Freedom. I give you the American Flag, the emblem of Freedom.

Sergeant at Arms, conduct the candidates to the Honorary Junior Past President who will instruct them in Democracy.”

*Have, on desk or table, sufficient American Legion Auxiliary pins for each candidate. The Sergeant at Arms conducts the candidates to the designated positions in front of the Honorary Junior Past President. The Honorary Junior Past President rises.*

*Sergeant at Arms:* “Sir or Madam Past President, I present these candidates to you for instruction in Democracy.”

*Honorary Junior Past President:* “Democracy is government of the people, by the people, and for the people. Democracy is American in principle and universal in appeal. Democracy offers a voice in government to every citizen, and in its benefits every citizen may share.

To the American Legion Auxiliary, Democracy is concrete and actual. We express it in our meeting halls where distinction of rank is banished, and all are equal in a common service. Permit every member a free voice, but not a voice so free as to transcend the limits of liberty. Ever remember, Democracy can exist only where each one knows and accepts the responsibility of service to community, state, and nation. In all our undertakings, seek to prove that all are born equal, with certain natural rights, and that a nation dedicated and true to this principle shall endure forever.

I give you the emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary, which is also an emblem of Democracy.

Sergeant at Arms, conduct the candidates to the President who will instruct them in Loyalty.”

*The Sergeant at Arms conducts the candidates to the designated position in front of the Unit President. The Unit President rises.*

*Sergeant at Arms:* “Sir or Madam President, I present these candidates to you for instruction in Loyalty.”

*Unit President:* “Loyalty is the cornerstone of the American Legion Auxiliary since it is one of the first virtues of a soldier. Loyalty is as dear as Justice is desirable, as Freedom is glorious, as Democracy is practical. Loyalty is one of the first requirements of a citizen. In the American Legion Auxiliary, Loyalty will lead us to defend our organization in all that is right, and to do our utmost to keep it in the right. Loyalty to country and self is the basis of true Americanism. You must ever see that the officers of this Unit are loyal to their duties; that the members of this Unit are loyal to The American Legion; that the American Legion Auxiliary is loyal to its principles; and that this land of ours is loyal to itself.

By this time, you understand that the American Legion Auxiliary is a united organization. Composed, as it is, of members of every race, religion, occupation, and political conviction, it is obligated to strict neutrality on all questions concerning religion, politics, and industrial strife. You have heard its four great principles, Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty explained.

Are you now ready and willing to obligate yourself as expressed in the Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion Auxiliary? If so, you will each answer *I am.*”

*Candidates:* “I am.”

*All candidates must answer and signify, they are willing to assume the obligation. The Unit President shall give three raps of the gavel and members shall rise while candidates repeat the obligation to the Auxiliary.*

*The Unit President will step to the right, immediately next to the American Flag and, raising the right hand, address the Candidates.*

*Unit President:* "You will raise your right hand and repeat after me:

"I, (here give your name)

Do solemnly pledge

To uphold and defend the Constitution

Of the United States of America:

To maintain law and order;

To foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism;

To preserve the memories and incidents

Of our associations during all wars;

To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation;

To combat the autocracy

Of both the classes and the masses;

To make right the master of might;

To promote peace and good will on earth;

To safeguard and transmit to posterity

The principles of Justice, Freedom, and Democracy;

To participate in and contribute

To the accomplishment

Of the aims and purposes

Of The American Legion;

To consecrate and sanctify our association

By our devotion to mutual helpfulness

To all of which I pledge myself

For God and Country.

I am not a member and do not subscribe

To the principles of any group

Opposed to our form of government."

*At the conclusion of the obligation, the Unit President will resume the president's station and seat the membership with one rap of the gavel. The Unit Chaplain rises and stands at some convenient location close to the emblem and calls the attention of the candidates to the emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary. All lights, except those of the four candles shall be extinguished. Silence shall be observed for ten seconds - soft music shall be played. Using an emblem light, if available, or the banner, a pin or picture of the emblem, the Unit Chaplain should say:*

*Chaplain:* "The emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary is your badge of distinction and honor. It stands for God and country, and the highest rights of mankind. It consists of several parts and each part has a meaning. The rays of the sun that form the background stand for the principles

of the American Legion Auxiliary; Loyalty, Justice, Freedom and Democracy, dispelling the darkness of violence, strife and evil. The star of blue is the emblem of service in war; it is no less the emblem of service in time of peace.

The emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary is the emblem of Americanism. Americanism is unity of love, singleness of allegiance, practicality of purpose, care of the distressed, and the education of children, all directed to the promotion of a common good. As members of this organization, we must preach and teach the principles of Americanism. Let us not forget that to each generation comes its patriotic duty and that upon your willingness to sacrifice and endure as those before you have sacrificed and endured, rests the hope of the nation.”

*Lights are turned on and one rap of the gavel seats membership.*

*Unit President:* “On behalf of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of \_\_\_\_\_, I welcome you to membership in this Unit. May you enjoy your association with us and always be a loyal member of the American Legion Auxiliary.”

*(Music) The Unit President introduces each newly obligated member to the membership and requests the Sergeant at Arms to seat them with the members in the chairs reserved in front of the room.*

### **Initiation Ceremony for American Legion Auxiliary Units - Short Form**

The props, setting, participants and procedures for the short form of the Initiation Ceremony are much the same as that of the long form. However, the number of participants is not the same, and the ceremony is not as detailed.

*Initiation Officer:* “We shall now proceed with the Initiation. You are requested to remain in silence. The Sergeant at Arms shall present the candidates for initiation.”

*The Sergeant at Arms proceeds to the rear or anteroom, ascertains if the Assistant has the lines ready and then addresses the Initiation Officer.*

*Sergeant at Arms:* “Sir or Madam Initiation Officer, I present the following candidates.” *(Reads their names)*

*Initiation Officer:* “You will conduct the candidates to the front and place them properly before the flag of our country.”

*(Music) Sergeant at Arms and Assistant shall escort the candidates to the front.*

*Initiation Officer:* “Your desire to associate with us is a source of satisfaction to the members of this Unit. Your membership will represent additional strength to sustain the principles for which we are organized.”

*Three raps of the gavel for membership to stand.*

*Initiation Officer:* "The Chaplain shall offer prayer."

*Chaplain:* "Let us pray. Father of all, we come to ask your blessing upon us. We thank you for your guidance and tender love in times of need. Keep us steadfast, O God, in the cause of human rights, liberty, and true Americanism. Help us to remember that in days of peace as well as in times of war, there is need for unselfish service in the interest of these principles. With our thanks, may the memories of those who have died in service remind us of all they have done and inspire in us a renewed patriotism. Amen."

*One rap of the gavel to seat membership.*

*Initiation Officer:* "The American Legion Auxiliary cherishes four great principles: Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty. Before you are asked to assume the obligation you will hear them explained."

*Have sufficient copies of the Constitution and a poppy for each candidate. Copies of the Constitution may be procured from your Department Headquarters at a nominal cost.*

*First Vice President:* (Rises) "I light the candle of Justice. Justice is the highest code by which humanity is governed. True Justice makes no distinction of persons and transcends all boundaries of race and creed. Justice views all sides impartially, without anger, without malice. We should all foster a true spirit of Justice, for it is the guiding Star of Life and upon it rests the future of all Nations."

These poppies are the official flower of The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary. They are in memory of those who gave their all that Justice might be supreme. May your actions forever bring credit to our organization, which is a living memorial to the heroes of the World Wars, who fought in order that Justice, the divine right of man, might ever endure. I give you a copy of our Constitution, in which you will find a practical application of the ideals of Justice."

*Sergeant at Arms and the assistant shall distribute a poppy and a copy of the Constitution to each candidate.*

*Second Vice President:* (Rises) "From the candle of Justice, I light the candle of Freedom. Freedom is among all the rights of mankind the one held most dear. In the war of the Revolution, Freedom was won for the people of the United States; in all wars, Freedom was the torch that led men and women and through the darkness of conflict. You must help us keep the American Legion Auxiliary, a free organization, faithful to the ideals upon which it was founded."

This bell is a reproduction of the Liberty Bell which rang out the freedom of a new nation, and may it ever remind you that America is the cradle of freedom.

The flag of the United States is the emblem of Freedom.”

*Sergeant at Arms and the assistant shall give each candidate a small flag and a copy of the Flag code.*

*Honorary Junior Past President:* (Rises) “From the candle of Freedom I light the candle of Democracy. Democracy is government of the people, by the people and for the people. American democracy offers a voice in government to every citizen so that all may share in its benefits. Democracy can exist only where each knows and accepts his responsibility of service to his community, state, and nation.

The emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary is the emblem of Democracy.”

