



TOGETHER



ON THE FRONT LINES



Today, our gifts to LMVFM matter more than ever as we deal with two disasters:

- ♦ The Global COVID-19 Pandemic ; and
- ♦ The ongoing epidemic of US military suicides costing some 20-plus lives every day.

Giving to LMVFM has dropped dramatically since the COVID-19 Pandemic made its way out of China in early 2020, offsetting much of the gain generated by the year-end 2019 Christmas Ornament Adoption Appeal, and the resulting economic downturn has affected us all.

In order to keep this ministry Christ-centered, LMVFM never accepts government aid. In other words, your gifts to LMVFM assure that no military veteran, contractor or family member will ever be turned aside from the free clinical and pastoral counselling and related care that they will not get anywhere else.

Please know that your regular, generous gifts to LMVFM are saving lives from spiritual and physical death, 24/7/365.



- ♦ **Oct. 14** — LMVFM's 13th anniversary "Dine to Donate" at Granite City Brewery, Fort Wayne IN
- ♦ **Oct. 24** — 2nd Annual "Battle Rattle Run" 5K, St John's Lutheran, Lake Township
- ♦ **Nov. 1-Jan. 31** — Annual Christmas Ornament Adoption Appeal
- ♦ **Every month** — Designate your Thrivent Choice Dollars to LMVFM
- ♦ **Daily** — Designate LMVFM as your organization with Kroger's' Rewards Program



Donating Your Choice Dollars is Easy



There are two ways to Donating your Thrivent Choice Dollars to Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministries.

1. Call 1-800-847-4836 and when prompted say "Thrivent Choice" which will connect you to a friendly Customer Care Agent and tell them that you would like to donate your Thrivent Choice Dollars to: Lutheran Military Veterans & Families Ministries.
2. You can also donate your Choice Dollars by logging into your account at Thrivent.com/Thriventchoice and direct your Choice Dollars to Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministries.

Your Donations of these items help us to keep our programs and services free to those we serve. Gift Cards of any amount, unused postage, large and small business envelopes.



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You shop. Amazon gives.

AmazonSmile will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible **AmazonSmile** purchases when you select:

Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministries as the organization you want to support. Smile Amazon will remember your selection, and then make a donation from all of your *eligible purchases made at smile.amazon.com.*

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



I H S

Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministries, Inc.

3480 Stellhorn Rd., Fort Wayne, Indiana 46815 260.755.2239 www.lmvfm.org

"Serving with Christ's Love Those Who Serve"



Summer



2020

NEVER SOUND RETREAT

Never Sound Retreat: These three words demonstrate how Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministries (LMVFM) fulfils its' mission: In 'normal' times and times when pandemic illness, economic downturn, and social unrest increase Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) reactions in veterans, military contractors, and their families.

For several years now, more than 20 US veterans have been committing suicide every day. The current pandemic has only made matters worse. Isolation, uncertainty and social upheaval only aggravate the severe depression, heightened anxiety, and uncontrolled anger that are symptoms of PTS.

At LMVFM, we've seen a steady increase in clients for individual and family care and counselling since COVID-19 hit our nation. A few recent examples (names changed to protect confidentiality):

† James, a combat veteran of Iraq and Afghanistan, was doing well until a workplace incident nearly led him to suicide. Counselling is helping James recognize what triggers his PTS and control his responses.

† COVID-19 precautions prevented Rob, a 92-year-old Korean veteran, from picking up his hearing aids at the VA hospital. Within two days, an LMVFM supporter at the VA picked up and delivered the hearing aids.

† Reserve families like Lieutenant Murphy, Celia and their two young sons lack the supportive community and services that come with living on base. Murphy's distant duty location and increased duties have left Celia and the boys to shelter, alone, too often. Couple's counselling and support for the family has helped ease the strain and isolation.

† Pete, a Viet Nam combat veteran, and his wife suddenly found themselves with 12 persons sheltering with them: Adult children, spouses, and grandchildren including three infants, two of them with special needs. When plumbing broke down and repair bills broke their budget, LMVFM found a reliable plumber and resources to cover the bill.

Meanwhile, we've had steady traffic of new and returning counselees – including a 20 percent increase in client caseload during April alone. In addition, we did lots of well-being calls with current and prior counselees, offering support before pandemic-induced stress became too much to bear.

Our office volunteers, themselves vulnerable due to age and medical status, worked from home during the shutdown. Now that social distancing guidelines have eased, they're happily back in the office every Tuesdays.

The downside? Virtually all of our scheduled outreach events through September have been cancelled or postponed.

The upside? Now's the time for congregations to schedule an LMVFM outreach event for the rest of 2020 and into 2021. There's never been a better time to partner with LMVFM in "Serving, With Christ's Love, Those Who Serve" God and Country. Let us know how we can serve you!

BINDING the WOUNDS
OF WAR



Congregational
Training Seminars

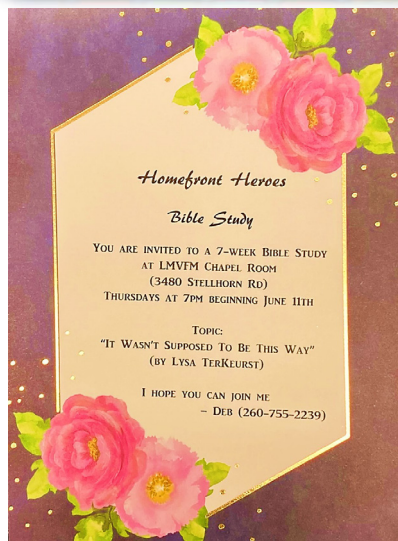
LMVFM equips churches and other organizations to offer Christ-centered care to your neighbors who are affected by military-related Post-Traumatic Stress. Learn how pastors, health and human services professionals, congregations and family members can partner in binding up the unseen moral and spiritual wounds of military service.

