



June

2022

The Heat Is On

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. - Galatians 6:2

The heat is on.

When I stepped out of the office yesterday morning a thick miserable humid heat enveloped me much like the heat I had felt the night our unit landed at "Camp Wolf" at 3am for our tour in Iraq. Never had I felt heat like the heat that blasted into the cabin when the flight crew opened the door. It was around 3am and the temperature was well above 110 degrees. I knew at that moment, it was going to be a miserable tour of duty, and *there was no going back*. You see, unlike a civilians who can quit at the drop of a dime, soldiers know regardless of the mission, the danger, the environmental conditions put before them, that they're going to have to deal with it, in a "suck it up butter cup and drive on" sort way that has been expected of soldiers since day one.

Perspective.

To be honest my time in Iraq was pretty miserable as the oppressive heat took its' toll on my body, and we did have to deal our share of unpleasant situations. But to be fair, it's really about perspective. Were I to *focus* only on those things I would be denying the fact that my time in Iraq was also filled with positive life changing experiences. Most importantly, the fact that many events and people related to my tour there ultimately helped lead me back to God.

Focus vs Fixation, it's a choice...

The heat is on, and we are all feeling it. As a ministry, we, like you have are experiencing the pain of historically high and rapidly rising costs especially at the pump. Back in March when certain financial



experts predicted that by August, the lowest grade of unleaded would cost \$6 dollars a gallon, I thought "surely not". Well "Surely" has arrived, and it's only June. Like that moment in Iraq when the heat blasted its' way into the cabin, we have a *choice*.

1. We can allow ourselves to become *fixated* on a problem we have no immediate power over, and wallow around in misery as we hunker down, or

2. We can get on with it and *focus* on the mission at hand. We can't undue the decisions certain elected officials have made that have lead us down this disastrous economic path, and posed additional challenges to us. We can however *resist* the temptation to *fixate* on those challenges and do as God has called us to do by focusing our attentions on our mission: *To provide free care and counselling services to our veterans, contractors and their family members, as well as train and equip congregations, pastors, counsellors with the tools they need in their military outreach missions.*

Leslie

Serving with Christ's Love Those Who Serve

Honoring our Veterans

Most people have heard this before, but with the 4th of July just days away we think it bears repeating. Many veterans, though not all, especially those with PTSD struggle with holidays that involve, as this one does fireworks. But why?

Imagine it is the evening of July the 4th, and even before the sunsets, the neighborhood suddenly comes alive with the sounds of battle. Long gone are the days when firecrackers, which sound like small arms fire were the primary sound heard in and around neighborhoods. Today, you are more than likely to hear loud explosions sounding like mortar rounds, or IEDs going off on your doorstep. We're talking explosives that cause windows to rattle and pulsate throughout your house. Then, as the sun sets, the sounds increase, and with them the flashes of light reminiscent of firefights troops have engaged in with the enemy. One boom after another continuing through the night, long past midnight.

There are some easy ways we can celebrate our independence, while enjoying the day and the first is limiting our use of explosives in residential areas. Most towns and cities have family friendly celebrations for their citizens where we can get our fireworks fix. Remember, as we celebrate the freedoms and independence won for us by our veterans, let us do so in a way that does not cause harm.



And the Adventures Continue...

My oh my what a difference a year makes, especially post covid! Our calendar has seen an explosion of activities, and we are excited about the opportunities that have and will be keeping us busy both at home, and afar.

One of the most rewarding calls we get is from congregations that invite us in to provide them training on the unique challenges of military service. These seminars afford us to the chance to help them by increasing their awareness of how they can better minister to their veterans and family members.



We give thanks to the Lord that opportunities have opened up for us to begin traveling again. Our team never lets the dust settle. Check out our website for scheduled events.

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 add you to our 2022 schedule. To schedule a seminar please call us at: **260.755.2239**, email us at lmvfmoffice@gmail.com.



Paws & Effects, the legacy continues!

Our “Paws & Effect” program promotes and incorporates specialized calm, well-trained service dog team members who assist us during counselling programs and training programs. The results from our counselling sessions speak for themselves as our clients can attest. The success of our program lead us to want to see it expanded with carefully selected pastors who would take our lead and use them in their ministry work.



