

Fund Raising Appeals

A huge thank you to our Friends at Granite City and all of LMVFM's ministry partners for making our St. Paddy's day Dine-2-Donate a great success!



Why your help matters

LMVFM provides veterans, contractors and their family members with *free* counseling services and assessments, help with VA claims, assistance locating and connecting with other types of resource support.

- ◆ LMVFM does not solicit or accept any government funding or resources.
- ◆ All LMVFM programs and services are free to our clients.
- ◆ LMVFM has never turned a veteran, contractor or family member away for any reason.

We need your help



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



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) 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.

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.



Spring

2021

Springing Forward!

I thank God for giving us the four seasons, something for everyone. If the flowers springing up and the buds on my apple trees are any sign, I do believe Punxsutawney Phil got it wrong about there being 6 weeks more of winter. And, for that I am relieved. Don't get me wrong, next to Fall, Winter is my favorite season. However, on the heels of a year of painful struggles among so many of our folks, I believe that Spring, the colors of life, and sunshine is just the thing we all need.

2021 is certainly a year where we expect to see a lot of growth, both in our *Direct Care* and our *Education* missions. When LMVFM first opened its doors in 2008, the geographic area for our Education mission, where we provide seminars and programs, was limited to the states that bordered Indiana where LMVFM is located. However, within a year, based on demand from states outside our original boundaries we began accepting requests throughout the country.

Our mission calendar is filling up with mission trips being highlighted in a Springlike bright yellow. We've already



completed several mission trips in 2021 that were cancelled in 2020. Along with the 2020 mission trips we've rescheduled for 2021, we are adding new mission trips as well.

One of the programs we have added this year are evening bible studies, led by LMVFM Ministry Operations Manager (MOM) Deb Myers. Most of our participants are clients, and ministry volunteers of which are either veterans, spouses, or family members of veterans. Last night our Lenten series bible study concluded with a Seder meal. As a new bible study is being prepared, we look forward to reaching more of our veterans and their family members.



and educate churches about the issues faced by veterans and their family members.

By April of 2020, we began looking for ways to improve our digital communications. We began by revamping our website, and by making the best use of our Facebook page. Unfortunately, but understandably, a good number of folks don't engage with Facebook. We wouldn't either if it weren't the *currently* largest digital communication platform. With the help of LMVFM Volunteer Rob Myers our digital guru, we have begun the process of creating digital ministry outreach programs to have available on our Facebook page. Rob's expertise has been instrumental in helping LMVFM expand our ministry outreach through digital means.

It is now April, 2021 and we are excited about the opportunities we have before us to not only reach more of our veterans and their family members, but the churches and groups that serve them. Blessings as we go forth in ministry together,

Leslie

Department of Defense Suicide Report

DoD Component and Service	Total 2019	Total 2020
Active Component	348	377
Army	146	173
Marine Corps	47	60
Navy	73	63
Air Force	82	81
Reserve Component	155	194
Reserve	65	76
Army Reserve	36	42
Marine Corps Reserve	9	10
Navy Reserve	7	12
Air Force Reserve	13	12
National Guard	90	118
Army National Guard	76	102
Air National Guard	14	16

Last year, the combined Active Duty and Reserve military suicide rates increased 14%. So here's the question: How do we end military suicides? To answer this, you have to understand what the core issue is and survey after survey the number one reason given by soldiers who had attempted suicide for their attempt was that they wanted to *end the intense emotional pain they were feeling*. Both the Military and VA most commonly respond to this pain by using a combination of medication and secular counselling sessions. As Christians we know that without providing those who are experiencing pain so great that they just want to die, with the lifesaving hope that only God can provide, that suicides will continue to rise. Together, we can do what only the church can do which is reach out to those who have served, and provide them Christ centered compassion and care.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN



LMVFM presentations and seminars at congregations and groups, afford us the opportunity to raise awareness of the unique challenges and issues involved with military service.

11 April, the LMVFM team will be at St. Marks Lutheran, Fort Wayne, Indiana

1-9 May, the LMVFM team will be on the road and meeting with NALC pastors during their Annual Conference in San Antonio, TX

30 May, you'll find our team at Living Faith Lutheran, Wabash, In.

4-6 June, the LMVFM team will be conducting a seminar for pastors, parishioners, and individuals interested in learning about the unique challenges faced by military members and their families at first English Lutheran, Marysville, OH

To schedule a seminar please call us at: **260.755.2239**, or email us at:

lmvfmoffice@gmail.com

HOME FRONT HEREOS BIBLE STUDY



We recently concluded our Lenten Bible Study "He Chose The Nails" by Max Lucado. This particular study gave us an up-front and personal experience to the purpose of Lent. We studied specific symbols as gifts from God and how He uses them to show us his endearing love.

The nails, the crown, the robe, and the Temple Curtain are some of those symbols. Although many other religions use happier symbols as indications of their faith, Christians use the cross. "The design couldn't be simpler: one beam represents the width of God's love, and the other reflects the height of his holiness", Max Lucado said in his video for this study.

As the study progressed we were able to get more "hands on" with each symbol, and were able to better grasp Christ's love for us. At our final gathering we experienced the Seder Meal, a yearly tradition that Jewish Christian families would partake in remembrance of Passover and freedom from slavery. Although the Seder Meal was not truly part of the Bible Study, it added additional dimension by tasting bitter herbs, the unleavened bread and communing together for a wonderful Lenten/Passover experience.

As we celebrate Easter, such celebrations will be even more joyful, exciting and meaningful! Every Sunday is that opportunity for each of us to celebrate a "little Easter". We hope you and your family will continue to grow in your faith and love in Jesus Christ and continue your fellowship with your church family also.

PAWS & EFFECT

According to the calendar, April 11th is "National Pet Day". What a perfect time to promote and celebrate the Paws and Effect program here at LMVFM and to show care and concern for those military families who also have 4 legged companions by their side.

This month we are highlighting the importance of a pet companion, particularly dogs, for our veterans who suffer greatly with PostTraumatic Stress (PTS). In his book *Until Tuesday*, the late former Captain Luis Carlos Montalván writes "the wounds [of PTSD] don't leave visible scars, so some people assume they don't exist." A properly trained canine companion provides help and support, in unexplainable ways, especially during moments of intense anxiety. Such anxious episodes often occur as a result of events or situations, such as the unexpected loud noise of fire works, crowded situations, and while driving. While a trip to the local grocery store may seem mundane to civilians, many veterans report that it often triggers their symptoms that stem from an overwhelming sense of imminent danger, that fills them with anxiety, and hypervigilance.



If you LMVFM on Facebook, you probably see that we have been posting information about LMVFM's Paws & Effect team member Patrick-Dooly. Dooly's calm, caring and affectionate temperament personify the qualities we look for in our team members, and so in February Dooly enjoyed a week staycation at Summer's Golden's with "Tatum Hope" in the hope of producing offspring sharing his qualities. Our other Paw & Effects team member, Stanley-Tucker really enjoyed not having to share all the attention he received at the office and during counseling sessions while his little brother was away.

For the month of April, we are raising funds to help with the costs of veterinary care, food and other necessities for our Paws & Effect program. Many advanced thanks to those who feel inspired to donate to this valuable program!



"What does a "normal" day at LMVFM look like?"

