

Stars and Stripes

By Kelsi C

So much activity, all around
That in my head, the colors blur
Right now in this crowded airport
My life is changing, and nothing's for sure

I look up at my hero
In vain, I try to smile
Although he seems so strong
I know that even he is fragile

I try to take a snapshot
A snapshot with my mind
So that I will not forget
My hero's face, so kind

Suddenly he's pulled away
I swallow my urge to cry
The print of desert camouflage
Swims before my eyes

Deep breath now,
Breathe in, breathe out
'Cause for my hero,
I'm staying strong.
Deep breath now,
Breathe in, breathe out
It's just one year...
It's not that long

--

We all leave in silence
But our family is incomplete
Turning back will do no good
I don't want him to forget me

I wish that I could hold him in
Just one more warm embrace
I call to mind with teary eyes
The snapshot of my hero's face

Every day when I wake up
I wonder if he's ok
This fact of life weighs down my heart:
He could die any day.

Praying through the night
Staring longingly at moon
Does he see it too, and think of me?
Please, Daddy, come home soon.

Pick myself up, time to keep going
Although it should, life does not stop.
I must keep living, I push ahead,
It's time to wipe up all my spilled teardrops.

Deep breath now,
Breathe in, breathe out,
'Cause for my hero,
I'm staying strong
Deep breath now,
Try to remember
That he still loves me
Although he's gone

--

I refuse to consider
All the possibilities
So I just keep living,
Believing desperately

That God is watching over him
That he'll be ok
That angels guard his sleep,
That he'll be coming home to stay

Feeling so selfish,
Wishing that he was with me
We could be outside together
Laughing, playing, completely free.

Daddy, don't get me wrong
I'm so very proud of you
I just wish your service to our country
Didn't hurt me so much, too.

I call upon my snapshot,
Already, it's starting to fade
I wait for the time when I will no longer need it
The time when I will throw it away

But until then, I'll be hoping
And praying with all my might
That somewhere around a year from now
We'll be hugging each other tight

So I
Take a deep breath now,
Breathe in, breathe out
'Cause for my hero,
I'm staying strong
Deep breath now,
Breathe in, breathe out,
Try to remember
He'll be home before long.

Kelsi C is a fourteen year old child of a military family.

2010 Disability Inclusion Sunday, June 27

The Wounds of War: The Church as a Healing Community

“We don’t have any idea what the cost is. I hope the church is ready. We must be ready.”

The Rev. Roger Ezell, Vietnam War veteran who lives with disabilities

Is the church ready? Are we prepared to be a community of healing for those who are living now, and will be living for many years, with the wounds of war? Every day the news media reports on the physical and emotional costs of war. One in five soldiers returning from Iraq or Afghanistan lives with major depression or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Suicide rates and domestic violence have soared. Is the church prepared?

Members of the PDC Leadership Team believe that the physical, emotional, and spiritual wounds are intertwined. We believe that the church can and must be a community of healing. This is the challenge we are issuing to the church in our 2010 Inclusion Sunday resources.

Many congregations are divided over our nation’s involvement in the current wars. We believe that in our ministry we must relate to veterans and their families regardless of our convictions about war. Our ministry and pastoral care must transcend politics!

At the heart of the church’s ministry of healing is worship. This is the unique gift of our community of faith. Therefore, our resources begin with poetry, prayers, litanies, and a “Ceremony of Restoration.” Cindy Merton’s article, “Worship Rituals” describes creative rituals used in her congregation. These can be adapted by other churches. We have included two moving poems by Kelsi C., whose father is in the military. Her poetry expresses the pain but also the resilience of one teenager.

In an excellent guide, [Welcome Them Home – Help Them Heal](#) (See Resources), the authors state that the primary role of the church is to create a safe environment that is conducive to healing. The Rev. Neil Hering calls pastoral care “The Journey of Traveling Together.” The Rev. Karen A. Craven describes a safe, sacred place in her essay, “Pastoral Presence With Veterans.”

It is a space of silence created by mutual vulnerability. It is a space of uncertain ambiguity where strangers meet with fear and trembling. It is a heart space of love that has no height or depth.

In “The Journey Back: A Personal Story,” the Rev. Roger Ezell lists three essentials of the church’s ministry: awareness, listening, and advocacy. Dr. James Munroe’s article, “8 Battlefield Skills That Make Life in the Civilian World Challenging,” raises awareness of the challenges of reintegration. In “A Brief Guide for Congregations Welcoming Home Those Members Who Are Veterans,” the Rev. Tom Williams offers several basic suggestions for churches.