We are proud to announce that we have been able to, at no charge to them, place puppies from two of Dooly’s litters, with two pastors to use in their ministries. The first was “Smidgen” who, having weighed less than a pound at birth wasn’t initially expected to survive. A lot of prayer went into Smidgen as she was given extra care. And though her body was small, her heart was big and she soon began to thrive. “Vicar” Smidgen, though in training now dutifully serves as a therapy dog in South Carolina.



Several months later Dooly’s third litter was born, and on the 8th of April, Pastor Mark Ryman and his wife Susan adopted “Wyclif”. Though all of Wyclif’s siblings showed the right temperament and characteristics you’d expect in a retriever who had been properly socialized during their first eight weeks, Wyclif immediately stood out as being the one who would have the temperament to best serve as a therapy dog. His adoption was soon arranged, and he now serves in North Carolina.

This wonderful outreach effort is an expansion of the services provided by LMVFM. Our ability to give back is because of the generous support of our donors, and ministry partners, to include our breeder Marta, owner of “Summers Goldens” where Dooly’s pups are made.

MAIL CALL

Dear Paws & Effects Team,

I have a service dog “Jake”, who helps me with my PTSD. Jake is a great big goofy lab who goes everywhere with me. He would play fetch non-stop if I let him. With the summer now getting really hot I’m wondering if you have any advice you can give me about keeping my buddy Jake safe. Thanks for your help guys, Steve

Hi Steve, thanks for reaching out. You are so right to be concerned about the heat, especially this year. Our Lab, Stanley who is also a big goofy fella will, if we let him, play till he drops. So knowing that we’ve put certain protocols in place. The first is, that when it comes to playing fetch outdoors, or any other outdoor activity we limit it to no more than 5 min., and definitely only during the early morning or evening hours after the heat starts to break. Keeping hydrated is a must, so make sure Jake always has access to cool clean water. Ceramic bowls are great for keeping water cool. Avoid walking on pavement, and if it is too hot for your feet it’s too hot for Jake’s.

Here are some other ways to keep Jake cool, and happy during the summer. Labs love water so think about getting him a large kiddie pool, and fill it up. Make sure to keep the pool clean-as mosquitos will start breeding if you don’t, and add fresh water to it. You can make your own cool pup-pops for Jake in the freezer.

On a related note, make sure Jake’s flea, tick and heartworm meds are up to date. Check with your vet about the best one for your boy. If you have any questions down the line, give us a call at **260.755.2239**.

Blessings from Team LMVFM



LMVFM's 4th annual "Battle Rattle 5K Run/Walk" is set for **October 29, 2022**. It will be held once again at **St. John's Lutheran Church, 7914 W. Cook Rd, Ft. Wayne, IN**. Join us for a scenic run/walk through the country roads of Lake Township, while we facilitate community involvement in the support and assistance of our Veterans, Military Contractors and their families. LMVFM was established in 2007 and provides free care and counselling to our military Veterans, contractors and their families, no matter how long they served, where they served, or what branch of the military they served. By being non-profit and not accepting government funding, LMVFM is able to keep Christ at the center of our services and care.

The Battle Rattle 5k Run/Walk is fun for the entire families as we race along the scenic country roads of Lake Township. The race will be timed by Watt's My Time.

Sign-up is easy-peasy at: <https://runsignup.com/Race/IN/FortWayne/LMVFM>

Why give to LMVFM?

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.

LMVFM 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.



Make a Donation at no cost to you!

That's right. Take advantage of the generous programs offered by Thrivent. Each year, Thrivent distributes a portion of its funding to member selected ministries. Eligible Thrivent members have an opportunity to direct their "Choice Dollars" to LMVFM at no direct cost to them! To donate your Choice Dollars please visit **Thrivent.com**, or call them at: **1-800-847-4836**.

What an Impact!

This year, LMVFM has received over **\$3,000**, in Thrivent Choice Dollars from Thrivent members.

Thrivent financial provides many benefits to its clients. One particular benefit is the ability to donate funds, at no cost to you, to LMVFM. According to Thrivent, "Through Thrivent Choice®, our clients with membership can contribute to organizations and causes they care about—and influence how Thrivent distributes some of its charitable grant funding through Choice Dollars®. You can make a personal donation to your favorite enrolled organization—Thrivent pays the processing fees. Eligible clients with membership can also direct Choice Dollars or nominate an organization to be a part of the program. Through Thrivent Choice, more than \$520 million has been distributed to churches and nonprofits nationwide. "



Have Gift Card, Will Serve!

Your donations of gift cards of any amount will help us to keep our programs and services free to those we serve.

