

Planting Seeds to Grow a New Ministry

Serving Those That Served

***How to start a veteran /
military ministry in your
parish or community***

OCT 21, 2023





Veteran Ministry Team

*Welcome
&
Introductions*

The Rev. Laura Adelia
Chaplain, Lt Col, USAF (Ret.)
Missioner, Diocesan Veteran Ministry

The who, what, where, why & how...

- ***What*** is veteran / military ministry?
- ***Why*** have a veteran or military ministry?
- ***How*** to start something like this? ***Where*** to begin?
- ***Who*** – anyone can be involved, vets & non-vets alike!



What is a military or veteran ministry?

- Ministry is service!
- Ministering to military service members, veterans, their families, Gold Star families, retirees, etc.
- Includes serving & honoring veterans & military members of the parish, as well as those in your local wider community.



**New Flagpole Dedication Ceremony at
St John's, Bisbee. MAY 2023**

There Is No “One Size Fits All” for Veteran Ministry!

Each parish & community has different resources & needs.

There are many ways, types, sizes & styles of veteran / military ministry!



Veteran gives a 2 thumbs up at the Charity Golf Tournament hosted by St John the Baptist to raise funds for “Paws for Vets”

Why have a military / veteran ministry?

- **Needs!** In the state of Arizona....
- There are well over 600,000 veterans!
- There are 20,000+ currently serving in the active duty armed forces, & 14,000+ serving in the Reserves & National Guard.
- Plus...thousands of military family members, Gold Star families, Retirees, DOD employees & other agencies that work with the military.



Why else have a military / veteran ministry?

- Bridge building!
- Veterans, service members & their families can benefit from the spiritual & social support that a caring & loving church community can provide.



And in our very polarized world, it can help bring us together, help us to better understand each other, vets & non-vets alike!

How to start a veteran / military ministry

- ***PRAY!***
- One or two people with a **vision & passion** for helping veterans must step up & lead the effort!
- Obtain parish leadership support from Rector & Vestry.



St Francis of the Valley, Green Valley, AZ
Memorial Day Service, MAY 2023

Start with Small Steps!

- Start with your own parish
- Do you know who in your parish are veterans & military families?
- What are their needs?

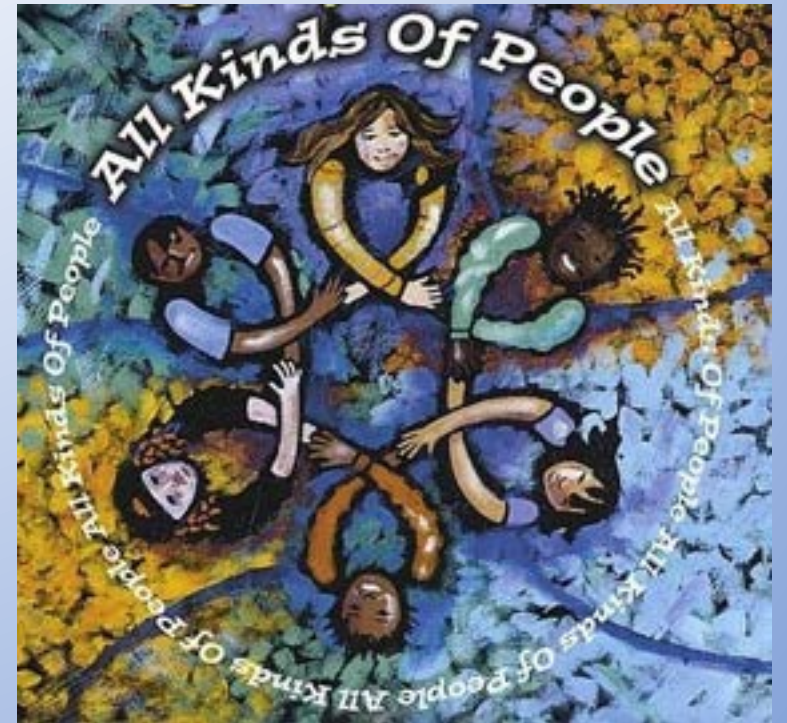


“Rim Country Vets” started as a Tuesday morning coffee gathering in Payson. It grew quickly & now 50+ vets meet weekly!

