



## **VBS Missions Spotlight: The Praetorian Project Leader Guide**

The Praetorian Project has produced 5 short videos to help introduce kids and VBS leaders to this military community church planting ministry.

### **Videos:**

Find them online at: [www.praetorianproject.org/VBS-download](http://www.praetorianproject.org/VBS-download)

Over the course of 5 videos, kids will learn what the Praetorian Project is, what's unique about military families, how many of the Praetorian Project pastors are veteran military service members, and what inspires people to give their lives to mission work for the sake of the Gospel.

### **From our Executive Director:**

Next in this document, you'll find a letter from our Executive Director, Brian O'Day, where he highlights the importance of your partnership in the work of The Praetorian Project.

### **Supplemental Questions:**

Included below are informational pages to go along with each day's video. Each day includes:

- A written description of that day's video.
- Discussion questions with example answers.
- Three ways to pray each day based on the video topic.
- A key Bible verse to learn related to the video topic.

Use these supplemental pages however best suits your church's needs!

### **Thank you so much for supporting the Praetorian Project!**

Jen Huntley  
Communications Director



#### **CONTACT.**

[communications@praetorianproject.org](mailto:communications@praetorianproject.org)



#### **WEBSITE.**

[praetorianproject.org](http://praetorianproject.org)



## Dear friends of the Praetorian Project,

My name is Brian O'Day. I am a veteran US Marine, one of the pastors of Pillar Church of Jacksonville (NC), and I have the privilege of serving as the Executive Director of the Praetorian Project.

Through this VBS video journey, you will meet just a few of our Veteran pastors who have been "Called To Serve Twice"—first as military service members, and then as ministers of the Gospel. Your VBS children will learn that military families live a unique and transient lifestyle, face frequent relocations, deployments, and all the challenges that come with serving in the military. These realities create some obstacles but also great opportunities for Gospel impact. At the Praetorian Project, we believe God has uniquely positioned us to minister to this community through church planting that follows the patterns of military family movement.

Because of the faithful generosity of supporters like you, we've been able to:

- Plant and sustain churches across the United States and overseas that provide biblical teaching, authentic community, and ongoing discipleship in military communities.
- Train and send church planters, pastors, and lay leaders who are uniquely equipped to serve and shepherd military families.
- Offer support to military families as they move from one duty station to another, helping them stay connected to a healthy local church.
- Provide resources, counseling, and biblical guidance to service members and their families navigating the pressures of military life.
- Create connection and brotherhood for Praetorian Project pastors to support and encourage one another in ministry.

We cannot do this alone. Your involvement—whether through prayer, connection, or financial support—makes this mission possible. Here are a few ways you can support the Praetorian Project:

1. **Pray** – Pray for our pastors, church planters, and military families. Ask God to strengthen our churches, provide open doors for ministry, and raise up new leaders.
2. **Connect** – Stay in the loop with what God is doing by subscribing to our monthly email newsletter and following us on social media. Your encouragement and advocacy help spread the word!
  - *Newsletter Sign-up:* [praetorianproject.org/connect](http://praetorianproject.org/connect)
  - *Social Media:* The Praetorian Project on Facebook and YouTube
3. **Give** – Your financial support fuels leadership development, pastoral encouragement, strategic expansion, and more. Whether it's a one-time gift or ongoing monthly support, every dollar helps advance the mission.
  - *Give here:* [www.praetorianproject.org/give](http://www.praetorianproject.org/give)

We believe God is using the Praetorian Project to bring the good news of the Gospel to military service members around the globe. I invite you to join us in this work, and I thank you for your partnership in the Gospel.

I would love to connect with someone from your church to hear how this process went at your VBS and get to know you better!

## For Christ and His Church,

Brian O'Day  
Executive Director



### CONTACT.

[brian@praetorianproject.org](mailto:brian@praetorianproject.org)



### WEBSITE.

[praetorianproject.org](http://praetorianproject.org)



## Day 1: The Marines and Intentional Discipleship

### Day 1 Video: Trace Martinez

In this video, we meet Pastor Trace Martinez. Trace is a Marine veteran and now serves as the pastor of Pillar Church of Oceanside in California, near Camp Pendleton. He shares how God called him from serving in the Marine Corps to serving in ministry, helping military members and their families grow strong in their faith and live on mission wherever they go.

#### What is the mission of the Praetorian Project?

The Praetorian Project is a family of churches located in military communities. These churches work together to: Welcome military families, help them grow in their faith, equip them to share the gospel, and send them out to their next assignment. It's a mission of loving, training, and sending time and time again.

#### What does it mean to "disciple" someone?

Discipleship means helping someone learn how to follow Jesus in their everyday life. It's not just knowing about Jesus—it's learning how to trust Him, obey Him, and love others like He does.

Pastor Trace explains that Marines only stay in Oceanside for a short time before moving to a new place. Because of that, his church focuses on helping people grow in their faith quickly and deeply. They want every person to be ready to follow Jesus no matter where they go next.

#### How can you live on mission?

Pastor Trace reminds us that kids have a mission too! You can grow as a disciple of Jesus by: Praying and talking to God, learning from the Bible, and loving and helping the people around you. You don't have to wait to grow up to live on mission—God can use you right where you are!

### How can you pray?

1. Pray for military families who are learning to follow Jesus and are moving to a new place.
2. Pray for churches like Pillar Oceanside as they teach and disciple people quickly.
3. Pray that Christians in the military would boldly share their faith wherever they go.