*Sergeant at Arms and the assistant shall distribute informational materials on the Auxiliary.*

*Initiation Officer will quietly move the Freedom candle toward the Honorary Junior Past President’s station so that it is easily accessible for her part in the ceremony.*

*Unit President:* (Rises) “From the candle of Democracy I light the candle of Loyalty. Loyalty is one of the first requirements of a citizen and is the cornerstone of the American Legion Auxiliary. Loyalty will lead us to defend our organization in all that is right. May the officers of this Unit be loyal to their duties and all the members be loyal to the principles of The American Legion. Loyalty to God, to country and to self is the basis of true Americanism. You have heard explained the four great principles of the American Legion Auxiliary, Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty. Are you now ready and willing to obligate yourself to these principles?”

*Candidates:* “I am.”

*All candidates shall signify verbally their willingness to take the obligation. Three raps of the gavel and the members shall stand.*

*Unit President:* “You will raise your right hand and repeat after me: ‘I do solemnly pledge to be a loyal member of the American Legion Auxiliary. To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism; to all of which I pledge myself to God and country! I am not a member of and do not subscribe to the principles of any group opposed to our form of government.’ “

*At the conclusion of the obligation, all lights, except those of the four candles shall be extinguished. Silence shall be observed for ten seconds, soft music shall be played, and without*

*a cue the Chaplain shall call attention to the emblem. This may be an emblem light, the banner; a pin, or a picture of the emblem.*

*Chaplain:* “The emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary is your badge of distinction and honor. It stands for God and country and the highest rights of mankind. It consists of several parts and each part has a meaning. The rays of the sun that form the background stand for the principles of the American Legion Auxiliary; Loyalty, Justice, Freedom and Democracy; dispelling the darkness of violence, strife and evil. The star of blue is the emblem of service in war; it is no less the emblem of service in time of peace.

The emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary is the emblem of Americanism. Americanism is the unity of love, singleness of allegiance, practicality of purpose, care of the distressed, and the education of children, all directed to the promotion of a common good. As members of this organization we must preach and teach the principles of Americanism. Let us not forget that to each generation comes its patriotic duty and that upon your willingness to sacrifice and endure, as those before you have sacrificed and endured, rests the hope of the nation.”

*Lights are turned on and one rap of the gavel seats membership.*

*Initiation Officer:* “On behalf of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of \_\_\_\_\_ I welcome you to membership in this Unit. May you enjoy your association with us and always be a loyal member of the American Legion Auxiliary.”

*Music*

*Initiation Officer:* “Sergeant at Arms, you will conduct these new members to their chairs.”

*Sufficient chairs shall be reserved in the front of the room.*

### **Installation of Officers - Short Form**

Unit officers shall be installed immediately following their election or as soon thereafter as possible. Unit officers may assume their duties without an installation procedure.

The Installing Officer for a Unit installation may be a past Unit President, past or present District President, past or present Department or National officer or any person designated by the Unit. A list of the Unit officers-elect should be prepared in advance for the Sergeant at Arms and all officers-elect should be seated in a reserved section, preferably near the front of the room.

In this simplified ceremony, only the Installing Officer, Unit President and Sergeant at Arms officiate, but an Installation team, stations for each officer, obligations given by outgoing officers, pins, badges and ribbons may be used to make the ceremony as elaborate as the Unit desires.

*Unit President:* "We shall now proceed with the installation of officers. The Sergeant at Arms shall present the Installing Officer."

Sergeant at Arms conducts the Installing Officer to the platform. Unit President makes a short introduction as to the name, office, and past services to the Auxiliary of the distinguished guest.

*Installing Officer:* "Sergeant at Arms, you will call the roll of officers-elect of this Unit."

*They, as their names are called, in order of rank, beginning with the president-elect, will either line up in the rear of the room or step forward forming a line before the Installing Officer. If the Unit desires to use a processional, the pianist will play appropriate music for marching.*

*Sergeant at Arms:* "Sir or Madam Installing Officer, I present to you the officers-elect of this Unit."

*Installing Officer:* "You have been chosen to fill the various offices of this Unit. You will familiarize yourself with the duties of your respective offices as given in the Unit Guide. Always remember that the welfare and success of this Unit depend upon you. Therefore, I would remind you of the obligation which every American Legion Auxiliary member assumes the obligation of preserving the integrity of The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary, contributing to the aims and purposes of our organization, the ideals of Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty. You will now raise your right hand and repeat after me: "I promise to perform faithfully all the duties of the office I am about to assume: and I further pledge that I am not a member of and do not subscribe to the principles of any group opposed to our form of government."

Sergeant at Arms, you are responsible for order at all Unit meetings; for the advancement and retirement of the colors and for their proper care; for courtesies to guests and such other duties as may be assigned to you; for regular attendance at meetings and cooperation with the President.

Chaplain, you are the spiritual leader of this Unit. Your words and actions will represent our founding principles of service to God and Country. You will be responsible for the observance of all religious ceremonies. It is expected that you will so dignify your office that all fellow members will follow your example.

Historian, you are responsible for the compiling and preserving of the records of this Unit. The lamp of recorded experience will do much to guide the footsteps of those who follow.

Treasurer, your office is one of trust. You are responsible for this year's budget and for payment of all authorized obligations. Guard well your trust!

Secretary, your duties are those of administrative and the promptness and discretion with which you meet your responsibilities will contribute to the success of this Unit.

Second Vice President, into your helpful hands is placed the responsibility of assisting the Vice President and President in all their duties. You will always be alert to apply the teachings of freedom to the proceedings of this Unit.

Vice President, to you is given the active cooperation with the President for the development of the Unit program. In the absence of the President you will be prepared to assume the duties of the office. Your office carries with it the teachings of Justice. Always remember that Justice is the guiding Star of Life.

President, great trust has been placed in you by your election to the highest office within this Unit. And as you assume the duties of the President of \_\_\_\_\_ Unit of the American Legion Auxiliary, I charge you to carry constantly in your mind the obligation which is yours, that of upholding the four great principles expressed in the Preamble to the Constitution: Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty.

Executive Committee Members-at-Large, you with the other members of the Executive Committee have been entrusted with the responsibility to manage and govern this Unit between meetings at the call of the President. All action shall be approved by the Unit membership. Use this trust wisely.”

*Installing Officer requests the new officers and Executive Committee-at-large to turn and face the audience. Three raps of the gavel for members to stand.*

*Installing Officer:* “I congratulate this Unit upon the officers you have chosen. I have charged them with a serious responsibility and in turn, I charge you likewise. Will every member of this Unit please raise their right hand and repeat after me?”

‘I solemnly promise to renew my pledge of service to the American Legion Auxiliary and to give wholehearted support to these Unit Officers.’”

*Chaplain, please refer to the alter*

*Chaplain:* “Father of our Faiths, we seek Your presence at this installation of our newly elected officers. May we ask Your blessing on them and Your guidance during the coming year. Make them aware of their responsibilities, both to You and to our country. Create in them a desire to foster the ideals of Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty so that the American Legion Auxiliary may accomplish its share of building toward a better world. This we ask in Your name. Amen.”

*One rap of gavel to seat members.*

*Installing Officers:* “Will the Sergeant at Arms please escort the President and Honorary Junior Past President to the podium and the other officers to their seats?”

Honorary Junior Past President, you have come to the close of your administration. You have been loyal to this Unit and led it courageously. As you retire from this office, be assured that you take with you the respect and appreciation of the members. I pin over your heart the insignia of Past President. May you always wear it with pride and happy memories of your service as Unit President.

To you, as the new President of Unit \_\_\_\_\_ Department of \_\_\_\_\_ I present to you this gavel, your symbol of authority. May you use it with discretion in the best interests of this Unit.”

### **Installation of Officers - Long Form**

Unit officers shall be installed immediately following their election or as soon thereafter as possible. Unit officers may assume their duties without an installation procedure.

The Installing Officer for a Unit installation may be a past Unit President, past or present District President, Department or National officer or any person designated by the Unit.

A list of the Unit officers-elect should be prepared in advance for the Sergeant at Arms. All members of the Installation team should be in their respective stations as shown in the manual of Ceremonies, and each officer shall be given a card on which should be copied the “charge” to the newly elected officer. Pins, badges, and ribbons may be used to make the ceremony as elaborate as the Unit desires.

*Unit President:* “We shall now proceed with the installation of officers. The Sergeant at Arms shall present the Installing Officer.”

*Sergeant at Arms conducts the Installing Officer to the platform. Unit President makes a short introduction as to the name, office, and past services of the distinguished guest.*

*Installing Officer:* “Sergeant at Arms, please present the officers-elect of the Unit.”

*As their names are called, President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Chaplain, Historian, Executive Committee Member-at large and Sergeant at Arms will form a line facing the Installing Officer. If the Unit desires to use a processional, the pianist will play appropriate music for marching.*

*Sergeant at Arms:* “Sir or Madam Installing Officer, I present to you the officers-elect of this Unit.”