How to start a veteran / military ministry

continued

- Gather & build your team! Assemble like minded people.
- Meet with your team & discuss the **feasibility** of a veteran / military ministry.
- What is your **passion**? What are the **needs**?
- Educate yourself, research, assess, explore, & discern!



Types of Veteran / Military Ministry... “In House”

- In what ways does your parish honor vets & military families who are parish members?
- Does your parish web site say you are a veteran / military friendly congregation?
- Get the word out - bulletins, newsletters, flyers, word of mouth, social media...



Veteran Christmas Tree, Church of the Nativity, Scottsdale, AZ

Gather, Publicize, Be Creative!



**Veteran Ministry Team at St. Peter's, Litchfield Park,
AZ**

- Host a meet & greet, or a social gathering, or a prayer group, or a special event for **Veterans & or Memorial Day.**
- *Again, what are the needs, & what is your **passion?***

DO YOU KNOW HOW TO HELP A VET IN NEED? WHERE TO REFER THEM? DO YOU KNOW WHAT HELP IS AVAILABLE FOR THEM?



Equine Therapy for Vets

Most veterans adapt seamlessly to civilian life, but some may deal with...

- Health issues from physical, emotional & spiritual trauma, isolation, loss, grief.
- Legal & or financial issues.
- May be in need of housing & employment.

Where to go? Who to turn to?

- There are numerous resources, programs, benefits, non-profits, veteran service organizations & government agencies to assist veterans & military families.
- So many in fact, it is confusing!
- **“Be Connected”** – The ‘One Stop Shop’ organization for Vets & Military Families!



Outreach Types of Veteran Ministry...

Research & assess your local & wider geographical areas.....

Draw concentric circles around your parish, your neighborhood, 5 miles, & or wider community...

What is **NEEDED**?

- *This is where your ministry is!*



Veteran Ministry Team from St John the Baptist, serving hot lunches at the US VETS CENTER in Phoenix, DEC 2021

More Ideas to think about...

- Consider fundraising & giving to a veteran or military nonprofit, charity or specific program.
- Specific groups & populations...
 - Gold Star families
 - Female veterans
 - Vietnam Vets
 - Disabled Vets
 - Homeless Vets
 - Native American veterans, etc.!



And Even More Ideas for Outreach...



And on it goes!



Buz Isban, CAPT, USN, (Ret.)

Chairman for Veteran Ministry
St. John the Baptist Episcopal
Church

Military Veterans' Ministry

- What is it?
- Who is involved?
- Why have one?
- Where and how to start?
- When to start?

Military Veterans' Ministry – *What & Who*

- ***What is it?***

Opportunity to enhance your outreach programs.

- ***Who is involved?***

Everyone!



Why Have a Military Veterans' Ministry?

- To recognize our current & former military members and their families.
- To offer a **small measure of thanks** for the freedoms we enjoy as a result of their sacrifices.
- Service to the congregation and community.

Where & How to Start...

**Start small and
slow**



**Develop as
you go**

**Small group open
to all**



Mission & Vision

What is your intended mission & vision?

**The “MISSION”
of the
Veteran
Ministry
at
St. John the
Baptist
Episcopal
Church**

- **To recognize, honor and support** military veterans.
- **To provide** both spiritual and moral support to families.
- **To render assistance** to veterans in need.

How the Veteran Ministry at St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church Got Started...

- In September 2014, Rev. Fred Ramsay, Tracy Hare and John Adkins had a “BS” session to discuss the establishment of a new ministry.
- (Everyone knows what “BS” means, *right?*)
 - ***“Brain storming” session!***

Development of the Veteran Ministry at St. John the Baptist

- In October 2014 the new Veteran Ministry was commissioned.
- Service flags were purchased.
- Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies were developed.
- **Staff positions** of the new Veteran Ministry Team established: Chairman, Adjutant, Treasurer, Chaplain, etc.
- March 2016 – The “**Feed the Vets**” outreach ministry program began at the US VETS Center in Phoenix.