The church’s ministry must extend beyond the individual family. The Rev. Bonnie Orth offers practical help for churches in “Domestic Violence and Veterans: An Increasing Problem.” In his powerful article, “Children of the Racket’s Red Glare,” the

Rev. Ralph Garlin Clingan personalizes the wounds of war inflicted on children. Lynn Cox describes family issues from the perspective of a military mom and grandmother in “The Church’s Journey: Caring for Our Military Members and Their Families.” Amy Blumenshine in “Aid to Veterans Follows the Way of Love” encourages loved ones to follow the ways of Jesus.

The closing resource in this collection is another poem by Kelsi C., “Moving On.” It is the hope and prayer of the PDC Leadership Team that the 2010 Inclusion resources will help members of the military and their families to “move on” and that your congregation will “move on” in its healing ministries.

Rev. Bebe Baldwin
Moderator, PDC

Offering Our Gifts

New From Presbyterians for Disability Concerns (PDC)

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.

I Cor. 12:4-6

Offering Our Gifts is a PowerPoint presentation with pictures and audio that features the personal experiences of persons with disabilities, “Access Your Heart” by poet Sarah Nettleton, and “Beatitudes for an Inclusive Church” by Bebe Baldwin. The resource celebrates the valuable gifts people with disabilities bring to the Body of Christ and offers practical suggestions for including people with disabilities in the church’s life.

Originally developed by the PDC Leadership Team for orientation of commissioners to the 219th General Assembly (2010), the PowerPoint is appropriate and recommended for all church gatherings. It is available at:

<http://www.pcusa.org/ga219/home/offering-our-gifts/player.html>

Worship Rituals and Practices

Cindy Merten

In *Welcome them Home, Help them Heal: Pastoral care and ministry with service members returning from war*, (www.welcomethemhomebook.com) the authors commit a chapter to suggested healing rituals to be used throughout the church year. A series of spiritual exercises that correspond with the church year are intended to provide a means for healing and restoration. These include an Advent and Lenten heart-cleansing ritual, a midweek worship series on *How to be a People of Faith in a Time of War*, a mid-week Lenten series on *How to be a People of Faith in a Time of War*, and suggestions for Memorial Day, Independence Day, All Saints Day, and Armistice/Veteran's Day.

A Veteran's Processional

Healing rituals can take many forms. One particularly meaningful ritual in our congregation included inviting veterans of different generations to lead in a processional as they carried in the Bible, the baptismal pitcher, the communion cup and plate at the beginning of our worship service. On the Sunday closest to July 4th, we invited four members who had all served in the armed forces over several decades to participate together. Four men smartly dressed in their uniforms and spit shined boots proudly processed the elements down the aisle to begin worship. Others who watched were moved as the eldest serviceman walked with his cane and was assisted up the chancel steps by the army chaplain. It seemed that the memories of all who had served merged with the promise of hope as these men walked together in footsteps of faith.



We added a procession of the elements that provides:

- ✚ A visual reminder of the focal points of worship in the Reformed tradition
- ✚ An opportunity for many people, young and old, of all abilities to participate

A Prayer Wall

For the last two Lenten seasons, we have created a place where children, youth and adults can write and tuck their prayers in a wall set aside for that purpose. This concept is reminiscent of the Western or Wailing Wall in Jerusalem where pilgrims come to pray leaving prayers written on small pieces of paper tucked into the crevices of the blocks.

Lenten Prayer Wall



In the tradition of the Western or Wailing Wall, as it is sometimes known, you are invited to write or draw your prayers of thanksgiving, lament, petition and praise. Fold them up and tuck them into the "rock" pockets. Your prayers are private and will not be read, but they will collectively be offered to God in worship.

Sit a moment. read a Psalm. write or draw a prayer. and put it on the wall.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Many churches now have Shawl Ministry groups who meet together for the purpose of prayerfully knitting or crocheting shawls. Sometimes the shawls are called Prayer Shawls, Peace Shawls, Comfort Shawls, etc. The shawl maker begins with prayers and blessings for the recipient, and throughout the process continues in prayer. Upon completion, the shawl is blessed by the group and given to someone in need. Several groups throughout the country send shawls to veterans and families of those fallen. The shawls may be dedicated in the context of a worship service or more privately with the group that made them. See the following websites for more information on Prayer Shawl Ministry.

<http://shawlministry.com>

<http://webpages.charter.net/ps4fs/shawls/>

Praying in Color

Sometimes we simply do not have the words to pray, and as Paul says, the spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. Sybil MacBeth, in her book *Praying in Color*, introduces a method of intercessory prayer that has the potential to engage the spirits of children, youth and adults in an active and visual way. Drawing with markers or crayons and carrying the prayer with you serves as a visual reminder of your prayer. For people whose hearts ache, who don't always have words to express difficult emotions, this form of prayer offers a way to pray for family, friends and the world. For more information, see <http://www.prayingincolor.com/MacBeth.html> or <http://www.prayingincolor.com/examples.html>



Cindy Merten
First Presbyterian Church
Director of Christian Education
1669 W. Maple Rd.
Birmingham, MI 48009

I wish that I could find a place...