*Installing Officer:* "You have been chosen to fill the various offices of this Unit. You will, I know, vindicate the trust that has been reposed in you, and fulfill in every way the obligations which that trust entails. You will familiarize yourselves with the duties your respective offices carry with them. Ever remember that the welfare and success of this Unit depend upon you; and upon your shoulders rest the burden of preserving the integrity of the American Legion Auxiliary. You must protect its good name before the people of the United States, and at all times endeavor to have them understand its policy and its purpose. Always remember the tolerant spirit of the American Legion Auxiliary. Allow no distinction of class or creed to appear among its members. There is no rank among us, for each serves as the equal to a fellow member, and all strive toward the same goal, which is the realization in the life of the Republic of the ideals of Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty. You will now raise your right hand and repeat after me, giving your name.

'I, do solemnly pledge to perform faithfully all the duties of the office I am about to assume; and I further pledge that I am not a member of and do not subscribe to the principles of any group opposed to our form of government.'"

*After the obligation of the new officers, the Installing Officer shall address the Sergeant at Arms.*

*Installing Officer:* "Sergeant at Arms, conduct the new officers to their respective stations."

*The Acting or Retiring Sergeant at Arms escorts each officer-elect to their respective station, starting with the elected Sergeant at Arms and ending with the Unit President. The Sergeant at Arms will conduct the Sergeant at Arms-elect to the station of the Sergeant at Arms and when arrived at that station will address the elected Sergeant at Arms as follows:*

*Acting Sergeant at Arms:* "You are responsible for order at all Unit meetings; for the advancement and retirement of colors; for the proper care of all Unit materials; for courtesies to guests and such other duties as may be assigned to you; for regular attendance at meetings, for loyalty to, and cooperation with, the President."

*The Sergeant at Arms next escorts the Historian.*

*The Acting Historian then makes the following charge:*

*Acting Historian:* "Your office is an important one. To you is given the responsibility of preserving and compiling the records of this Unit. The future can only be judged by the past. Be mindful that the lamp of recorded experience may do much in guiding the footsteps of those who follow."

*The Sergeant at Arms then escorts the Chaplain to the right of the Unit President.*

*The Acting Chaplain then makes the following charge.*

*Acting Chaplain:* “Recognizing our diversity, to you is given the spiritual leadership of this Unit. You will, I know, lend dignity and respect to your office. By your words and actions, you will represent our founding principles of service to God and Country. You are responsible for pronouncing the invocation and benediction at all Unit meetings, and for participating in other ceremonial occasions. You should remain in close confidence with the President and the other officers and should attend all Unit Meetings. Into your keeping we place the spirit of cooperation within this Unit.”

*The Sergeant at Arms then escorts the Treasurer to the left of the Unit President’s station.*

*Acting Treasurer:* “You are the keeper of all funds and, with you, rests the financial policy of this Unit. You are responsible for the year’s budget, and the payment of all obligations when correct authorization has been given for such payment. Your election to this office signifies that the members of this Unit have reposed in your implicit trust.”

*Sergeant at Arms escorts the Secretary to the desk and the Acting Secretary makes the following charge:*

*Acting Secretary:* “To you is given the greatest number of duties of any officer of this Unit. Your duties are administrative. You occupy an important position around which all the activities of the Unit revolve. Your cooperation with the President will determine a large measure the success of the President’s administration.”

*If your Unit bylaws require a Corresponding Secretary, you may use the following:*

*“Sergeant at Arms, please escort the Corresponding Secretary to the right of the Secretary or Recording Secretary.”*

*Acting Corresponding Secretary:* “The character of the Unit is given great opportunity for expression from your hand. The promptness and discretion with which you meet your responsibilities will reflect the efficiency of your office. Promptness will tend to establish efficiency. Discretion will make and retain friends for the American Legion Auxiliary.”

*Sergeant at Arms escorts the Second Vice President to the station.*

*Acting Second Vice President:* “Your office carries with it the teachings of Freedom. In the War of the Revolution, as in all wars, Freedom was won for people of the United States; in all the wars, Freedom was the torch that led our men and women through the darkness of the conflict; and again Freedom will be the torch which will lead us to victory. You will be ever alert to apply the principles of Freedom in the proceedings of this Unit.”

*Sergeant at Arms next escorts the First Vice President to a station.*

*Acting First Vice President:* “To you is given the co-responsibility with the President for the complete development of your Unit Program. You should attend all meetings, and in the absence of the President be prepared to assume the duties of her office. Your office carries with it the responsibility of expounding the principles of Justice. True Justice makes no distinction of persons. Justice recognizes neither rich nor poor, the classes nor the masses. Justice is the guiding star of life, and upon it rests the future of our nation.”

*Sergeant at Arms escorts the President to a station.*

*Acting President:* “Great trust has been placed in you by your election to the highest office this Unit can bestow. To you is entrusted the supervision of the duties of all officers. To you is entrusted the responsibility for the success of this year’s program. To you is entrusted the sacred duty of upholding the four great principles expressed in the Preamble to our Constitution: Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty. Ever remember that Loyalty is one of the first virtues of a soldier, and Loyalty to country and self is the basis of true Americanism. (I place this ribbon over your shoulder) optional. I pin over your heart the insignia of President, and place in your possession the Constitution and Bylaws, Unit Guide. and Manual of Ceremonies of the American Legion Auxiliary.”

*Charge to all members of the Executive Committee.*

“Executive Committee, as officers and members-at-large you have been entrusted with the responsibility to manage and govern this Unit between meetings or, at the call of the President, all action shall be approved by the Unit membership. Use this trust wisely.”

*Sergeant at Arms conducts the retiring President to a station.*

*Retiring Honorary Junior Past President:* “You have come to the close of your administration. It has been a rewarding adventure for you and a glorious one for this Unit. You have led us fearlessly, courageously, and nobly. As you retire from this office be assured you take with you the respect and appreciation of the members. I pin over your heart the insignia of Past President. May you always wear it with pride and happy memories of your service as Unit President.”

*Installing Officer requests the new officers to stand and addresses the members. Three raps of the gavel for members to stand.*

*Installing Officer:* "I congratulate this Unit upon the officers you have chosen. I have charged them with a serious responsibility and in turn, I charge you likewise. Will every member of this Unit please raise their right hand and repeat after me?"

'I solemnly promise to renew my pledge of service to the American Legion Auxiliary and to give wholehearted support to these Unit Officers.'"

*Chaplain:* "O Lord, we ask that You give wisdom and understanding to these newly elected officers of the American Legion Auxiliary. Bless and encourage them in Your own special way. Guide them as they lead us in our paths of service. May they assume their offices with loyal hearts, determined to fulfill their obligations to our organization. We pray that the American Legion Auxiliary may be worthy of being used by You in giving moral and spiritual leadership to the great enterprise of building an organization that has for its purpose service to mankind and to You. We ask this in your name. Amen."

*One rap of gavel to seat members. Installing Officer presents gavel to Unit President, and says:*

*Installing Officer:* "To you, as the new President of Unit\_\_\_ Department of \_\_\_\_\_, I present this gavel, your symbol of authority. May you use it wisely and in the best interest of the membership."

*Installing Officer hands the gavel to the new Unit President and the Installing Officer takes a seat.*

**Note:** *Alternative prayers for Installation may be found in the Appendix under Prayers.*

### **Graduation Ceremony for Juniors Reaching the Age of 18 Years**

*The table should be set such as in the Initiation ceremony plan - short form.*

*Unit President:* "Will the Sergeant at Arms and the Junior Activities Chairman please escort the Junior member(s) that are eligible for Senior membership to the front of the room."

*The members will stand in front of table facing the officers. The Sergeant at Arms and Junior Activities Chairman step back a few paces.*

*Unit President:* "In the Junior Activities program you have been given the opportunity to learn the duties, privileges, rights and responsibilities of the American Legion Auxiliary in order that you may understand and participate in the functioning of the Unit when you become Senior members. May you always be a loyal and faithful Unit member, helping to carry out the four great principles for which we are organized. As you are now eligible to join the ranks of the

Senior members of our great organization, may you always be ready to use your ability in leadership, one of the highest gifts from God, to help carry our unselfish program of service to our veterans, military, and their families.”

*First Vice President:* (Rises and lights candle) “I light the candle of Justice. Justice is the highest code by which humanity is governed. True Justice is the guiding Star of Life, and upon it rests the future of our nation.”

*Second Vice President:* (Rises and lights candle) “I light the candle of Freedom. Freedom is among all of the rights of man and the one held most dear. You must help keep America a free country, faithful to the ideals upon which it was founded.”

*Honorary Junior Past President:* (Rises and lights candle) “I light the candle of Democracy. Democracy is government of the people, by the people and for the people. Our American Democracy can continue to exist only if our citizens know and accept their responsibilities to their community, state and nation.”