The Vision...

- We **established** a registry of current and former military members at our parish.
- We **encouraged** membership of those interested in supporting military personnel and their families, vet & non-vets alike!
- We **interfaced** with other church ministries.
- And we interfaced with local veteran service organizations.

Involve Everyone!

We got other groups involved in this new ministry...

The Boy Scouts made the flag poles & stands!



**However,
there will
be
failures
&
crash
landings**

*But don't
lose
heart!*



© Brent Stephenson
Eco-Vista: Photography & Research

Recognize, Analyze and Adjust

- The first attempt in Veteran Ministry at St John the Baptist was called “**SAFE HAVEN**”.
- It was modeled loosely on 12 step programs & envisioned as a place for vets having difficulty adjusting to civilian life to meet & share in a safe and confidential setting.
- Meetings at the church were held on the first and third Mondays of each month.
- **Outcome: Close to NO participation.** Then we lost our primary facilitator, as our priest moved on to another parish.



“Take 2!”

The US VETS Center Hot Lunch Outreach Ministry



FUNDING!

How St. John the Baptist Military - Veterans' Ministry

Established Funding Sources...

- Church Yard Sale
- Diocesan Outreach Support
- Fund Raising via the “Milk Can”
- POWWOW reimbursements
- Free will donations at POWWOW events
- Thrift Store Profits

The Milk Can





Development of the Golf Tournament Fundraiser for “Soldier’s Best Friend”



- September 24, 2022 - The first “Pets for Vets Golf Tournament” (Soldier’s Best Friend “Paws for Vets”) held.
- Raised over \$8K!
- Enough to train 1 service dog for a disabled vet

- April 29, 2023 the second “Pets for Vet Charity Golf Tournament” held.
- Over \$27K raised!
- Enough to train 3 service dogs for disabled vets!

2023 “Paws For Vets” Charity Golf Tournament

Save the Date!
April 29, 2023

- Only \$300 per Foursome
- 4 Person Scramble

Registration Fee includes:

- Green Fees 18 Holes
- Lunch Provided

Coyote Lakes Golf Club
18800 N. Coyote Lakes Pkwy.
Surprise, AZ
623-566-2323

Presentation of the Flag –
6:45AM

Shot Gun Start – 7:00AM

For more information contact: John Klems – 480-201-0338

SCAN ME
FOR DETAILS



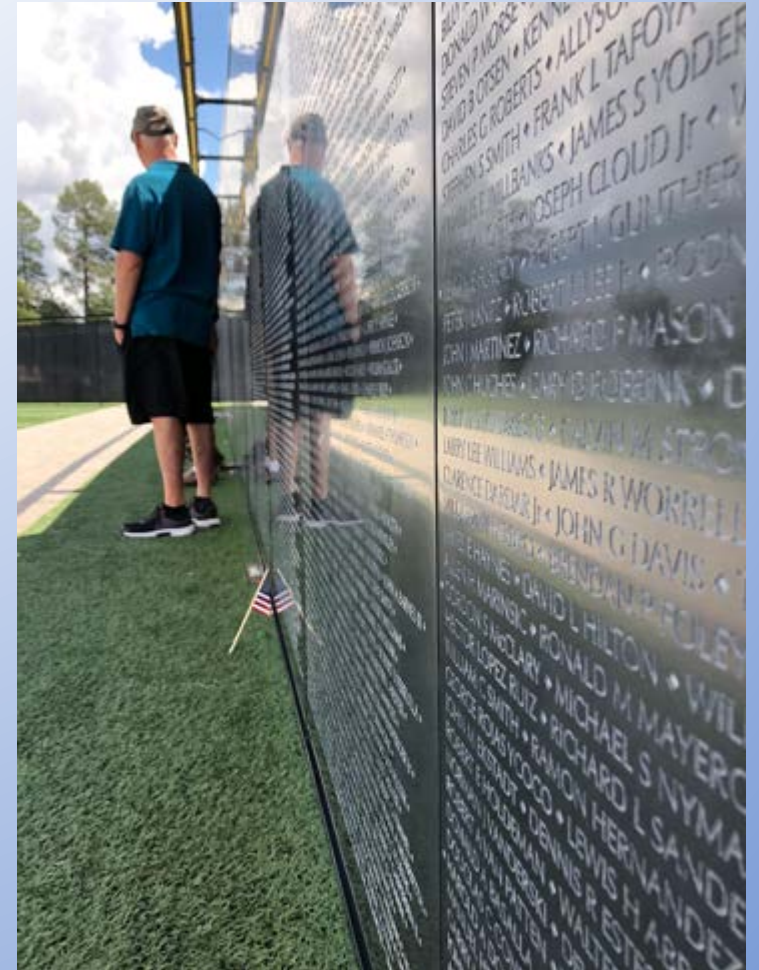
Funds are raised for Soldier's Best Friend – “Touching Two Lives at Once”