Randy Kautto

I wish that I could find a place...

A place where I could heal and regain faith in myself, and again feel the joy and happiness that I so long ago lost – displaced by despair and hopelessness.

A place where my friends live, if only for awhile, for I sorely need to belong...where I am accepted without judgment, and where I am loved for who I am.

A place where forgiveness reigns...where the future will become clearer and brighter...and filled with hope.

A place where I can find spirituality and wisdom, and where I can be embraced by those who know and can show me the path.

This place existed only in my dreams – until now – and I am once again me.

Randy Kautto, Vietnam Veteran

Dec. 20, 2009

<http://www.eft4vets.com/>

A Litany for Veterans

The Rev. Tom Williams

Leader: We pause to remember those who go to war in our name.

Congregation: We give thanks for courage, for love of country, for those who work to bring peace to our world.

L: Remind us, Oh God, that the goal of any war need be justice and peace.

C : On this day, we pause in worship to give thanks to God for veterans.

L: And seek to bind up the wounds of those who served.

C: Enable us to know how to comfort, how to bind up their wounds.

L: And remind us, Dear God, that the widow, the orphan, the widower, and the veteran – all know the cost of war.

C: Challenge us to love the warrior but hate the cost of war.

L: And we pray for a time when peace will reign and swords become plowshares once more, that war be known only in history books.

All: And we give thanks, Gracious God, that you remain with us as we celebrate the service of all who dared to go forth in our name. Remind us that such service is not a movie, an adventure, nor something to be glorified. Remind us that war is a failure by us to overcome hatred with love, injustice with righteousness, violence with peace. We give thanks for those who protect us from such failures. May we truly be Your people and be makers of peace. AMEN.

The Rev. Tom Williams
Whitefish Bay, WI
[TOM JENNIFER WILLIAMS \[revtlee@yahoo.com\]](mailto:revtlee@yahoo.com)

A Litany on Psalm 46

(Note: the second reader regularly interrupts the first reader with the headlines . . .)

Reader One: God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble . . .

Reader Two: Suicide Bomber attacks, two killed, ten injured in town square.

One: Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.

Two: Terrorists strike again! Embassy bombed.

One: There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place, where the Most High dwells. God is within her, she will not fall. God will help her at break of day . . .

Two: Africa hard hit by AIDS; infections booming in Asia and Eastern Europe.

One: Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall . . .

Two: Last Filipinos leave Iraq; kidnapped soldier soon to be released.

One: God's voice lifts, the earth melts . . .

Two: Kidnappings rock Palestinian government; emergency session called.

One: The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Two: Financial dirt discovered on big businesses; lawsuits pending.

One: Come and see the works of the Lord, the desolations God has brought on the earth. God makes wars cease to the end of the earth; God breaks the bow and shatters the spear, God burns the shields with fire.

Two: Martha Stewart gets five months.

One: Be still and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.

Two: Thousands are dying in Sudan; is it genocide?

Both: THE LORD ALMIGHTY IS WITH US; THE GOD OF JACOB IS OUR FORTRESS.

This worship service has been provided for your use and encouragement by Howard Vanderwell and Norma de Waal Malefyt, Resource Development Specialists at the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship. You can reach them with your suggestions and comments at howard.vanderwell@calvin.edu or norma.malefyt@calvin.edu.

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Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Veterans

PTSD Prayer Request List

Veterans

- For those who have been injured
- For those who are healing from physical or psychological wounds
- For those who have witnessed devastation and death
- For those who have lost friends
- For those whose memories affect their daily lives
- For those who struggle with anger, anxiety, mood swings, or depression
- For those who are frustrated by trying to readjust to civilian life
- For those who need to reestablish family roles
- For changes in marriages and relationships with children
- For flexibility in negotiating changing roles in relationships
- For the ability to communicate
- For those who have discomfort being around other people
- For those who feel misunderstood by friends and loved ones
- For those who feel like they have missed significant events in life and cannot catch up
- For those who have problems sleeping
- For those who have trouble keeping a job
- For those who feel left out or like they are no longer needed
- For those who feel stressed or overwhelmed
- For those who feel guilty
- For those who have lost motivation or interest in life
- For those who feel emotionally numb
- For those having problems concentrating
- For those having flashbacks