*Secretary or Treasurer:* (Rises and lights candle) “I light the candle of Loyalty. Loyalty is one of the most important requirements of a citizen. Loyalty to God, to Country and to self is the basis of true Americanism.”

*Unit President:* “Will the Junior Activities Chairman please present the names of the Junior members who are eligible for Senior membership.”

*Junior Activities Chairman:* “Sir or Madam President, I have the honor of presenting (give each member’s name). These members have served as Junior members of the American Legion Auxiliary, Unit \_\_\_\_\_ the Department of \_\_\_\_\_ and have attained the required age of eighteen. They are now eligible for Senior membership.”

*Unit President:* “Your presence here indicates the trust our Unit has placed in you as Junior members. Your membership as a Senior will represent additional strength to sustain our Unit and the Department of \_\_\_\_\_ I now declare you a Senior member of the American Legion Auxiliary and take pride in presenting each of you with this certificate.”

*The Unit President walks around the table and hands each a certificate. The Sergeant at Arms presents the Unit Guide, and a copy of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Unit. The Junior Activities Chairman pins a Poppy Corsage on the left shoulder of each girl and also presents each with an Auxiliary pin if none had been presented during the time they were Juniors or if it had been lost.)*

*Unit President gives three raps of the gavel.*

*Unit President:* "The Chaplain will offer prayer."

*Chaplain:* "Let us pray. O God, as we participate in this Graduation Ceremony for these Juniors, we express our pride and satisfaction in having them as Senior members of the American Legion Auxiliary. Help us to guide them so that Your Name may be glorified and that the full significance of the emblem of our organization, Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty may be exemplified through service to our Country and to You.

Bless The American Legion as it charts our course and the American Legion Auxiliary as we carry on our program of service to mankind. Grant that all of us may seek Your guidance throughout our lives. We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen."

**Note:** *Alternative prayers for Installation may be found in the Appendix under Prayers.*

*Unit President seats the members with one rap of the gavel.*

*Unit President:* "On behalf of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of \_\_\_\_\_ I welcome you as Senior members of this Unit. May you enjoy your association with us and always be a loyal member of the American Legion Auxiliary."

*Music*

*Unit President:* "Sergeant at Arms, will you conduct these Senior members to their chairs."

*Sufficient chairs should be reserved in the front of the room if this ceremony takes place before a Unit meeting or any other gathering.*

### **Ceremony for Permanent Retirement for Unserviceable Flags**

It is assumed that prior to this ceremony new National Colors and Unit Standard have been appropriately dedicated. The Unit meeting is opened in the usual manner. The one exception is that Color Bearers will stand beside Color Stands holding Colors at "carry" instead of placing them in Color Stands.

*Sergeant at Arms:* "Sir or Madam President, I wish to present our unserviceable flags for inspection and permanent retirement."

*Unit President:* "Sergeant at Arms, select a detail from among our members present and advance with the flags to be retired."

*Sergeant at Arms selects two members who take National Colors and Unit Standard to be retired - and with the Sergeant at Arms on the right, advance to the Unit President's position.*

*Unit President:* "Sir or Madam Second Vice President, will you inspect these flags?"

*Second Vice President:* “Is the present condition of these flags the result of their usual service as the emblem of our Country and of our Unit?”

*Sergeant at Arms:* “These flags have become faded and worn in the service of \_\_\_\_\_ Unit No. \_\_\_\_\_ American Legion Auxiliary. Department of \_\_\_\_\_.”

*Second Vice President retires.*

*Unit President:* “Sir or Madam First Vice President, will you inspect these flags?”

*First Vice President:* “How did these flags come to their present condition?”

*Sergeant at Arms:* “In the service of memory and tribute to our honored dead of all wars.”

*First Vice President:* “Present them to our Unit President for final inspection and fitting retirement.”

*The Sergeant at Arms commands the detail “about face” so that they face the Unit President.*

*Sergeant at Arms:* “Sir or Madam President, we have the honor to present for inspection and proper retirement our unserviceable flags.”

*Unit President:* “Have these flags been inspected by the First and Second Vice Presidents?”

*Sergeant at Arms:* “They have.”

*President:* “Sir or Madam Second Vice President, what does your inspection show and what do you recommend?”

*Second Vice President:* “Sir or Madam President, these flags have become unserviceable in a worthy cause. They have served our beloved Unit well. I recommend that they be honorably retired from further service.”

*Retirement of Colors*

*President:* “Sir or Madam First Vice President, what does your inspection show and what do you recommend?”

*First Vice President:* “Sir or Madam President, these flags have become faded and worn in a service of tribute and love. I recommend that they be permanently retired and eventually destroyed.”

*Unit President:* "My fellow members -- we have presented here the flag of our Country and the standard of our Unit which have been inspected and condemned as unserviceable. They have reached their present state in a proper service of tribute, memory, and love. Let these flags - faded though they be, but so rich in memories and traditions be permanently retired and destroyed with respectful and honorable rites.

"Comrades two, tried and true, peace to you.  
May your ashes rest where our heroes are,  
And your memory shine like the morning star.  
Comrades two, tried and true, farewell."

*Unit President:* "Sergeant at Arms, retire the flags!"

*Sergeant at Arms gives the command "About face."*

*Unit President:* "Unit Salute!"

*At the command salute, Sergeant at Arms orders "forward march!" Color Bearers --National Colors remain erect at the "carry." Unit standard is dipped in salute as retiring Colors are marched to rear of the hall. Unit Color Bearers then insert their flags in the flag stands and take their places among the Unit members.*

### **Dedication of American Legion Auxiliary Halls, Colors and Memorials**

The members of the Unit shall assemble at the designated place. The President, Chaplain, and the member assigned to receive the gift shall take their places on the platform with the public officials and other guests. The Unit members shall assemble with the public.

Following the program as outlined by the committee, the President, when called upon, shall address the assemblage as follows:

*Unit President:* "Members of Unit No. \_\_\_\_\_ Department of \_\_\_\_\_ American Legion Auxiliary, and friends:

We are gathered today for a grateful and patriotic duty, to dedicate this hall as headquarters for the American Legion Auxiliary, or (these colors, the emblem of the United States, and the emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary) or (this monument, a perpetual memorial to our heroes who died in their country's service). May we again dedicate our organization and

ourselves to the sacred ideals which are here represented, ever remembering that the American Legion Auxiliary's principal service is for God and country."

*Some other phrase designating the purpose of the gathering may be substituted for hall, colors, or monument.*

*Unit President:* "The Chaplain will ask the blessing of God upon these ceremonies."

*Chaplain:* "Let us pray. Father of our Faiths, we stand before You today as loyal citizens of our country, grateful for its splendid heritage. We ask Your blessing upon our great republic. May America ever remain free, mighty, and true to our ideals. Bless the President of the United States and all public servants, that they may walk in justice before You, and that all their acts may contribute to the greater welfare of our people.

We pray for Your blessings upon our Flag, the emblem of heroes. May Your merciful blessing rest upon them, and upon those for whom the war is not over. Teach us to honor them by ever cherishing the ideals for which they fought and died. Inspire us by their example to live that we may die worthy of their sacrifice.

We ask Your blessing upon this service. May it uplift us all to constant devotion to Your teachings, and to the welfare of our country. Amen."

*Unit President:* "Let us stand in silence with bowed heads for thirty seconds in memory of those who have made the supreme sacrifice and who have answered the call of the Great Commander of all Divisions."

*Soft music will add to the solemnity of the occasion.*

*The President shall introduce the donor, or member of the Unit designated to present the hall, colors, or memorial. Presentation Address. The President shall introduce the Past President, or member of Unit designated to accept the hall, colors, or memorial. Acceptance Address. At the conclusion of the program as outlined by the committee, the President shall proceed to dedicate the hall, colors, or memorial.*

### **Dedication of Hall**

*Unit President:* "In the name of \_\_\_\_\_ Unit No. \_\_\_\_\_ Department of \_\_\_\_\_ American Legion Auxiliary, I now dedicate this hall, embodiment of the ideals of Justice, Freedom and Democracy for which the American Legion Auxiliary exists. In time of war and in time of peace may we serve our republic fearlessly and well. May we ever remember the heroes who have gone before and may their memory dwell within this hall and be a constant blessing among us. I dedicate this hall to the objectives of our Unit, and with it I dedicate our Unit to the faithful service of our nation, and to the memory of our heroic dead."

### **Dedication of Colors**

*Unit President:* "Sergeant at Arms, you will display the flags."

*The assemblage shall rise.*

"In the name of \_\_\_\_\_ Unit No. \_\_\_\_\_ Department of \_\_\_\_\_ American Legion Auxiliary, I now dedicate these colors. May they fly permanently as the emblem of freedom. Here is the Flag of our country; safe within its folds is the freedom and loyalty of our nation. Beside it is the banner of the American Legion Auxiliary; on its expanse is the emblem of our organization, the star of service.

