



2017-2019 LWML Mission Grant #3
Christ for Veterans and Their Families
LCMS Ministry of the Armed Forces, \$27,750

Mission Grant Story

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod’s Ministry to the Armed Forces (MAF) is authorized as the mission arm of the Synod to support and serve all military chaplains – active and reserve – their families and the veteran population.

Operation Barnabas – an extension of MAF and the only program of its kind in the United States – provides a network of care through trained congregations that want to reach out to members of the military, their families, and the veterans in their congregations and communities.

Our military has answered our nation’s call to protect and defend us. In every time and place they have stood the watch, far from their families. Congregations have focused on deployment care – with good reason. There is a need, however, for adjustment to a more normal pace of life in the military and civilian communities when military personnel and their families are reunited after repeated deployments. *Operation Barnabas* focuses on connecting soldiers with their families after deployment and reintegrating them back in the worship life of their church.

Ministry to the Armed Forces *Operation Barnabas* will host a national, three-day training event empowering *Operation Barnabas* Districts, Congregations and Chapter members to bring the Good News of God in Christ to veterans and their families. The primary purpose is to train participants in techniques to reach out to veterans in local communities with witness, mercy, and life together. The goal is to train and equip *Operation Barnabas* leaders to take back and share with other congregations how to reach out to our veterans and their families so that all have an opportunity to know that the only source of true peace comes from Jesus Christ.

You may be interested to know that the name *Operation Barnabas* comes from Paul’s missionary companion and aide, Barnabas. His name literally means “son of encouragement.” Providing encouragement is a key component in the ministry to military members and their families. *Operation Barnabas* works through relationships that offer encouragement and thanksgiving centered in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.