Families

- For the enormous relief of a safe return
- For those disappointed if the returning veteran is different from how they imagined
- For the changing roles in relationships with the returning vet
- For those who feel underappreciated
- For those who feel no longer needed
- For those caring for a wounded veteran
- For communication and flexibility
- For patience
- For balancing time with the returning veteran and allowing him/her alone time or time with others
- For the additional stress from watching the pain of a veteran
- For those who worry about the redeployment of a loved one
- For young children of veterans who may not remember their parent well
- For older children who may not fully understand and worry about being left again
- For wisdom to parent children of returning veterans well

Those Currently Serving

For physical safety
For those worried about the uncertainties of war
For wisdom to make good decisions in combat
For courage in the face of danger
For compassion for fellow soldiers and civilians
For comfort in distress
For hope and strength

Families left behind

For those who must take on new responsibilities
For those who feel alone or abandoned
For those who worry about the safety of their loved ones
For those who eagerly wait for a phone call or email
For those who must parent alone
For those who miss their mom or dad

For Families of those who have died
For those who constantly miss a lost loved one
For those dealing with feelings of anger, jealousy or guilt
For hope and strength for coming days

Church

For an awareness of needs and a willingness to meet them
For understanding and openness
For providing space for brokenness
For becoming a community that supports the families of soldiers and veterans
For creating a place for those with PTSD to share experiences and find hope
For a willingness to listen and pray
For discerning the balance of giving support and allowing veterans and their families space to heal
For those who will support veterans and their families rebuild marriages, acquaint families, and renegotiate life

*Calvin Institute of Christian Worship
1855 Knollcrest Circle SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546-4402 USA*

Prayers of a VA Chaplain for those with PTSD

Chaplain Richard A. Lutz

O Lord, many of us have tears deep inside of our lives, because we've been hurt in ways that go to the very core of our being, and some of the hurts we carry around have been there for a long, long time – even for years. We experienced a loss from which even today we have not really recovered. We took a beating that ripped into our heart and soul and tore us apart at the deepest place in our life. We went through the betrayal of a trust, the betrayal of a friendship, and still today we find ourselves dealing with its aftereffects and its residue. We suffered the unforgivable at the hands of a parent or the hands of someone we loved, and there's a scar there that breaks open over and over again.

Sometimes our tears come up and get very close to the surface. We can feel them just behind our eyes or even in our eyes. Sometimes they form a big lump in our throat. And then we realize again that they haven't gone away at all, that they're still there, that they've just been buried for awhile and now are back to make themselves known again.

O God, you are the one who looks way down deep inside of all of us. You see and know what no one knows, no one at all except we ourselves. And, not only do you see us and know us, but you also feel things along with us, even the very painful stuff, the deep stuff along with us, and we feel a strange kind of healing taking place. For it's like you care and you understand...and we're no longer left alone with our burdens.

Today, those of us who are struggling inside – who've been broken and hurt and still feel the tears within – we thank you for being there and sharing with us what we cannot bear alone.

-Chaplain Richard A. Lutz, "Prayers of the VA Chaplaincy," Department of Veterans Affairs, Hampton, Virginia, at their 12th Annual Chiefs' Convocation, Washington, D.C., December 6-9, 1997.

Ceremony of Restoration

Words of Welcome

Chaplain

Some of you may have come in here today feeling uneasy about what you were walking into. You may be asking why you would want to participate in a ceremony such as this. As all of you know, returning from a combat zone and trying to once more fit into your community is difficult. This observance today recognizes that trouble. In the American Indian tradition, many tribes provide ceremonies for troops who are deploying to and returning from war. War brings with it a sense of being disconnected and out of balance. The Hopi Indians have a word to describe this feeling of life being out of balance. That word is Koyaanisqatsi, which means a state of life that calls for another way of living. These ritual acts are designed to cleanse the warriors from the horrors of war and to welcome them back to the community. Warriors are respected as important people of wisdom in the tribe. They are held up as models because they have done their duty and protected their tribe. You have developed certain types of wisdom in your military experience that can benefit all of us. We are here today to honor you for your service and to provide a way for you to put some of the experiences of war into a perspective of healing and peace.

Gathering

Reader

We gather today to name our sorrows and share new visions.

We gather to heal our pain and rekindle our hope.

We gather because the journey is long.

We gather because we long for a new day.

May this gathering serve to strengthen, encourage, and renew us.

Purpose

Chaplain

[You were handed a patch from your service branch when you entered the room. Military insignias represent more than simply a unit to which a service member is assigned. A service insignia symbolizes the investment a warrior made in defense of this nation in time of war or peace. What from your military service keeps you from living your life as you would like to live? Choose whatever that may be for you and let this military insignia represent it – whether one thing or many.]

Naming Our Pain

Reader

Save me, O God! The water is up to my neck;

I am sinking in deep mud, and there is no solid ground;

I am out in deep water, and the waves are about to drown me.