I dedicate these colors to the objective of our Unit, community, state, and nation; and with them I dedicate our Unit to the faithful service of our nation. You will join me in the salute to the Flag of our country."

*Salute to Flag.*

### **Dedication of a Memorial**

*Unit President:* "In the name of \_\_\_\_\_ Unit No. \_\_\_\_\_ Department of \_\_\_\_\_ American Legion Auxiliary, I now dedicate this memorial. It is dedicated to the memory of those who fell in the service of their country on land and sea. It is dedicated in the name of those who offered their lives that Justice, Freedom and Democracy might survive. The lives of those who have made the supreme sacrifice are glorious before us, and their deeds are an inspiration. As they served America in time of war, yielding their last full measure of devotion, may we continue to serve America.

I dedicate this memorial to them, and with it I dedicate our Unit to the faithful service of our country and to the preservation of the memory of those who died that Liberty might live."

*At the conclusion of all dedications, benediction shall be given by the Chaplain, followed by the retirement of colors.*

## **Services for the Deceased**

### **Funeral Service**

The American Legion Auxiliary service is non-sectarian. Therefore, it may be varied in accordance with the religious belief of the deceased. The wish of the family of the deceased, and of the officiating pastor, should be respected.

*Music*

*Unit President:* "Death has entered our ranks and members of (name of Unit) of the American Legion Auxiliary are here to pay tribute to one who has been called to the High Command."

*Chaplain:* "Let us pray. God of infinite Love and Mercy, draw near to us in this hour of grief. Open our hearts to Your comforting presence and our eyes to the realities of Eternal Life. May the darkness of death be replaced by the dawn of eternity, and the present pangs of separation to the joys of future reunion."

Grant us, O Father, that our present sorrow may bring us closer to You, and that our hearts may be cleansed and purified by Your grace. We thank You for the understanding that death does not really separate us from the departed. Help us to look beyond the grave and see the glories of that new Life. Help us to know that our loved ones who have passed on are not dead but are living and enjoying Your Grace and Love more than when here upon earth.

O Father, we earnestly pray for our departed member, that this member may enter into all the joys of the life beyond. We pray that by cherishing the memory of this member and by cultivating Your presence, we, too, may grow up into that more perfect Life in which death has no power and sin no part. Amen."

*Alternative prayer.*

"Let us pray. Lord of all life, You have taught us the measure of our days. We are strangers with You and sojourners, as our fathers were. Our days are as a shadow and there is none abiding. But you abide. Your years fail not. You never change. A thousand years in Your sight is but as yesterday when it has passed. The grass withers, the flowers fade, but Your word endures forever. And therein is our help and hope.

You heal the broken hearted and bind up the wounds. Comfort Your people, in their sorrow. May there be no bitterness, no doubt of Your eternal goodness. Have them know that You have not mocked us with this stubborn hope of life eternal; that having created and cared for us You will not desert us to the dust; that You hold us with a love unending; that our dead are in Your keeping; and that You are able to do for them above all that we ask or think.

Until for us also the daybreak and shadows flee away, grant us to so live that our lives may honor the members who have gone before us. Together may we come to that City which You have prepared for them that love You and keep Your commandments. For Your own name's sake we pray, Amen."

*Music*

*Unit President:* "Eternal rest grant unto this member, O Lord."

*Chaplain:* “And let perpetual light shine upon this member.”

*Unit President:* “May this member rest in peace.”

*Chaplain:* “Amen.”

*Unit President:* “May the soul and the souls of all faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.”

*Chaplain:* “Amen.”

#### *Prayer*

*Chaplain:* “Let us pray. O God, our heavenly Father, who ushered Your children into life and recall the soul to Yourself in Your own good time. We thank You for the sweet memory of those dear to us who have been gathered to their fathers. We praise You for all the hallowed influences of our lives and for the rest and peace which they have found with You. May they still be a joy and an inspiration to us; may they quicken us to a more useful life, to higher hopes and greater contentment of spirit, so that in our departure we, too, may leave a memory and example that shall serve as a hope and inspiration to those who follow us.

Send Your consolation, we pray You, to those who today recall the loss of loved ones. Speak peace to hearts that are wounded by recent bereavement. Comfort them with the thought of Your wisdom and justice, which You in Your fatherly love grants to Your trusting children.

In final submission to Your will and in joyous hope of life everlasting, we praise You in whose hands are the souls of all creatures and the spirits of all flesh.”

*Unit President:* “Extolled and hallowed by the name of God throughout the world which He has created, and which He governs according to His righteous will. Just is He in all His ways, and wise are all His decrees. May His kingdom come, and His will be done in all the earth.”

*Chaplain:* “Praised be the Lord of life, the righteous Judge forevermore. Amen.”

#### *Music if desired.*

*Unit President:* “This final moment of visible presence with the one who has left us, is sacred. Let us not remember this one in anguish. Tears or words of sympathy cannot bring back the comfort of those loving hands, or the music of the voice that is stilled. Only solemn pride in this member’s service is theirs who live to remember.

To those who are left behind, we realize how futile are mere words to express our deep and abiding sympathy in their loss. May they feel that their loved one is at rest and in endless peace. Surely there is an after-life for all who have been loyal and true: a life to which light and peace shall come, where the burden shall be lifted and the heartache shall cease, where the love, the hope, and the fulfillment that escapes us here shall be given to us to be ours forever.”

*When there is a service at the home, the President and members may at this point place a poppy or carnation within or upon the coffin.*

*Benediction by Chaplain (if desired).*

*Unit President:*

“Goodbye, till morning come again,  
We part, if part we must, with pain,  
But night is short, and hope is sweet,  
Faith fills our hearts, and wings our feet  
And so we sing the old refrain,  
Goodbye, till morning come again,

Goodbye, till morning come again,  
The thought of death brings weight of pain  
But could we know how short the night  
That falls, and hides them from our sight,  
Our hearts would sing the old refrain,  
Goodbye, till morning come again.”

### **At the Graveside**

*If no previous American Legion Auxiliary service has been held, the service for church chapel or home may be read at the grave, prior to the following committal*

*Unit President:* “Forasmuch as it has pleased God to take unto Himself the soul of our departed member (name), we therefore place these poppies, the memorial flower of the American Legion Auxiliary, in her memory.”

*Chaplain places poppies on casket or in some designated place.*

*Chaplain:* “The Lord bless and keep you. The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace, both now and evermore. Amen.”

### **Memorial Service - Taps**

Any officer or member other than those designated may be assigned to parts in the memorial service.

*Unit President:* "We have come to that time set aside in our program, to pay tribute to the memory of those members of the American Legion Auxiliary who have answered the call of the Supreme Commander during the past year. The rich blessings of their lives of Service to God and Country inspire us to rededicate ourselves anew in their memory."

*Chaplain:* "Many years ago a group of women had a dream. They envisioned the formation of an organization that could render service to others - an organization to give a hand of love and comfort to the wife, the mother or the orphan of our deceased veterans, and to those in sickness. Those valiant women, with the true spirit and ambition of pioneers, surged forward to great heights and their dreams became a reality, The American Legion Auxiliary. This organization is founded on the sacred principles that there is no rank among us; no distinction as to color, race, or creed, but rather the wish, the desire, and the firm determination to be of service to others. Today we embrace all spouses in service to our veterans, military, and their families. As we observe a quiet moment to pay tribute, by word and song, to the memory of those beloved members whom Our Heavenly Father, in His Infinite wisdom hath called Home; those whose lives have reflected much glory for us; we believe it is a time for rededicating our services and ourselves for 'God and Country.' It is time for remembering that death is not the end, rather it is the beginning of a new life to be lived in the presence of our Lord.

As we assume the unfinished tasks of these departed members, may we consecrate that task as a living memorial within ourselves; a firm determination to so live our lives that our priceless heritage, won for us at so great a cost, shall be ours to uphold, to defend, and to pass along to those who shall follow in our footsteps."

*Memorial Chairman:*

"There comes a time for all of us, when we must say goodbye,  
But faith and hope and love and trust can never, never die;  
Although the curtain falls at last, is that a cause to grieve?  
The future's fairer than the past if only we believe  
And trust in God's eternal care. So when the Master calls,  
Let's say that life is still more fair, although the curtain falls."

*An inspirational song may be sung.*

*Chaplain:*

"A child or loved one to us loaned  
Was ever by the Father owned.

Allotted time they're ours to keep  
When God reclaims, we'll trust, not weep.

Deep within our hearts will remain the sainted memory of those members whose names shall be engraved on the pages of our Book of Memories, as we honor them today."

