



# Leave no ornament behind!

## 2023 LMVFM Christmas Ornament Adoption Appeal



Each year, November 1st marks the beginning of LMVFM's annual Christmas Ornament Adoption Appeal. When you make a gift, of any amount to LMVFM between **November 1 and January 31** an ornament, made by a veteran or family member, will be hung on LMVFM's Christmas tree. Your ornament will then be photographed, where it can be seen by you and/or those you wish to honor or remember on LMVFM's Facebook page and website.

LMVFM has *never* accepted or received any government funding or resources. Our ability to provide all of our counseling, care and programs, *without cost* to veterans and their families is through the support of individuals, churches, groups and people like you who value the freedoms we as Americans enjoy, made possible by the sacrifices made by our military members, and their families.



This year, please help us, help those who have served, to reach our goal of raising 100k by adopting your ornament with your gift, of any size to LMVFM. Your donation can be made online at [lmvfm.org](http://lmvfm.org) or by mail to: **LMVFM Christmas Appeal, 3480 Stellhorn Rd., Fort Wayne, IN 46815.**

**Blessings from Team LMVFM**



This fall, with all its beauty, is going to be one of the busiest years on record for LMVFM. The team will be on the road for the majority of weekends in October and November. Our travels will take us to Missouri; Pennsylvania; Ohio and the Carolinas. We will also hold three separate events in Northeast Indiana. We look forward to this time as we gaze upon the changing leaves, breathe in the crisp, fresh air, and visiting ministry friends.

### 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](http://Thrivent.com), or call them at: **1-800-847-4836**. LMVFM receives approximately \$3,000 each year from Thrivent members who direct their Choice Dollars.

Donations of these items help us to keep our programs and services free to those we serve. Gift Cards (especially gas and general merchandise) of any amount, **Unused stamps, Small/Large Business Envelopes.** LMVFM is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Your gifts are tax-deductible.



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"*



*Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.*

- Ephesians 3:20-21

There is something comforting about the changes that happen over the season of fall. From the long soft shadows as the sun rises and sets, to the cool breezes that replace the hot, muggy days of summer, fall is a welcomed friend. Most striking though, is the rich pallet of colors as leaves begin to change their colors, before they die off and hit the ground.

Fall is also a season of reflection for us at LMVFM, most notably because LMVFM was officially planted 16 years ago during autumn (October, 2007). We typically transition this time of year from steady efforts of counseling and education, to efforts of planning for the next year. It is a perfect time to relish God's rich blessings upon our ministry, and to recall those who we have helped throughout the year.

We often have a desire to share with our supporters the details of our success stories at LMVFM, because God's gracious hand is so powerful! Like the grieving parents of a soldier whose death by suicide rattled their very foundation. Yet, these loving parents found refuge in Christ Jesus as we worked through the pain together.



**LMVFM  
21 OCTOBER 2007**



Like the combat veteran of the war in Afghanistan, whose battle buddy was killed right before his eyes. His terrible struggle with anger and depression has caused numerous outbursts that led to job loss and alienation from friends. This veteran has felt a loss of identity in a civilian world, and often fails to feel a part of it. During active service, there can be a sense of being part of a tribe—a connection that can be more powerful than that of family. Trust and dedication to task and purpose exceeds anything known in the civilian world. Counseling has helped this veteran obtain and maintain employment, where there is a new sense of accomplishment and belonging.

But who remains on the "battlefield" of invisible, spiritual wounds? How many more veterans, contractors and family members need to know, without any doubt, that their Lord loves them unconditionally? Our efforts will not stop, and we leave no one behind.

Blessings to you all,

*Leslie, Deb, Rob, Stanley and Dooly*

# Be Not Afraid

And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. **See that you are not alarmed**, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. Matthew 24:6-8 (emphasis added.)

Time and again, our Lord reminds us (either directly or through His angels) not to be afraid. Apparently, He knows our nature is to be fearful of the bad things that are happening to us now and of future things that we cannot see.

You see, we all face uncertainty in our lives. If you watch the news, you cannot escape the stories of how bad the economy is doing, including how inflation and interest rates are decimating senior's ability to be financially secure in retirement, or a young family's ability to buy a new home or vehicle. It affects the costs of groceries and fuel, and other daily expenses.

Our veterans face all of these same challenges, but they often face them at a disadvantage. Many struggle with depression, anxiety, and other symptoms of invisible moral and spiritual wounds. Stressors like a poor economy, political infighting or global conflict are enough to push them over the edge. It doesn't stop there.

"I look upon the spiritual life of the soldier as even more important than his equipment... The soldier's heart, the soldier's spirit, the soldier's soul are everything. Unless the soldier's soul sustains him, he cannot be relied upon and will fail himself and his country in the end."