I am worn out from calling for help, and my throat is aching.

I have strained my eyes, looking for your help.

I am like a stranger to my relatives, like a foreigner to my family.

Answer me, God, in the goodness of your constant love;

In your great compassion turn to me!
Don't hide yourself from your servant;
I am in great trouble – answer me now!
I wish I had wings like a dove.
I would fly away and find rest.
But I am in pain and despair;
Lift me up, O God, and save me!

(All): TAKE ME TO A SAFE REFUGE, FOR YOU ARE MY PROTECTOR.

[Psalm 69:1-3, 8, 16-17, 29; Psalm 61:2b-3a; Psalm 55:6 (GNT)]

Releasing the Past

Chaplain

[The combat helmet on the left of the table signifies the military. When you are ready, you are invited to place the insignia representing your service in the combat helmet. As you do so, you are placing your self, what or who your insignia represents, into the container. Once you have placed your insignia in the helmet, please return to your seat.]

A prayer from India says, in part:

**All: Like an ant on a stick both ends of which are burning,
I go to and fro without knowing what to do,
Like the inescapable shadow that follows,
The weight of war can haunt me.**

Lighting of the Memorial Candle

[The book lying in the middle of the table lists the names of all the troops who have died in the Global War on Terror. The names are listed in chronological order according to the date each person died. We light this candle in their memory and in appreciation for their sacrifice.]

Counting our Losses

Reader

Remembrance is a sacred moment when we raise up and hold up to the light of eternity, those who have given life itself.

In the rising of the sun and in its going down,
We remember them.
In the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter,
We remember them.
In the opening of buds and in the rebirth of spring,
We remember them.
In the blueness of the sky and in the warmth of summer,
We remember them.
In the rustling of leaves and in the beauty of autumn,
We remember them.

When we are weary and in need of strength,

We remember them.

When we are lost and sick at heart,

We remember them.

When we have joys we yearn to share,

We remember them.

So long as we live, they too shall live,

All: For they now are part of us, as we remember them.

Mourners Kaddish (Jewish Tradition)

An Act of Restoration

Chaplain

[You have placed into the combat helmet an insignia representing the weight of war or other experiences during your time of service, that haunt you. The fountain on the right end of the table symbolizes forgiveness, peace and restoration. Many Jewish people observe a custom on the first afternoon of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, where they walk to flowing water, such as a creek or river, and empty their pockets into the water, symbolically casting off their sins. The flowing water from the fountain and the river rocks which continue from there, stand for a stream which takes away the emotional and spiritual wounds of war. When you are ready, you are invited to come forward again and take your insignia from the combat helmet and, leaving the weight of war on that side, move your insignia to the rocks flowing from the fountain on the right side of the table and return to your seat.]

Prayer

Chaplain

God, you have delivered us from the scourge of war. May we who have been scarred by war be reconciled to each other, to our enemies, and to you. May we become peacemakers in all that we do. May we always be channels and instruments of your peace. Grant to those who are as yet untouched by war the great gift of continued freedom from the terrible agonies of armed conflict. We ask this in the peace which you alone can provide. Amen.

Words of Parting

As we close our gathering, let us read the following together:

May what is wounded in my life be restored to good health.

May I be patient with the time it takes to heal.

May I find moments of beauty and joy to sustain me.

May I keep hope in my heart.

[All participants are invited to take a stone with them if they so desire as a reminder of restoration.]

Restoration Ceremony Notes

Preparation Set-Up: This service may be conducted in any type of setting. In the front of the group is a table covered with a blue, green, red or beige tablecloth. (We use a blue cloth and a red cloth one on each end of the table. This arrangement reinforces the movement from one side to another.) It is not recommended that white be used, as it ordinarily symbolizes an altar cloth. On the table are two containers – one on each end. On the left end of the table is a vessel symbolizing military service. This could be a canteen cup, a bowl covered with cammo cloth, a helmet, etc. (We use a WWII helmet that our Chief has. On the right is a large vessel filled with river stones, in the center of which is placed an inner container. Coming from the large vessel with the stones are other river stones which are arranged as if flowing from the large container. During the Restoration part of the service, water will be poured over the river stones to surround the inner container. (We use a small fountain for running water with the river stones arranged to give the impression of a stream flowing from the fountain to the edge of the table. A container of rock or natural looking pottery is placed among the rocks.) These containers (or fountain) represent the move toward healing, forgiveness and restoration. Military unit patches or service insignias (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines) for each of the service members or Veterans will be provided by Chaplain Service. These patches may be given to the Veterans following the ceremony for a remembrance. (We purchase the insignias therefore it is cost prohibitive to give them to the Veterans following the ceremony. Instead, we invite anyone who would like to take a stone as a remembrance of the move to healing.) Veterans may also use their own personal insignias and/or unit patches. A candle of remembrance is set behind a three ring binder (We use a black one) containing the names and dates of all the troops killed in Iraq. (To include Veterans from other wars and conflicts, such as Vietnam, we state that we are using the names in the book to pay tribute to all American service men and women who have died for our country.) The book is placed in the middle of the table. You can find this list and print it from www.iraq.pigstye.net/wd1.php. (This is an antiwar site, but it's the only place we could find a list like this one. It's amazing how meaningful it is to the Veterans. Everyone who moves his/her insignia to the water container stops in front of that book and some of them look up the name of a buddy.) The candle may be lit before the ceremony or during the **Counting our Losses** part.