*Unit Chaplain reads the names of all deceased Unit Members. Deposits white and colored flowers in their memory.*

*Gold Star Mothers:*

"I place this flower in honor of those members whose lives had been saddened by the sacrifice of War, but whose Loyalty and Devotion to the American Legion Auxiliary, in order that they might be of service to others, has ever been an inspiration, a guiding light to all. We pay homage to their memory. May they live together in Faith and Love and with the Hope of Divine Blessing, which is immortality."

*Place flowers for deceased Gold Star Mothers.*

*Junior Members:*

"She is not dead--the child of our affection  
But gone unto that school  
Where she no longer needs our poor protection.  
But day after day we think of what she's doing  
In those bright realms of air;  
Year after year, her meager steps pursuing,  
Behold Her, grown more fair.

To those Junior members, Our Seeds of Destiny, whom we have loved and lost so soon, and who hold in their hands the future of the American Legion Auxiliary, we lovingly place these flowers."

*To Our Membership:*

"To the memory of those members, numbering including our Past Unit Presidents who have been mourned by the Unit this year, we bow in tribute. To those members unrecorded but who leave a vacant chair at their family fireside and whose passing is known to God, we reverently add these flowers."

*Chaplain:* "God's beautiful handiwork, the blossoms of Youth and Life are so closely associated with our organization and with our membership, that we leave these flowers, knowing that they

too, as all material things do, shall wither and die but their fragrance shall linger forever in our memory.”

*They Softly Walk*  
by Hugh Robert Orr

They are not gone who pass  
Beyond the clasp of hand,  
Out from the strong embrace.  
They are but come so close  
We need not grope with hands,  
Nor look to see, nor try  
To catch the sound of feet.  
They have put off their shoes  
Softly to walk by day  
Within our thoughts, to tread  
At night our dream-led paths  
Of sleep.

They are not lost who find  
The sunset gate, the goal  
Of all their faithful years.  
Not lost are they who reach  
The summit of their climb,  
The peak above the clouds  
And storms. They are not lost  
Who find the light of sun  
And stars and God.

They are not dead who live  
In hearts they leave behind.  
In those whom they have blessed  
They live a life again,  
And shall live through the years  
Eternal life, and grow  
Each day more beautiful  
As time declares their good,  
Forgets the rest, and proves  
Their immortality.

*Solo (“The Lord’s Prayer” or any appropriate solo is suggested.)*

*Unit President:* “The Chaplain will offer prayer.”

*The President shall give three raps of the gavel and the members shall rise.*

*Chaplain:* “Now that they have gone, we can well believe that a voice is saying: ‘Well done, Thou good and Faithful Servant, Enter Thou into the Joy of Thy Lord.’ To all of these members who by their courage, their unselfishness and their vision have helped so largely down through the years to make America great, we solemnly bow our heads in Prayer.

O Gracious Father, we lift our voice to You, to thank You for continuing to watch over us in our hour of trial, ever ready to direct and guide our faltering steps. We thank You for the rich experiences and for the many friendships enjoyed by Your children here. We Thank You for the knowledge that in their passing they do not tread the Valley of Shadow alone, that always that Giver of Gifts, the Great Comforter is present as they enter that Eternal Haven of Rest.

Grant, O Lord, continued Peace to the souls of our departed members and give us understanding and appreciative hearts. Help us to bequeath added blessings to the generations yet to be. Lead us and guide us evermore by the teachings of Your goodness. As we witness Your handiwork in the heavens and the beauties about us, we feel Your presence ever near. Grant that Your spirit may continue to dwell in the hearts of the American Legion Auxiliary. Let us not fail those whom we honor by ceasing to do good, or to turn from Your guiding hand.

We know, O Lord, Your will be done. Amen.”

*Taps, followed by Echo of Taps.*

*One rap of the gavel and the members shall be seated.*

### **Memorial Service for Auxiliary Members - Short Form**

*Music (To be selected)*

*Prayer by Chaplain*

*Unit President:* “Death has entered our ranks and we pause to pay tribute to those of our members who have passed to the Great Beyond during the past year.

We shall keep in hallowed memory the lives of these members whom we have loved and ‘lost awhile.’ We shall strive to pattern our lives after their zeal for patriotism and their devotion to duty, as we rededicate ourselves to the unfinished work which their hands began.”

*As each name is called, a candle is lighted, or a white flower placed in a low bowl while soft music is played.*

Memorial Chairman:

“In God’s great garden of our lives,  
Some rain is sure to fall,  
But after that He sends the sun  
To triumph over all  
And so when sorrow comes to us  
And teardrops cloud our day  
He sends us strength to bear our load  
And light to guide our way.”

*Unit President:* “The Chaplain will offer prayer.”

*Three raps of the gavel for membership to stand.*

*Chaplain:* “Let us pray. We give thanks for the good examples of all those Your servants who, having finished their course in faith, do now rest from their labors. Have us to know that we shall be remembered for what we have done for others, not what others have done for us. Each one of us exerts an influence upon those with whom we come in contact. As we go along the years, a single act of advice, encouragement, or caution, may decide a question of usefulness and happiness for another. O God, whose presence is everywhere and whose mercy never fails, we magnify You for Your gifts, especially for the promise of the peace which passes all understanding. We commit ourselves to You, Amen.”

*Taps or Solo*

*One rap of the gavel for members to be seated.*

## **Commemorative Services**

### **Draping the Charter**

When a Unit is deprived of one of its members by death, it is customary to drape the Unit charter with black crepe during the period of mourning. The following ceremony is suggested for the draping of the charter.

*Unit President:* “We have assembled here at the call of our Maker who has taken from us one of our beloved leaders. We have come to give, by simple token, official expression of the grief of the Unit of \_\_\_\_\_. Let us first bow our heads in prayer.”

*Chaplain:* (Brief prayer) “Almighty God, who has dominion over life and death, grant to us the grace to remember with love and reverence our valiant and honored departed Member

(Members). Grant peace and eternal rest to those who have gone before us and make us ready for that last hour. Strengthen and console those in sorrow and bestow upon us Your everlasting blessing. Amen.”

*Unit President:* “We stand before the document which gives our Unit life and being. Under its authority years of devoted service were given by \_\_\_\_\_, who contributed greatly to its significance, whose service is ended but the results will go on and on for our American Legion Auxiliary and for God and the country which the Auxiliary serves.

It is therefore fitting that about our charter we should drape this crepe of black, an expression of the sorrow that is in our hearts and of the mourning of the Unit of over its great loss.”

*(Drapes the charter)*

“Now we will ask God’s blessing for our departed friend and co-worker, then go silently to carry forward the task.”

*Chaplain:* (Brief concluding prayer)

### **Undraping of Unit Charter**

The undraping of the Unit Charter will occur at the next regular monthly meeting unless another member passes on, in which case the Charter will remain draped until at least thirty (30) days have passed or until the next regular monthly meeting.

*President:* We have assembled here to acknowledge the conclusion of our grieving at the loss of a fellow member. Though we move forward from our grief, we continue to remember and celebrate the life of \_\_\_\_\_. We further acknowledge that we will continue to honor \_\_\_\_\_ in our continued mission to support and defend our nation and our veterans.

*Chaplain:* Let us bow our heads. Almighty God, we thank You for the time we had with \_\_\_\_\_. We cherish the memories and ask for the peace that rests with You. We ask that You guide us in our continued service to our nation and our veterans. AMEN.

### **POW/MIA Remembrance Service**

(The following is a “suggested” service to be used at American Legion Auxiliary meetings, banquets, luncheons, or memorial gatherings in conjunction with the POW/MIA flag draped over an empty chair...this service can be adopted as is, or modified to whatever is appropriate for your own preferred use.)

“Those who have served and those currently serving in the uniformed services of the United States, are ever mindful that the sweetness of enduring peace has always been tainted by the

bitterness of personal sacrifice. We are compelled to never forget that while we enjoy our daily pleasures, there are others who have endured and my still be enduring the agonies of pain, deprivation, and imprisonment.

Before we begin our activities, we pause to recognize our POWs and MIAs.

We call your attention to the small table, which occupies a place of dignity and honor. It is set for one symbolizing the fact that members of our armed forces are missing from our ranks. They are referred to as POWs and MIAs.

We call them comrades. They are unable to be with their loved ones and families, so we join together to pay humble tribute to them, and to bear witness to their continued absence.

The table is small, symbolizing the frailty of one prisoner, alone against his or her suppressors.

The tablecloth is white, symbolic of the purity of their intentions to respond to their Country's call to arms.

The single rose in the vase, signifies the blood they may have shed in sacrifice to ensure the freedom of our beloved United States of America. This rose also reminds us of the family and friends of our missing comrades who keep faith, while awaiting their return.

A slice of lemon on the plate reminds us of their bitter fate.

The salt sprinkled on the plate reminds us of the countless fallen tears of families as they wait.

The glass is inverted, they cannot toast with us at this time.

The chair is empty. They are NOT here.