General George C. Marshall

Team LMVFM recently watched a short video of an Army Veteran pulled over on the side of a highway in Connecticut late one night. Because the situation looked suspicious, the police officer cautiously approached the vehicle. As he got up to the driver's side he discovered a sobbing male about 25-30 years old. He was on the phone with the VA's suicide line. The bodycam footage from the officer clearly shows a broken young man at the end of his rope. His sobs express a weary soul, tired of the stressors, who was fully willing to end the pain right there on the highway.

Much to his credit, the officer immediately understood the situation and calmly encouraged the man by offering him help rather than a ticket. The officer called an ambulance to the scene as a precaution, but more than that the officer showed mercy and love. After following the necessary safety protocol, including an abbreviated pat-down, the Veteran asked the officer for a hug. With a snotty nose, and barely able to verbally speak, the Veteran nearly fell into the arms of the kind, willing officer.



When I think of what we at LMVFM offer to our Veterans, Contractors and their Family members, I think of the words Love, Mercy and Compassion, just as the police officer showed this veteran who was ready to end it all that night. Each day we remind them that Jesus loves them, and that His love has overcome the world and all of its stressors. Each veteran is comforted with the Good News, and shown that they do not need to be alarmed or fearful any more. General Marshall was right—healing begins in a soldier's heart, spirit, and soul. The way to bring healing is through showing Christ's love first and foremost.

# The Harvest is Plentiful...

During a recent meeting of our Board of Directors, we opened with a devotion about praying for big things to a big God. If you can imagine it, pray for it! There is nothing too big for our Lord, King of the Universe.

So, we should not be surprised that He has richly blessed LMVFM, and those who have been touched by our ministry, for sixteen years.

According to some business studies, one-half of non-profits fail within the first few years, and less than 30% survive ten years. So how has LMVFM avoided those statistics? Simple: God's blessing and your support!

Those blessings have been abundant, and we never cease to give thanks for them. And we never take them for granted. We believe God has given us a very clear and specific mission—to provide free counselling, and to educate caregivers of veterans to understand their unique challenges.

Typically we share the latest statistics on suicides among those in the military. There is a common number used often: 22 suicides per day. As if that weren't bad enough, the number is actually higher when we factor in problems with reporting suicide occurrences, and the manner surrounding the death itself. In short, we all have our work cut out for us in this mission.

When we consider the mission of LMVFM, we believe our mission "field" is made up of military veterans, contractors and their family members who struggle with the invisible wounds of war. We certainly believe that the harvest field is plentiful, and that God calls and equips this ministry and team members to work in that field.

So what now? Well, if anything we continue to march into the ever growing challenges faced by our veterans and their family members. Quite frankly the need for Gospel-based counselling and care for our veterans, contractors, and their families is at an all-time high. Incidents of suicide are on the rise as is a marked increase in depression, loneliness, and hopelessness among those we are serving.

The first challenge for us as a ministry is to connect with and engage and train individuals, congregations and others who are looking for ways to effectively reach out and share the hope that Christ alone has to offer to veterans and their families in their communities.

The second challenge for us is raising the necessary resources, that allow us to keep all of our counselling and care programs free to those we serve. Again, so what now? How will God do "far more abundantly than all we ask or think" as the scripture verse at the beginning of this newsletter states?

We know that whenever He provides an opportunity to serve others, He provides the tools to get the job done. He has equipped this ministry for the last sixteen years, and allowed our team to serve in some amazing ways. We often sit back, take a breath, and ponder just how good our God is. Each team and board meeting begins with prayer, thanking God for His guidance, abundance, and mercy, and for you who help us as workers in His field.

Please pray with and for us, and for those we serve. Remember to pray big!

**Does your Church Reach our Military?**

**LUTHERAN MILITARY VETERANS & FAMILIES MINISTRIES, INC.**

ORGANIZE EDUCATION WITH US!  
45 MIN "TEMPLE TALK", OR HALF-DAY SEMINAR:

**Awareness**

- Understand the root causes of traumatic stress injuries
- An alarming number of military service members are not being ministered to
- They often seek alternative and unhealthy ways of coping
- Without help, a valuable member of our community is lost
- Behaviors can be recognized to get help early
- Their family is left behind while the service member is called to active duty

**LMVFM Can Help**

- Free one-on-one counseling in person or by phone for the service member or their spouse
- Educating groups, training clergy and lay leaders
- Guidance for launching ministry programs in your congregation

**Your Church Can Help**

- Direct ministry and assistance for service members and their families within the congregation
- Available resources to support the family left behind
- Focused mission effort: free meal program, Bible studies, designed fellowship, home visits, support for military youth
- Organize an "Emergency Response Team" to attend to needs of family: meals, home repairs, car repairs, child care
- Provide effective Outreach to military in community who are not church members (yet)

3480 Stellhorn Rd., Ft. Wayne, IN 46815  
260-755-2239  
LMVFM.org  
LMVFMoffice@gmail.com

**BOOK NOW**

"As a nation ... our mental health facilities and access to mental health providers is not adequate for the need right now." - Gen. Eric Schoemaker

*Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."*  
Matthew 9:37-38