Staff and Volunteers: The service is conducted by a chaplain and a reader. Meditative music may be used before and after the ceremony. (We have found that silence works better than music because music before and after seems to remind people of a church service.) Silence is maintained until the ceremony begins. Staff members need to be available to Veterans following the ceremony so that any who need to debrief have resource people accessible. Be prepared for some Veterans to express strong emotions during the service.

Bonita Barnes
Veterans Administration

On Peace and War

We are aware, acutely aware in your presence,
of the grind of tanks,
of the blast of mines hidden against human flesh,
of the rat-tat-tat of sniper fire.

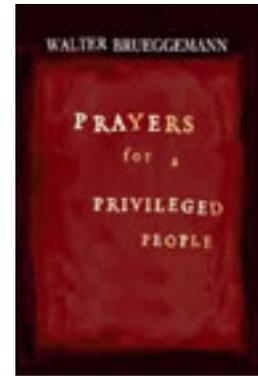
We are aware of the stench of death,
bodies of our own military women and men,
bodies of countless Iraqis,
and the smell makes us shiver.

Such smells and sounds are remote from us,
but not remote from us are bewilderment,
and anxiety, and
double-mindedness.

We are bewildered,
whether we are liberators or invaders,
whether they are terrorists or freedom fighters,
whether we should yearn for peace or savor victory.

The world has become so strange,
and our place in it so tenuous,
where gray seems clearer than the white purity of our hopes,
or the darkness of our deathly passions.
There is so little agreement among us,
perhaps so little truth among us,
so little, good Lord, that we scarcely know how to pray,
or for what to pray.

We do know, however, to whom we pray!
We pray to you, creator God, who wills the world good;



We pray to you, redeemer God, who makes all things new.

We pray to you, stirring Spirit, healer of the nations.

We pray for guidance,

And before that, we pray in repentance,

for too much wanting the world on our own terms.

We pray for your powerful mercy,

to put the world – and us – in a new way,

a way after Jesus who gave himself,

a way after Jesus who confounded the authorities and

who lived more excellently.

Whelm us by your newness, by peace on your terms –

the newness you have promised,

of which we have seen glimpses in your Son

who is our Lord.

-Walter Brueggemann, *Prayers for a Privileged People* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008), pp. 65-66. Used by permission.

The Journey Back: A Personal Story

by The Rev. Roger Ezell

as told to The Rev. Bebe Baldwin

Christmas trees stacked on a flatbed truck, a scene in which he was running away from battle -- these were the recurring dreams that haunted Roger after his service as a medic in Vietnam. For years he lived with undiagnosed PTSD and a series of outbursts he called “career-altering moments.” Finally, an intervention by trusted friends led to the beginning of his long journey back.

Roger’s dreams took him back to the Mekong Delta where he woke in the middle of the night to recognize the sound of incoming mortars and small arms fire. Forty-three U.S. soldiers were being attacked by fifteen hundred Vietcong. He remembers looking at the bodies the morning after the firefight and thinking, “Americans and Vietcong – how equal they are.”

Many years passed before Roger understood his dreams. The Christmas trees were body bags loaded on a Huey. Explaining the other dream he said, “I had always asked myself, ‘Why was I running away?’ I finally realized that I was running toward the guns because we had been ordered to the perimeter to bring back the wounded.”

Shortly after the battle Roger experienced the first of what he called his “career altering moments.” He lost his temper with a superior. The consequences of his action were averted only because his commanding officer already had orders for Roger to go to Europe to sing with the army chorus.

After his discharge Roger studied music at the University of Iowa. “One of the first things I learned was not to talk about Vietnam. Nobody wanted to hear. I didn’t know how to react to the student demonstrations.”

After graduation Roger taught public school music. He had another “career-altering moment” when he lost his temper, used inappropriate language, and threw a music stand. That ended his teaching career.