The candle is reminiscent of the light of hope, which lives in our hearts to illuminate their way home, away from their captors, to open arms of a grateful nation.

The American Flag reminds us that many of them may never return - and have paid the supreme sacrifice to insure our freedom.

Let us pray to the Supreme Commander that all of our comrades will soon be back within our ranks.

Let us remember—and never forget their sacrifice.

May God forever watch over them and protect them and their families.”

### *Prayer*

“Our Heavenly Father, we deem this a fitting time to pay our respects to our departed comrades. As we stand with bowed heads in reverence to them, let us remember the good deeds they accomplished. Let us revere them, as good soldiers who fought the good fight in a just cause, let us silently pray for peace, the peace that passes all understanding. And let us in mind and soul consecrate our hearts and lives to the real America, the land of the free and the home of the brave, the America worth fighting for. As we stand in silence to our departed comrades, may we sincerely say, ‘May their souls rest in peace.’ Let us also remember the POWs and MIAs still unaccounted for from the Wars and Conflicts. Amen.”

### *Alternative Prayer*

“O Lord, God, we pray for our prisoners of war. Comfort them, we pray, in their isolation from their homes and loved ones; supply their needs and protect them from want and deprivation; strengthen and sustain them day after day that they may face discouragement with courage and hardship with resolution. Grant that they may find patience to endure and peace in the knowledge of Your continuing presence.

Most importantly, O Lord, we earnestly plead for their release and safe return. And grant to us the wisdom and the restraint to treat such prisoners as we may now detain in the manner in which we hope and pray our military men and women are being held in foreign lands. This we pray in Your name. Amen.”

## APPENDIX

### Prayers for Special Occasions

#### **Grace at Meals**

We thank Thee, O Lord, for the food given us this day, and we pray that it may strengthen and sustain us in body and mind to serve Thee by doing our daily tasks faithfully and well. Grant that we may be ever grateful for all Thy blessings to us. Amen.

Accept our thanks, O Heavenly Father, for all the expressions of Thy goodness and mercy toward us. We thank Thee for this food received from Thy bounty. May Thy protecting care and watchfulness be over each of us as we carry on for God and country. Amen.

Heavenly Father, bless, we pray, this food which Thou hast provided for us. Remember with Thy blessing all who are dear to us by the ties of kinship and friendship. We commend to Thy tender care our loved ones far away. Teach us ever to be thankful to Thee for health and strength, for life, for home and its comforts, and for our opportunities for service to others. Forgive us our wrongs and watch over us. Amen.

Give us grace to be grateful for the blessings, which Thou hast so bountifully spread before us this day. Amen.

We thank Thee, O Lord, for this food and all the blessings so generously provided. Amen.

#### **Veterans Day/Thanksgiving**

Lord, thank you for your everyday gifts to us. We have so much to be thankful for, not just on Thanksgiving Day, but each new day that you give us. We give you our thanks, Lord. Our prayers of Thanksgiving join those of our forefathers. God, you know the words we so often speak; but more than that, you know the secrets of our hearts. We thank you for this day. Lord, we pray for peace in the world. We thank you for people who stand for truth and that which is right. Give your blessing, Lord, to our veterans who have given so much for our freedom. Remember those who have given the supreme sacrifice for we pray they will never be forgotten. Be with us, we pray. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father we thank Thee for this day with its opportunities for service. We thank Thee for sustenance and Thy guiding hand - for friends, companions and loved ones. Send Thy blessing upon our dear ones wherever they may be. To those in sorrow, reveal unto them the comfort of Thy tender mercy. Help us all to be more constant in our praise and obedience to Thee. Amen.

We acknowledge our gratitude to Thee, Our Father, for all good gifts. May we prove by our use of them that Thy trust has been well bestowed. May we be ever constant and faithful in our

service of mercy, comfort and cheer to those veterans whose bodies and minds have been maimed in battle, to the needy families, the widows and orphans, and all who in any way have suffered or are now suffering from the horrors of war. May our ministrations to them and our activities on their behalf always be pleasing to Thee and be guided by Thy holy will. Amen.

### **Christmas**

Our Heavenly Father, on this holy Christmas Day, our hearts are filled with solemn joy and gratitude for the gift of the Savior, Christ the Lord. For the fullness of His grace, and for His redeeming love, we humbly join in ceaseless praise and thanksgiving.

In Thy infinite mercy, Our Father, grant to us and to all others, the spirit of kindness, goodwill, and charity. Hasten the day when men shall again hear the angel chorus paying homage to Thee, the Prince of Peace, singing again the glad tidings "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of good will." Amen.

We beseech Thee, O God, that we, who rejoice in celebrating the nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, may never cease to be grateful to Thee for Thy divine gift. May our actions at all times be directed toward good works and helpful ministrations which are pleasing to Thee.

Bless us all, we earnestly pray; gladden our hearts anew with the joyful tidings of this holy day. Let the day soon dawn when men shall permit Thy love to right every wrong, and when truth and justice and love shall overrule all the affairs of men, that here and everywhere there shall prevail the glorious message of the first Christmas morning "Peace on earth to men of good will" through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### **The New Year**

Lord, as we begin a new year, let us resolve to keep a promise, seek out a forgotten friend, listen, laugh, brighten the heart of a child, encourage the young, appreciate our elders, express our gratitude, take pleasure in the beauty and wonder of life, and speak your love to others.

God, guide us in the new year to grow closer together in our families, in our Units, in our world. Let us always strive to bring peace to the world. Let us live each day to the fullest. For all the blessings of the year, we give you thanks, God. Amen.

### **Easter**

We thank Thee, O God, for the day in which life and immortality were brought to light through the resurrection of our blessed Lord from the dead. Evermore in heart and mind, we shall sing praises of joy to Him and we shall show our love for Him by our thoughts, words and deeds, our helpful service to others, and faithful performance of all our obligations. We earnestly ask Thee to bless and preserve all whom we love; comfort and aid all in trouble and distress. We offer our thanksgiving for all graces and favors we have received in the name of Him Who rose triumphant from the dead. Amen.

On this glorious day, O Lord, our hearts are raised to Thee in joy and gladness as we celebrate the resurrection of Thy Son from the dead. May His loving kindness and His blessings rest on us and on our dear ones. Grant us, O Lord, that our devotion to Thee may reflect our happiness at this glorious season and may we all enjoy sweet fulfillment of the promise of this day. We pray that love of Christ, the Risen King, may abide in our hearts forevermore and fill us with the joyousness and peace of Eastertide. Amen.

### **Memorial Service Prayer**

Almighty God, grant to us the grace to remember with love and reverence our dear departed members. Grant peace and eternal rest to those who have gone before us. We ask for consolation for those who sorrow, and that you bestow upon us your everlasting blessing. We are thankful for the lives whom we have remembered here today. May their memory serve as an inspiration to us. Be with us and bless us, we pray. Amen.

### **Memorial Day**

Dear God, as we approach Memorial Day, may we honor and remember those who died that we might live in freedom. We remember our departed loved ones gone on before. Those that we honor will be a part of our lives forever. O God, we are mindful of your great love for us. We are thankful for that love. We praise you for the blessings of love and friendship for our families and our homes. Amen.

God, be with us and be our guide in time of need. We ask your support in all we do. Help us to reach out to one another, to communicate and show real care for others. Help us to be open to new experiences of personal growth and challenge. May we be alert to the opportunities before us each day. Accept our thanks, God, for the leaders of our Auxiliary for their work this year, and for their leadership. As they have worked for God and Country, we give them our grateful thanks. Amen.

Accept, our Heavenly Father, our thanks and praise for all that you have done for us. We thank you for the beauty of this world, for the wonder of life, and the faithfulness of your love. May you, our members, bring joy and happiness to others through your smile, a warm hand clasp and kindly deeds. Be with us today and give us hope. Amen.

### **Fourth of July**

O God, we remember the courage and determination of our founding fathers. We remember the brave patriotic men and women who gave so much for us. We thank them that we are a free nation and a free people. It is through them that we carry forward the ideals of Justice, Freedom and Democracy. We pray for our elected officials, for sound government and just laws. Lord, make us ever proud to be Americans. We ask that you would rekindle the flame of compassion within us so that we might show real care for our fellowman. Teach us to be sensitive to the

needs of others. Grant that as Americans and as Legion Family, we may continue to help our veterans and those in need. Be with us and guide us, we pray. Amen.

As we work in our great organization, help us look beyond the outward appearances to the person underneath. Teach us to love and accept them. Forgive our critical thoughts and harsh words; replace our impatience with your love and forgiveness. Open our eyes to the needs of the world and fill our hearts with love. Make us sensitive to the issues of poverty; racial, sexual and age discrimination; war and peace; pollution and environment. O God, help us to recognize and grasp the opportunities for service that each one of us might make a difference. Let us reach out and touch someone with a helping hand. Help us to never lose sight of your continual guidance in our lives as we work for our fellowman. Amen.