† Invite an LMVFM speakers for your Mission Festivals or other occasions.

† Ask neighboring churches to join you in exploring opportunities for ministry with veterans, military contractors and their families.

† Meet our 'Paws and Effects' emotional therapy dogs, who apply their unique, unconditional care in counselling sessions as well as educational

Contact LMVFM today for details and available dates. Reach us at 260.755.2239 or lmvfm.org@gmail.com .



Homefront Heroes



The American Soldier is our country's hero. We are "The land of the free" and are forever indebted to those who have sacrificed their life, career, family for all that we have available to us - our freedom of speech, freedom of press and freedom of religion.

The strength of a soldier (whether in combat or not) comes from the strength and support of those at home. We call these our Homefront Heroes. These are the spouses, the children and family members that remain at home to take care of each other, to send care packages, additional support and prayers to their soldier(s) while they are away. These Homefront Heroes spend sleepless nights worrying, endless hours taking care of, and countless days managing both the mother's and the father's role for their children. Yet too often these Homefront Heroes are forgotten and don't receive the same care that they need to continue such a burden of worry and support.

Although LMVFM is already providing services to these Homefront Heroes, we are excited to add a Bible Study specifically designed for them in mind. We will host the first in a series of Bible Studies beginning with a seven (7) week study on June 11th at 7:00 pm by Lysa TerKeurst titled "It's Not Supposed To Be This Way". Each Bible Study evening is designed to give these special Homefront Heroes a time to find a place of stillness, take the time to heal their spiritual wounds, and to grow in their faith. We are grateful for our Thrivent Action Team who helped sponsor this event.

We ask you as our faithful readers and followers to take a few minutes each Thursday evening over the next several weeks, to say a quick prayer for each of those in attendance. Our Homefront Heroes appreciate your thoughts for them as well.

COVID-19: Finding the silver lining

At LMVFM, we didn't look too long or too far for that silver lining in the Pandemic cloud.

"Every threat taught us something new," recalls Chaplain Leslie Haines. "Every challenge tuned out to be an opportunity in disguise, whether it affirmed our strength or provided an opportunity for growth."

An "essential service" as defined by the State of Indiana's emergency declaration, LMVFM remained open seven days a week throughout the 10-week shutdown.

Emergencies lead to three different responses: Fright, flight or fight.

"We found out quickly who would run towards the emergency and continue to carry out the mission to our clients," Haines said. "Several of our volunteers continued to serve from home, while others continued coming to the office. We've even picked up two new volunteers during the Pandemic."

One of the greatest blessings for the ministry was the arrival of our new office manager, Deb Myers! Deb brings a positive can do attitude and effectively approach's each challenge in a way that leads to successful outcomes!

"Our way of working changed, too," Haines said. "While we still saw clients for face-to-face counselling, we did so with enhanced sanitation measures and other safety protocols. And, for those we could not see in person, the telephone was a lifeline for counselling and for well-being checks on clients."

New opportunities emerged in response to clients' needs. One example: "Homefront Heroes" — the new small-group Bible study ministry for military spouses (*see page one*).

"Enemies of the USA have often said they can't predict what we'll do because we never stick to the book," Chaplain Haines noted.

"We didn't have a book for the Pandemic, and we didn't need one. Team LMVFM worked together, as one, to 'Assess, Respond, and Repeat' whatever the situation. is mission-ready and stronger than ever. I couldn't be more proud of Team LMVFM "

Homefront Heroes



Our Homefront Heros gathered together for a meet and greet in the Chapel area at LMVFM. This is the first of a series of bible studies for spouses of those who protect Americans at home and abroad.



Homefront heros include the children of those who protect us. These little homefront heros are enjoying their first night of VBS

MAIL CALL

A Question for Paws and Effects:

This Pandemic has been tough on our family, what with working and schooling from home. We humans are hanging in there, but our pets? Not so much. Our family dog "Gunny" and our rescue cat ('Shero') both are acting strange. They're on hyper-alert when they're not sleeping. Sometimes they act like they don't want to be around us. What's going on?

— Marines Jim and Sheila K and family



Sarge replies:

Dear Jim and Sheila, Gunny and Shero

Sarge here. I've been with LMVFM since the beginning. Thank you, Jim and Sheila, for your service and your question.

My sister, Callista (a.k.a. e Ghost-Cat) are alone during the day whilst Mum(Chaplain Haines), Stanley-Tucker and Patrick-Dooly are at the LMVFM office. Fur-babies haven't had it easy during this Pandemic. We pick up on our fur-humans' anxiety — even when they try hard to hide it. That's what makes some of us such good emotional therapy animals. However, it can also stress us out.

Like our humans, we critters need our space, too— especially if we're not used to having humans around day and night. Callista usually hangs in the shadows, but lately, has taken to patrolling the inside perimeter of the house before retiring for the night. One soldier reported that her dog has started nudging her around 9pm each night to get her to go to bed. Other people have reported that their fur-babies are now experiencing anxiety when their person leaves the house.

As it was with people who had their lives and routines disrupted during the period of shelter in place, your fur-babies have had a lot to deal with, including being able to pick up on their humans anxiety. No matter how much we love our humans, sometimes we need some time to ourselves.

So, the best thing you can do for Gunny and Shero at this point is start working towards returning their routines to what they were before everyone was suddenly on lock down.

Be well. Remember we're all in this together. Keep in touch with us and with each other, too. — Sarge and all the LMVFM Paws and Effects Team