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### Gardner-Webb Campus Honors Military During Veteran's Day Prayer Service

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**VETERAN'S DAY**

## Gardner-Webb Campus Honors Military During Veteran's Day Prayer Service

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON NOVEMBER 11, 2021



### Speaker, Adjunct and Air Force Veteran Jim Rennie, Issues Challenge to Spend Time with Veterans

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—The Gardner-Webb University campus and community celebrated Veteran's Day, Nov. 11, with a prayer service at 11 a.m. in Dover Chapel. In his opening remarks, President Dr. William Downs noted the significance of the date: "At the 11th hour, on the 11th day, in the 11th month in the year 1918, fighting ended in what we now know as World War I. The United States and its allies emerged victorious in the so-called great war, a war that was supposed to end all wars. And then a year later, American president Woodrow Wilson proclaimed Nov. 11 as Armistice day, a day that would—in his words—be an opportunity for Americans to show their solemn pride in the heroism of those who died... and with gratitude for the victory."

Later in 1954, Dwight Eisenhower established Nov. 11 as a national holiday and renamed the occasion Veteran's Day.

The speaker, Jim Rennie, an adjunct professor and veteran of the U.S. Air Force, presented "A Veteran's Reflection." Using the word VET as an acronym, he talked about veteran's Values, Experience and Treasures. He explained that the purpose of military training is to instill core values, and these core values provide the basis for soldiers to make decisions in situations they experience.



- ▲ Speaker, Jim Rennie, a U.S. Air Force veteran and Gardner-Webb adjunct professor, shows a replica of a billboard his son had made for him when he retired.
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Rennie noted that people may think treasures are the items veterans pick up in their travels, but “the real treasures are the friends that you meet along the way, the family that you left behind, and the treasures that are given to you by good friends and family,” he said, while recognizing the sacrifices also made by military families. “I would submit the true heroes in this entire discussion are the spouses and family members.”

As he thanked the University for hosting the Veteran’s Day Service, Rennie challenged participants to do more to observe the day. “I view Veteran’s Day as a participation sport,” he explained. “This isn’t something that you watch on TV and not get involved in. I think we should seek out people who have served in the military and just ask them some basic questions and spend some time with them. I found a quote from George Washington. This is a very somber quote and I think it shows the importance of this day. ‘The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional as to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their nation.’”

The service began with Gardner-Webb Army ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps) presenting the colors. Gardner-Webb music major, trumpeter Garrett Chitwood, played the national anthem, and GWU Police Chief Barry Johnson, a veteran of the U.S. Coast Guard, led the pledge of allegiance to the American flag. Vice President of Advancement, Nate Evans, a veteran of the U.S. Air Force, gave the Old Testament Reading from Micah 6, and Director of Enrollment-Marketing Jonathan Hooks, a veteran of the U.S. Army, gave the New Testament reading from Galatians 5.

After Rennie’s remarks, the GWU Concert Choir under the direction of Dr. Josh Cheney sang “America the Beautiful,” and Tracy Jessup, vice president for Christian Life and Service and senior minister to the University, gave the benediction.



*Gardner-Webb University is North Carolina's recognized leader in private, Christian higher education. A Carnegie-Classified Doctoral/Professional University, GWU is home to six professional schools, 14 academic departments, more than 80 undergraduate and graduate majors, and a world-class faculty. Located on a beautiful 225-acre campus in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb prepares graduates to impact their chosen professions, equips them with the skills to advance the frontiers of knowledge, and inspires them to make a positive and lasting difference in the lives of others. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.*