### **Prayer for Installation**

O God, this is the beginning of a new year of work in our beloved American Legion Auxiliary. Let us speak words of encouragement to our newly elected officers. Be with them, God, as they work to lead us in working on all the good programs we hold so important. Remember each one of our members, for they are needed in their own Units for the work in their communities. Let us all work for God and Country together in harmony and love. Dear God, teach us to think in wisdom and act in love and caring for others. Amen.

### **Gift Shop Opening**

O God, we come with grateful thanks today for all those Unit members who are represented here in these lovely gifts for others. Our members have given their time and effort to provide this beautiful Christmas Gift Shop for our hospitalized veterans and their families. Love and care are exemplified by these members who serve so willingly to provide a happier Christmas for the veterans and their loved ones. We thank you, Father, for the joy they bring. Let us remember the lonesome and often forgotten individuals and give them the joy of packages, visitors, and carols. O God, we wish that we could all keep the same joy of this day overflowing all year. Keep our hearts joyful, God, we pray. Amen.

### **Benedictions**

Dear Heavenly Father, send us away tonight in harmony, peace and good will to spread the spirit of our love for our country. Be with us and guide us in our labor for our fellowman. Amen.

God, we ask your presence with each of us as we begin our journeys to our homes, that we may have a safe return. Be with us until we meet again. Amen.

Accept our praise, O Lord, for the blessings of this day and hour. Give us, we pray, a willing attitude and grateful hearts. Amen.

Grant us that as Americans and Auxiliary members we may continue to help our veterans and those in need. We thank you for these people assembled here and pray you will bless their many works. Be with us, we pray. Amen.

### **Old Irish Verse**

May the road rise up to meet you.  
May the wind always be at your back.  
May the sun shine warm upon your face,  
And rains fall soft upon your fields.  
And until we meet again,  
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.  
Amen.

### **Gold Star Mothers or Members**

*(Teas or social gatherings)*

Dear Heavenly Father, we are gathered here this day to honor the Gold Star Mothers (or members) of this community - women who have given a loved one in our country's defense. Their sacrifice has been great. Keep them always under Thy loving care and tender mercy. May their courageous spirit and unselfish patriotism inspire us to greater service for our beloved country and for Thee. May the beauty and luster of the Gold Star which they so proudly wear ever remain a challenging symbol to us, and, as their loved ones gave their "last full measure of devotion" to preserve the ideals of free America, may we, in grateful remembrance, ever remain steadfast in our devotion to Thee, O Lord, and may the time be not far distant when, throughout the world, there may be righteousness and peace. Amen.

Our Father Who art in Heaven, we thank Thee for the opportunity of meeting here this day, and especially that we may pay reverent tribute to these Gold Star mothers (or members) whose loved ones died for us in war's heavy toll. Let us always honor the memory of these brave men and women and all of our heroic dead, for their supreme service and their incomparable sacrifice. Our Father, may we work side by side, serving constructively for the security and progress of America, with these valiant women over whose hearts the Gold Star gleams as an evidence of their own faith, their courage and their high spirit of patriotic devotion. Very earnestly do we pray for the hastening of the day when, among all peoples of the earth, Thy Kingdom will come, Thy will be done, and all the earth shall seek refuge in Thee. Amen.

### **Junior Graduation**

Our Heavenly Father, we ask Thy blessing on these Junior members who are now being received into our Senior group. May the high and lofty principles and ideals for which our organization stands inspire them and strengthen them to fulfill all their obligations and duties as loyal patriotic American citizens, obedient to Thy will at all times. May they be true leaders among their friends and associates and thus reflect the training and dignity which membership

in our organization affords them. Receive them under Thy loving care and protection now and forevermore. Amen.

Almighty God, as these Junior girls assume the duties of Senior membership, may they have more firmly implanted in their minds and hearts the unselfish and courageous service and sacrifice of a loved one in our country's defense which has earned for them this coveted privilege of membership in our organization. May they always remain loyal to God and country, and responsive to whatever obligations or duties may devolve upon them, at all times revealing by their thoughts, words and actions a constant devotion to Thy teachings as expressed in the Golden Rule. Amen.

### **Executive Committee Meeting**

Our Heavenly Father, we ask that Thy blessing may rest upon us as we gather here for this meeting. May our deliberations have Thy divine guidance, and may we now and in the days to come rededicate our organization and ourselves to the advancement of our sacred ideals, ever remembering that the American Legion Auxiliary's principal service is for God and country. Direct us so that we may perform our duties faithfully and efficiently; and abundantly bless us all, forevermore. Amen.

We thank thee, O God, that we are privileged to come together for this Executive Committee meeting. Direct our thoughts and our deliberations so that we may exhibit fair judgment and understanding of the matters submitted and trials of a world at war, endow us with fortitude, courage, and faith. Bless those gone away from our homes into the service of our country. Be their companion in danger, their solace in pain, and at death, grant them eternal rest in Thy heavenly Kingdom. Continue to surround us all with Thy loving care. Amen.

### **Legion Birthday**

*(for joint observance of Unit and Post)*

Heavenly Father, bless us as we are gathered here tonight to celebrate the anniversary of the birthday of The American Legion, that great organization which has continued to serve America for the past years. We thank Thee for the opportunity which has been given to the American Legion Auxiliary to have a part in everything which The American Legion has done and in sharing its endeavors. Grant that the patriotic enthusiasm which inspired these Legionnaires to serve our country in time of war may continue to guide their activities at all times, and that the principles of Justice, Freedom, Loyalty and Democracy maybe preserved for a happy and secure America. Bless all of our effort for God and country, and may we continue to be mutually helpful to each other. Amen.

Almighty God, we thank Thee for permitting us to gather here for the purpose of celebrating the anniversary of the founding of The American Legion. We thank Thee for granting to the mothers, spouses, sisters, daughters, granddaughters, and grandmothers of these men and women the opportunity to share their unselfish program of service consecrated to God and

country. Deepen our earnestness and devotion to the high ideals for which our two organizations stand. May our numbers be increased and may we, as members of these two great patriotic organizations, with Thy help, rededicate ourselves anew to our work. Lead us fearlessly, courageously, and nobly, increasing our usefulness and tempering our work with constant prayer for peace in our hearts. Amen.

### **Dedication of Honor Roll**

*(if Unit is asked to have a part in the ceremony)*

O God, bless those whose names appear upon this Honor Roll and all who have gone from our homes and hearts into the service of our country. Grant to them patience in the long wait, hope in the dark hours, steadiness in victory and loyalty in defeat. We thank Thee for the unselfish devotion of those who have sacrificed their lives that we might enjoy the liberties for which our forefathers fought. Especially, God, let Thy blessing abide this day upon those of us whose lot it is to be at home in time of war. Teach all the ancient wisdom that, "They also serve who only stand and wait." Amen.

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, we ask that Thy blessing may be bestowed upon those whose names appear on this Honor Roll, who have relinquished home and happiness and all that they hold dear, and accepted the call to service so that Justice, Freedom and Democracy might survive, and so that the name and fame of this land we love may be kept unblemished. O God, keep them in Thy gracious care wherever they go and wherever duty calls them, and, if it be Thy will, bring them safely home. May Thy merciful blessing rest upon those departed heroes who have answered the last summons. Amen.

Strengthen our devotion to Thy teachings and make us worthy of the citizenship which these young people are fighting to maintain. Bless those in authority in our city, state, and nation with wisdom to know and strength to do their duties honestly and well. Hear our prayer, Our Father, help us and bless us. Amen.

### **The War Bereaved**

Almighty God, sustain with Thy healing power all those whose loved ones have given their lives in the service of our country. Redeem, we pray Thee, the pain of their bereavement, that knowing their loss to be the price of our freedom, they may remember the gratitude of the nation for which they gave so costly a sacrifice. And grant that we may highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, and that out of the agony of the present hour there may arise a new and better world in which Thy will shall rule. Amen.

### **Prayer in Wartime**

O God, our refuge and our strength, we beseech Thee to guide and protect our nation in the fiery trial of war. Grant us true repentance, and take away the offenses of our people, that with clean hands and pure hearts we may go forward in Thy name. Save us from hatred, cruelty, and malice. Imbue our leaders with courage and wisdom. Strengthen and protect our defenders by

land, by sea, and by air, and suffer no dishonor to stain our arms. Safeguard and multiply the ministries of mercy; heal the wounded, receive the dying, comfort the bereaved. Bless those who labor in field and factory, in office and home, for our country's welfare. Make a speedy end of tyrannies in the earth and deliver the desolate and oppressed of all nations. Hasten the advent of a righteous peace, and with great might establish Thy Kingdom. Amen.

**Prayer for Peace**

God, make me an instrument of thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy. O, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.