## Key Verse

### Philippians 1:12-13

"Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole Praetorian guard and to everyone else..." (NASB)

(The name "Praetorian Project" is inspired by Philippians 1:12-13)



## Day 2: The Navy and Movement as Mission

### Day 2 Video: Jonathan Rivera

In this video, we meet Pastor Jonathan Rivera. Jonathan is a Navy veteran who served for 27 years and now pastors Pillar Church of Norfolk in Virginia. He shares how God used his time in the Navy to send him all over the world to share the gospel—and how that mission continues today.

#### How does God use movement for mission?

Pastor Jonathan spent many years traveling on ships and living in different places. Everywhere he went, he had the opportunity to tell people about Jesus.

In the military, people are often sent to new places. But instead of seeing that as a problem, it can be a mission! God uses movement to bring the gospel to people all over the world.

#### How are military members sent out as missionaries?

At Pillar Church of Norfolk, many service members are only there for a few years before moving again.

The church's mission is to:

- Teach them to follow Jesus
- Train them to share their faith
- Send them out to their next duty station—Wherever they go, they take the gospel with them.

#### How can you live on mission?

Pastor Jonathan reminds us that God is always with us (at school, at home, and in your neighborhood). Wherever you go, God is with you—and you can share His love with others.

### How can you pray?

1. Pray for military members being sent to new places.
2. Pray that they would boldly share the gospel.
3. Pray that God would use their movement to reach people everywhere.

## Key Verse

### Romans 10:14-15

“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!’”



## Day 3: The Army and Church Plants & Pastors

### Day 3 Video: Jared & Jen Huntley

In this video, we meet Pastor Jared and his wife, Jen. Jared is an Army veteran and now pastors Pillar Church of San Antonio in Texas. They share how God called them to plant a new church and how the Praetorian Project supports pastors serving military communities.

#### What is the Great Commission?

Pastor Jared explains that after serving in the Army, he was given a new mission by Jesus—the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20). This means telling others the good news that Jesus died for our sins, He rose again, and we can have new life through Him. Every Christian is called to be part of this mission.

#### What is a church plant?

A church plant is a brand-new church started from scratch.

Jared and Jen moved to San Antonio to start Pillar Church. Over time, God has grown their church into a group of people who are sharing Jesus with others in their community every day.

#### Why do pastors need support?

Pastors care for people who are hurting, encourage families, and teach others about Jesus. This can be hard work. That's why pastors need prayer, encouragement, and support from other churches.

The Praetorian Project helps pastors stay strong so they can continue this important mission.

### How can you pray?

1. Pray for pastors to have strength and encouragement.
2. Pray for new churches as they get started.
3. Pray for military families being cared for by these churches.

## Key Verse

### Matthew 28:19-20

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” - Jesus



## Day 4: The Air Force and Global Mission

### Day 4 Video: Darren & Traci Pautz

In this video, we meet Pastor Darren and his wife Traci. Darren is an Air Force veteran and serves as a pastor with Pillar Church of Okinawa in Japan. They share how God is at work in military communities overseas and how the gospel reaches people across cultures and nations.

#### How does God use global mission?

Jesus told His followers to “go and make disciples of all nations,” so Christians go all over the world to share His love, help people, and teach them how to follow Him. There are many people in many places who have never heard of Jesus because no one has ever shared the gospel with them.

Pastor Darren served in the United States Air Force, where he learned that military missions often take people far from home. But he learned that God can use them to be a light for Jesus wherever they go.

#### What is life like in overseas military communities?

In Okinawa, military families live in a different country with a different language, culture, and way of life. That can be challenging for them. But it’s also a unique opportunity to share the gospel with people who have never heard it.

Churches like Pillar Church of Okinawa come alongside these families to help them follow Jesus in a new place, grow in their faith overseas, and share God’s love with others —so military families don’t just adapt to a new place, but become part of what God is already doing there.

### How can you pray?

1. Pray for military families serving overseas.
2. Pray for churches in other countries sharing the gospel.
3. Pray that kids everywhere would hear about Jesus.

## Key Verse

### Acts 1:8

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”



## Day 5: Families on Mission

### Day 5 Video: Daniel & Rachelle Carter

In this video, we meet Pastor Daniel Carter and his wife Rachelle, along with their children Hudson and Ruby. Daniel is a Marine veteran and pastor at Pillar Church of San Diego. They share how God called their family to serve military communities in San Diego and are now moving to plant a new church in Washington state.

#### How does God call some military families to a life on mission?

Pastor Daniel served in the United States Marine Corps, where he learned to be ready to go anywhere in the world when called.

During his service, he noticed that many Marines did not know Jesus. God used that to call Daniel and his family into ministry in military communities. Now they serve in San Diego and are preparing to move to Washington state to start a new church.

#### What is life like for military families?

Military families move often, and that includes kids. That means children may change schools, leave friends behind, and start over in new places.

While that can be difficult, it also gives churches a chance to show the love of Jesus to families who are constantly on the move.

#### How can you live on mission?

Daniel encourages kids to live on mission by praying for military families, looking for new kids who move into their schools, and being ready to show kindness and share the hope we have in Jesus. Even small acts of friendship can make a big difference.

### How can you pray?

1. Pray for military families who move often.
2. Pray for kids adjusting to new schools and places.
3. Pray for church planters like the Carters as they start new churches.

## Key Verse

### 2 Corinthians 5:20

Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.