

1st Annual Battle Rattle Relay



BATTLE RATTLE RELAY
1st Annual Fundraising Event

The Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministries is hosting a 24 hour relay event to be held on June 14th, 2019 starting at 12 noon at Zollner Stadium, Ft. Wayne, IN



KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS PROGRAM

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Note: Purchases made at the regular Amazon.com site do not qualify. You must use Smile-Amazon to have a donation made to: Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministries.

Saluting our faithful volunteers



A big salute goes out to our faithful LMVFM volunteer team members who are the backbone of our ministry.

Our volunteers meet at the office on Tuesdays and provide us with a wide range of support activities that helps our ministry focus on serving our veterans and their family members.

War is a disaster, too. That's why your Thrivent Choice Dollars are so important to us.

Hurricanes, floods, and fires are the Disasters that usually grab headlines. But the Disasters that LMVFM fights every day rarely get any notice such as:

- ♦ 22 military-related suicides a day.
- ♦ 22 sets of families and friends left behind.



Day by day, without headlines or fanfare, Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministries' counselling staff provides free Christ-centered counseling, care and programs to veterans, military contractors and their families who are at grave risk of suicide or other destructive behaviour.

Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministries accepts no government funds. We rely solely on gifts of supporters like you to keep our services free to all veterans, military contractors and family members.



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Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministries, Inc.

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DISCIPLESHIP MYSTERY SOLVED!


We are often asked how we at LMVFM incorporate the Gospel and Jesus Christ in the work we do with the veterans, contractors and their family members we serve. The answer is pretty straight forward and comes down to the *three bullet points of effective discipleship*. Before we get to those I want to share an illustration that pretty much sums it up.

One test I remember from seminary that still sticks with me today was from a pastoral counseling course. In reality, the test didn't cover any of the materials we had been studying and seemed more in keeping with an evangelism course. For the test we were instructed to write the names of **three housekeepers, three people who worked in maintenance, three dinner ladies** (we didn't have any males), and **three members of security**. Oh by the way, the test was worth 25% of our course grade.

For some the test was easy, but for more than half our class, as evidenced by how time it took them to finish, the test was a struggle. This was a bit ironic being that we were in seminary preparing for a vocation in ministry, ministry to real live human beings. Hence the test was a test of just how willing we were to talk and engage with people other than ourselves, especially those people who were serving us. It was a test of **Discipleship** and illustrates the three bullet points of discipleship.

 **Be:**
a willing follower of Jesus, one who accepts and assists in the spreading of the Good News of Jesus Christ out into the world.

 **Know:**
the word in order to credibly share the word. Know and accept that some people will reject you. Get to know the people that you are sharing the Good News of Jesus to.

 **Do:**
seek to build caring relationships with the people you meet especially those who are performing a service for you. Why?, because it's what Jesus did. The majority of those we serve at LMVFM have suffered from broken relationships, and so this is where we begin with them which allows us to be able to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with them.

Discipleship 101

1. Name a cashier where you normally get gas.
2. Name a waitress/waiter at your favorite restaurant.
3. What is the name of your regular mail carrier?
4. Who lives next door to you?
5. How many kids does the person who cuts your hair have?

Bonus Question: How many of the above have you shared the Gospel, prayed with or for?

How would you grade yourself?

Binding the Wounds of War: Military Outreach Seminar

The Dogged Affects, of LMVFM's "Paws and Effect" Team

Military and Veteran Suicides

The U.S. military finished 2018 with a troubling, sad statistic: It experienced the highest number of suicides among active-duty personnel in least six years. A total of 321 active-duty members took their lives during the year, including 57 Marines, 68 sailors, 58 airmen, and 138 soldiers.

The numbers weren't any kinder to veterans. Veterans are 1.5 times as likely as civilians to die by suicide, after adjusting for age and gender. The latest report on veteran suicide rates revealed that suicides by veterans were 26.1 per 100,000, compared to 17.4 per 100,000 for non-veteran adults.

Seeking Help

When service members were asked who they would prefer to seek counseling from, the majority responded that they would seek help from nonmilitary clergy, civilian counselor, or a friend over a military counselor, military chaplains or a VA counselor. This is hardly a surprise as seeking mental health care is not only stigmatized, but can be a career ender.

The number one reason service members and veterans reported that they were reluctant to seek help from a civilian clergy member or counselor: Civilians don't have a clue about what it's like to serve or the challenges they have faced. And this is where we at LMVFM come in.

Binding the Wounds of War

LMVFM offers educational programs and training seminars to clergy, congregations and groups that address the common issues and challenges faced by veterans, contractors and their family members.

These programs and seminars provide participants with valuable insights from those who have served. Additionally, we address the myths, and misperceptions many people in society have about the military gleaned mostly from the media and popular TV shows and movies.

LMVFM educational programs and seminars provide participants with examples of ways they can help veterans and their family members who are in need of assistance. Some of the topics covered include:

- ◆ Understanding Military Culture,
- ◆ Suicide issues for service members, contractors, veterans and their families,
- ◆ Moral & Spiritual injuries
- ◆ Post Traumatic Stress (PTS) and Traumatic brain injuries,
- ◆ Military sexual trauma (MST)



Most of us have been there before. We've made decisions on impulse, things that we wish we would have done or said differently. Maybe something that didn't line up on our moral compass, but due to our position we had to make a choice, or turn the other way. We feel guilty about it, we may even be ashamed. It's hard talk about it because we'd have to relive it, or because we fear that the person who is asking us to talk about it, might judge us. We may start looking around the room, trying to find a distraction, hoping maybe the phone would ring and give us a way out-at this point ANYTHING would be better than finding the words and admitting to ourselves, and to the person across from us, what we have done, thought or been through.

What's that? You feel weight on your side, a warm body; you hear the rhythm of breaths, and you look down and see two big brown eyes looking up at you.

Not in judgement but concern that tell you, "It's OK, I've got you! No matter what you say, I'm here and I will not turn away from you. There is nothing you can say that we can't handle together." Still looking at the dog, you start petting it, and telling him your story as everything just starts to flow.

This pretty much summarizes of what a lot of our veterans, contractors and their family members have described about their counseling sessions at LMVFM. Patrick-Dooly, Lilly-Bell and Stanley-Tucker almost always make the tough stuff easier to express. I would say God is the only other person that could provide such true unconditional love like these dogs do.

Over the past few years we've introduced a lot of kids to our 4-legged Paws & Effects team members. The question they ask the most is HOW Patrick-Dooly, Lilly-Bell, or Stanley-Tucker help the veterans we work with in counseling sessions. We explain how sometimes it is easier to talk to friendly dog about hard stuff, than it is to an adult or authority figure, and how dogs help to heal the broken hearts of our clients. Recently, one young man had a very good question, "If the dog heals OUR hearts, who heals the DOGS' hearts when theirs break?"

Studies of military dogs in combat has shown that they are just as susceptible to PTSD as their humans. The same hold true for counselors and therapy dogs who work with emotionally traumatized clients who are equally prone to being secondarily traumatized by those they serve. The to answer the question of "Who heals a dogs heart when theirs breaks", is this. At LMVFM whether dog or human, we help each other in the healing process by monitoring and limiting, as needed, each others trauma exposure, listening to them, praying with and for them, holding them, allowing them to rest and giving them time and space to simply play.



The next Binding the Wounds of War seminar is being held on 29, June, 2019 from 9-4 at:

All Saints Lutheran Church
4325 SW Green Oaks Blvd
Arlington, TX 76017