A call to Ministry of Word and Sacrament led to another career. Roger said he had always loved the church. He had been an active lay person and had worked with army chaplains. He had even memorized the entire Gospel According to Mark. “I love to tell the story,” he said.

After his ordination he served churches in Missouri and Minnesota. He remembers times when he was “on the verge of career-altering moments.”

In 2003, perhaps because of the Iraq war, he “felt pressure growing on me.” Roger had shared his story with an elderly couple who were church members and trusted friends. He often went to their home for coffee, rolls, and conversation. One day they began a conversation with the words, “We have observed ...” They described his startle response and his reaction to their dogs. Roger recalls, “There was a new dog that was jumping all over and I was jumping.” His friends were able to link his behavior and anxiety to his war experience. Roger said that his friends were not “professionals;” they were not psychologists or social workers. But, they were sensitive people who were able to describe what they had observed. They suggested a resource, a counselor with the Vietnam Veterans of America.

Roger accepted their suggestion and saw the counselor. “I had a life-changing breakdown right there in her office ... a life-changing moment under the supervision of a professional. I asked her, ‘Am I going crazy?’ She reached for a brochure, ‘PTSD does not mean you’re going crazy.’” For Roger, that was “the beginning of the journey back from depression and anxiety, not just for me, but for my wife, my family, my friends.”

Roger described his counselor as “my first listener ... It wasn’t because my wife and family and friends didn’t want to listen. They didn’t know what to listen for.” The

counselor became not only Roger's listener but also his advocate, helping him to navigate the Veterans Administration (VA) system which he described as a "maze."

Roger's health has been further complicated by lymphoma which is now in remission. He blames his cancer on his exposure to Agent Orange. About this he says, "The VA takes some responsibility."

With his healing journey has come "payback time" for Roger. He feels called to help others who are living with the wounds of war to begin their own hard journeys. He is an active member and speaker for the Disability Concerns Task Force of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area. He is using his gifts of music in the psychiatric units of the local VA hospital.

Roger shared his concerns for those serving in the current wars. He said that he and others in Vietnam did only one tour of duty. "How about those who are on their second or third tour? We don't have any idea what the cost is. I hope the church is ready. We must be ready!"

How can the church be ready? Roger listed awareness, listening, and advocacy. We must be aware of the facts about the issues faced by military personnel and their families. We must be willing to listen without passing judgment. We must be willing to advocate for adequate resources and, as we have opportunity, to advocate for veterans and their families. "Where would I be?" he asked, "without awareness, listening, and advocacy?"

8 Battlefield Skills that Make Life in the Civilian World Challenging

1. **Safety.** Military personnel in the war zone must be on constant alert for danger. Everyday events at home, like a traffic jam, can trigger a sense of danger and vulnerability. The Marine/Sailor may seek constant control and vigilance. People accustomed to safety may not understand.
2. **Trust and Identifying the Enemy.** To survive, military personnel must learn quickly not to trust in the war zone. It's better to assume that everyone is the enemy until proven otherwise. At home, mistrust and suspiciousness severely damage most important relationships, including marriage.
3. **Mission Orientation.** The Primary task in the military is to complete the mission ordered from above. All attention and resources are directed to its completion. In the civilian world, individuals are expected to take initiative, seek out tasks, balance competing priorities and decide for themselves how to proceed.
4. **Decision Making.** In the war zone, following orders is critical to personal safety, the well-being of comrades and the success of the mission. Military personnel whose rank requires decision making must give life-and-death orders, even when all the information is not available. At home, especially in families, decision making tends to be cooperative. People take time to consider questions and options and seek to seek out additional information.
5. **Response Tactics.** In the war zone, survival depends on automatic response to danger. It is critical to act first-with maximum firepower-and think later. Keeping all supplies and equipment, including weapons, clean, well-maintained and in their proper place is critical to response. At home, messy rooms and dirty dishes feel dangerous, and the Marine/Sailor's response to these realities may intimidate or frighten family members.
6. **Predictability and Intelligence Control.** In the war zone, troops are in serious danger if the enemy can predict their movements, routine, location or intentions. Military personnel learn to vary their routine and withhold information. But at home, employers expect routines and children need them.
7. **Emotional Control.** Combat exposes military personnel to overwhelming events that elicit fear, loss and grief. Yet the job required that they move on quickly, staying alert and vigilant. The range of acceptable emotions may narrow to anger and irritability. Drugs and alcohol help sustain emotional numbing, even after the Marine/Sailor comes home. Emotions that are dangerous in combat are critical for relationships at home.
8. **Talking about the War.** It's hard to talk about how the war changed the individual. War may challenge the soldier's core beliefs about humanity and justice in the world. There are few opportunities to reflect on this in the combat situation. At home, it is difficult to explain to civilians-to people who live in safety-what happened in combat, what decisions were made, why those decisions were necessary. Talking about the war may overwhelm the Marine/Sailor with horror or grief. And the Marine/Sailor may be afraid that their stories will upset people they care about or lead to rejection.

