



Leave no ornament behind!

# 2020 LMVFM Christmas Ornament Adoption Appeal



Each year, November 1<sup>st</sup> marks the beginning of the LMVFM annual Ornament Adoption Appeal. Your generous gift received between **November 1-January 31** will be recognized with a one-of-a-kind, hand-crafted Christmas ornament, made by a veteran or family member, like the ones pictured left, that will hang on the Christmas tree here at LMVFM in Fort Wayne.

**You and or those you honor** will be able to see your ornament on LMVFM's Facebook Page, and website. You will have the joy of knowing that your gift gives hope to those who have sacrificed for the freedom to worship and celebrate the freedoms that we enjoy.

**Adopt your ornament today** with a gift of any size to LMVFM, online at [lmvfm.org](http://lmvfm.org) or by mail to LMVFM Christmas Appeal, 3480 Stellhorn Rd., Fort Wayne, IN 46815.

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.



**AmazonSmile** will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible **AmazonSmile** purchases.  
On your next visit to AmazonSmile ([smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)) simply 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](http://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.*



## Thrivent Choice Dollars



Hurricanes, floods, fires and pandemics 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 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.

**You can Help us help them by Donating your Thrivent Choice Dollars to:**

Lutheran Military Veterans & Families Ministries  
3480 Stellhorn Rd  
Fort Wayne, IN 46815  
260.755,2239 WWW.LMVFM.Org@Gmail.com



Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministries, Inc.  
3480 Stellhorn Rd., Fort Wayne, Indiana 46815 260.755.2239 [www.lmvfm.org](http://www.lmvfm.org)  
*"Serving with Christ's Love Those Who Serve"*



October

2020

## Stay with us, Lord, stay with us

I doubt very seriously that the writer of an article found on page 13 of the April 2020 edition of Harvest News had any idea that it would be the basis of this article. However, what I do know is that she would be pleased.

**March 2020.** *"Stay with us, Lord!"* With the stroke of a pen, except for those considered "essential" the doors of stores and churches have all been shuttered and a fearful society has been locked in their homes lest they fall victim to an unseen enemy called COVID-19. The needs of our veterans and their family members have not gone away. We keep our doors open, each and every day, and go to our veterans who can not get out, to continue the mission you have given us.

**April 2020.** *"Stay with me, Lord!"* The calls for help are increasing from veterans and their family members. "My 92 year old dad needs his hearing aides, but the VA won't let him in." "My son is suicidal but he can't get an appointment". You knew that we would need a very strong cohesive ministry team, thank You Lord for giving us Chaplain Cathi, and Deb, our MOM, (Ministry Operations Manager). Together, You've allowed us to help them, during a pandemic having no foreseeable end.

**May 2020.** *"Stay with us Lord!"* If a viral pandemic, which has paralyzed our world wasn't enough, once peaceful calls for justice have been hijacked by evil foes not seeking justice but to cause social unrest through violence and destruction. Many of those protecting our cities and those who live with-in are themselves veterans, guardsmen and reservists who will no doubt need help from ministries, like LMVFM for the traumas they are experiencing not from a foreign enemy, but a fellow American. Help us keep our doors open to all who would enter in. Lord keep us healthy in the coming days ahead, for only you know when this will end.

**June-August 29 2020.** *"Stay with us Lord!"* The news few are reporting confirm what we've been seeing. Active and reserve suicides are rising, not only in the ranks, but in their families. Marriages of our Guard and Reservists, are suffering under the strain of active call-ups, to man Covid testing sites across the country, and protecting our towns and cities from the growing violence and destruction. We launched our first bible study specifically for the family members of veterans and also law enforcement officers. Our case loads keep increasing, and funding is sometimes tight. But our trust is in you to keep us in the fight for their lives.

**August 29.** *"Oh God our help in ages past, stay with us dear Lord!"* Just when you think you've got it, that nothing can befall you-how quickly things can upend you. I



had no idea that when Chaplain Cathi went to the ER that night to have a pain in her stomach checked that 12 days later our dear friend and Chaplain would enter the church triumphant. The days since she went to the hospital and since have been long, and often quite difficult, but two things have remained a constant.

The first is that the needs of our veterans and their family members *did not stop* when she died. The second and most important thing we are reminded of each and every day is that *God* has, as He has promised, *stayed with us*, and for that we are thankful. As our doors remain open we continue the mission He has given us. **Thanks be to God!** *Leslie*

# Military Suicide Pandemic

During the first six months of 2020, overall military suicides have increased by as much as 20 percent. Among the services, the Army and Marines have suffered the highest numbers of suicide, with the Army leading at a 30 percent increase. Not surprisingly, it should be noted that the surge in suicides began as soon as COVID-19 measures took effect.