Summary – Starting a Military / Veterans' Ministry

- ***What?*** An outreach program.
- ***Who?*** Everyone!
- ***Why?*** Service to the community.
- ***How to start?*** Start small!
- ***When?*** Why not today?

Stories of Other Parish Veteran Ministries & What They Do...

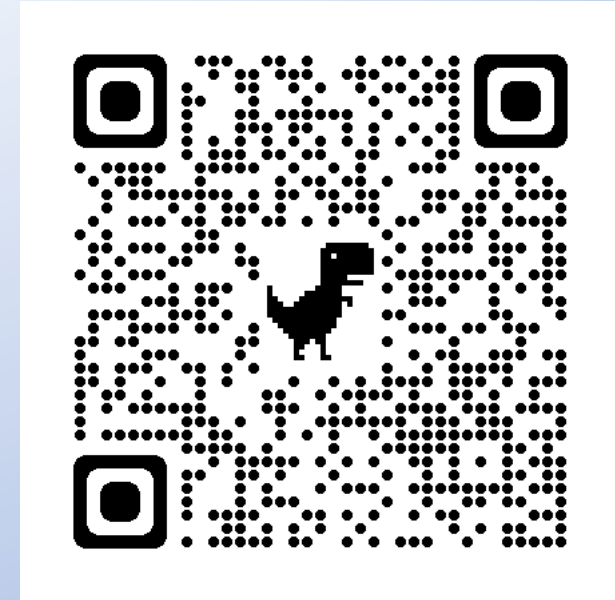
- **Deacon Michael Douglas**, USAF & Vietnam Veteran, St Peter's Episcopal Church, Litchfield Park
- **Ron Kupinski**, USN & USMC Veteran, Church of the Nativity, Scottsdale
- **Richard Brown**, USAF & Vietnam Veteran, All Saints of the Desert



Veteran & Military Ministry Resources

*QR Code goes to the
Diocesan Veteran Ministry
“Resources” webpage,
with **handouts**, links, this
PowerPoint Presentation, &
more!*

QR Code:

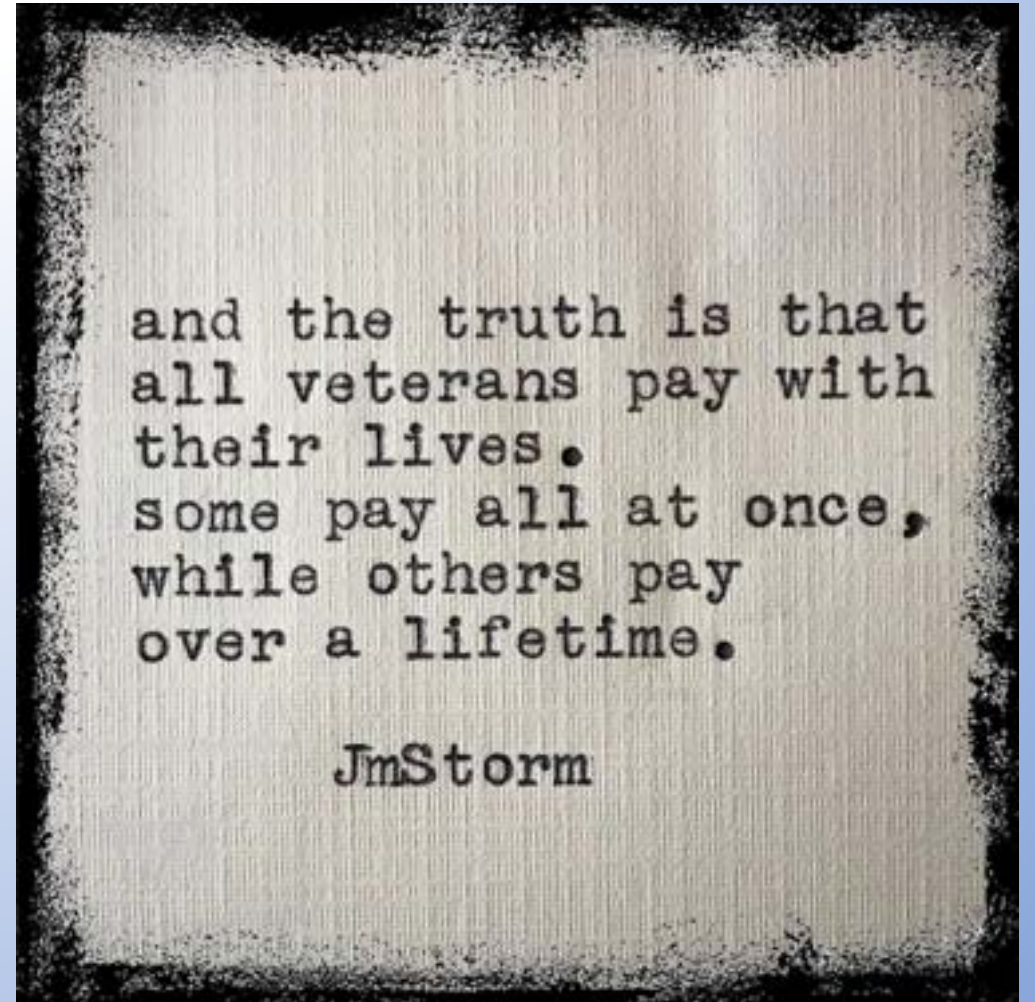


QR Code Web link:

<https://azdiocese.org/veterans-ministry/veterans-ministry-resources/>

Lastly....

- *Be patient, growing a new ministry takes time!*
- *Offer hope*
- *Don't give up!*
- *Be authentic*
- *Be encouraging*
- *Pray!*



Questions? Thoughts? Comments?

Thank you for your time everyone!

**And thank you for your service,
whatever it may be!**



*Workshop put together & presented by ... The Rev. Laura Adelia, Buz Isban, & the **Veteran Ministry Team, Episcopal Diocese of Arizona...***

Buz Isban, CAPT, USN, (Ret.)

Deacon Michael Douglas, USAF & Vietnam Veteran

Ron Kupinski, USN & USMC Veteran

Richard Brown, USAF & Vietnam Veteran

The Rev. Lisa Goforth, US Government

The Rev. Laura Adelia

Chaplain, USAF, Lt Col, (Ret.)

Missioner, Veteran / Military Ministry

Episcopal Diocese of Arizona

Jack Lutz, USMC Veteran

Jack Hanstein, USMC Veteran

Deacon Leah Sandwell-Weiss, JAG, USAF (Ret.)

Lyle Skillen, Corpsman Navy SEALs, USN, (Ret.)