In some way, every American has been negatively affected by the almost overnight virus-related forced isolation, financial disruptions, remote schooling and loss of child care. And the stress that all of us have felt has been magnified among our troops and their family members who also struggle with war-zone deployments, national disasters and civil unrest as evidenced by the sharp rise murders and other violent behaviour.

January-June Military Suicide Totals			
	2018	2019	2020
Active/Reserve Components	159	251	260

As a ministry we have seen first hand the effects that this pandemic and response to it has had on our clients. When the stay at home orders shuttered

our nations churches and counselling centers, we kept our doors open. By doing so, we've been able to provide greater levels of Christ centered counselling and care to a greater number of veterans and their family members.

Financially, it has been challenging, but our ability to remain open and serving is directly related to having God's support, and the support of Churches and our many friends and supporters of the mission or care of LMVFM to our veterans and their families.

## On the Road Again:



There is nothing quite like a pandemic to put the brakes on what would have been a very busy year for LMVFM. "Normally" in years past by October the majority of our travel events would have been fulfilled. But 2020 has been anything but normal we have since removed the word "Normally" from our vocabulary.

Now as restrictions across the nation lessen, requests for seminars are taking us on the road through the end of December. Training seminars are scheduled on a first come basis. If your congregation would like to learn more about the unique challenges of military service and how to help those who serve we would love to put you on our 2021 schedule. To schedule a seminar please call us at: 260.755.2239, or shoot us an email at [lmvfmoffice@gmail.com](mailto:lmvfmoffice@gmail.com)

## Post-Lock Down Adventures



Patrick-Dooly and a young friend get to know each other after watching the movie: Sgt Stubby

Since September, after about 6 months of having no travel, the LMVFM traveling team, Dooly, Deb and I, have been really excited to be able to get out of the office and begin accepting the invitations from churches and groups. Dooly, who has been traveling since he was 8 weeks old, really enjoys getting out and meeting people. One of our favorite types of events are those where we are asked to talk about the ways we use our four legged team members with our clients at LMVFM.



April Hermann and her son with the LMVFM team after a "Dog Days" home-school program.

## October

## Events



I think we can all agree, it has been a nutty year! But be that as it may, LMVFM has kept moving forward in ministry. The month of October is pretty special to us, as it is the month when LMVFM became an officially recognised 501(c)(3) non-profit Faith Based ministry.



### October 21st 2020

LMVFM celebrated its 13th Birthday at Granite City, Fort Wayne IN, surrounded by friends and supporters.

### October 24th 2020

LMVFM hosted our 2nd Annual 5K Battle Rattle Run at St John's Lutheran Church, Lake Township.

## HOME FRONT HEROES

**Bible Study—Update:** The first of our Home Front Heroes Bible Study's for military spouses, sponsored by "Thrivent Action Team" funds has just ended. For seven weeks we dug into God's word seeking His guidance for times when "(It) wasn't supposed to be this way" were upon us. Written by Lysa TerKeurst, we walked through any number of disappointments in life and learned to combat Satan's lies by focusing on God's truths.

Never one to waste an earthly crisis, Satan has been actively creating doubt, in his attacks on our faith which made this bible study particularly fitting during a period of unrest, where any sense of normalcy had been suddenly ripped from us. A chief take away underscored through out the Bible study is that God isn't picking on us, rather He has handpicked us to be a witness of His good works here on earth.

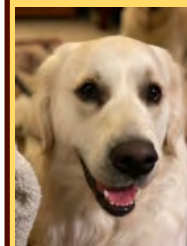
His love for each of us is so great!

## MAIL CALL

Hi, Patrick Dooly!

My name is Kendall, and I am 9 years old. My Mom is a soldier. She is on deployment for a year. My daddy takes care of me. I am sad and so is daddy because we miss my mommy. I can't wait until Mommy is home again. Can you help me?

Love, Kendall



Dear Kendall

I am so glad you wrote to me! I know it's tough buddy. While I can't get your mommy home quicker there are some things you can do to help until she gets back.

First, ask Dad to put monthly calendars on the refrigerator. At night, before you say your prayers and go to bed, put a big X in the square for that day. Every X means you are one day closer to when your mom comes home.

Next, keep a notebook – your own special "Deployment Diary", to give Mom when she returns. Every day, you write something about the day to share with your mom. Write a note, draw a picture, include a photo. Your mom misses you too and will love seeing pictures of what you've been doing while she's been away.

Soldiers love getting hand written letters, especially from their kids. So be sure to write your mom a lot and call her whenever Dad says it's okay. It can get pretty lonely when you're deployed, so your letters will really help your mom until she get's back home to you and your dad. Thank you, Patrick and your dad, for being your mommy's Home-Front Heroes!

Love, Dooly