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James F. Munroe Ed.D., Boston VA Healthcare System, james.munroe@va.gov

A BRIEF GUIDE FOR CONGREGATIONS WELCOMING HOME THEIR MEMBERS WHO ARE VETERANS

A Ministry with and For Veterans

The Rev. Tom Williams

Five things a congregation can do for vets returning from war

1. Acknowledge that Vets are part of the congregation and welcome them home.
2. Accept their self definition – some want to be heroes, some just want to be left alone. Encourage all to know they are welcome.
3. Prepare to listen to those who ache. Some will ache and some will not. And listen to the family. Prepare for changes in relationships. Don't expect things to be the same.
4. Prepare to aid those who need help. Offer information on possible sources for help to all the congregation not just vets.
5. Dare to pray publicly for victims of war including vets.

Resources (Web sites) [NB: The following is a short list of resources. Some are government agencies and some are non-traditional veterans groups. Do not be put off by the name or the politics of the name. ALL are very pro-vet and put that first. For example, Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) is an old anti-war group and pretty radical but they also are one of the main reasons that Agent Orange and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) are now recognized by the Veterans Administration (VA) as causes of disabilities. One needn't agree with any group's politics to receive help.]

1. The National Center for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (a center funded by the Veteran's Administration) has a booklet titled "Returning from the War Zone: A Guide for Families of Military Members" It can be found at:
<http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/ncdocs/manuals/GuideforFamilies.pdf>
2. The New York On Line Access to Health (NOAH) has a number of links to sites for resources for veterans. It can be found at:
<http://www.noah-health.org/en/mental/disorders/ptsd/complications/veterans.html>
3. Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) maintains a web site with many resources to include veterans' services and/or counseling resources. They can be found at: <http://www.vvaw.org/mc/>.
4. The National Veterans Foundation provides phone assistance at 1-888-777-4443 from 9 AM to 9 PM PST and offers counseling, referrals, and information.
<http://www.nvf.org/>

5. Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) maintains a very good web site with numerous links to other organizations and/or governmental entities. They can be found at <http://www.ivaw.org/vetresources>.

The Rev. Tom Williams
Whitefish Bay, WI
TOM JENNIFER WILLIAMS [revtlee@yahoo.com]

Pastoral Presence with Veterans

Karin A. Craven¹

When I stop by for a visit, one veteran opens up about his experiences as an army medic in Korea, after weeks of not talking about anything personal. He hasn't joined the usual American Legion Hall or the VFW because he doesn't want to sit down at bars and rehash war stories. He hasn't talked much about his experience over the years, and only to a few people. He tells me about the sparse language veterans use when they talk about their war experience. It is as if he is giving me a grammar or lexicon to understand his buddies and himself. He says, "Veterans don't embellish what happened. We name things clear as we can. It doesn't take a lot of words. It's writers who've never lived through war that use a lot of words to describe it. You can tell the truth simply." Our conversation is punctuated by a lot of silence into which he speaks slowly and haltingly, almost as if to himself. Yet he looks into my eyes to make sure I know his bottom line: the meaning of his experiences can't be expressed fully or even in a lot of words.

Truth and simplicity are important to this veteran and to many others who told me their stories. Telling the truth, I think, allows one to inhabit more fully the truth of one's identity. It allows one to get more comfortably into the skin of who we are, who we have been, and who we are becoming. Telling the truth of ourselves often involves small talk here and simple talk there, to different people at various times and in diverse places. It is often too scary to reveal even little bits of our lived truth to just one person, let alone confess it to God. Sometimes we don't even have the words to hold experiences larger than ourselves.

What can contain, even embrace, our individual truth is the space of relationships that exist between you and me. This is the space that allows people to engage with the truth of who they are, with the yearning that is on the tips of their tongues, the yearning they want to share but haven't yet. This is the space into which people can pour out their

hearts. What does it look and feel like? How do I know when I am in that space with another person? How is that space created?

It is a space of silence created by mutual vulnerability. It is a space of uncertain ambiguity where strangers meet with fear and trembling. It is a heart space of love that has no height or depth. It is intimidating to initiate pastoral visits with people of uncommon experience, namely with those who have been in combat. It is just as scary for veterans to open up to people who represent the church, peace and reconciliation, and God knows what else. It is awareness of their vulnerability and my own that is the bridge of connection, the common ground of our meeting. I imagine this space of vulnerability in theological ways. The doctrine of the Trinity grounds my pastoral presence, holds and sustains the interplay of silence and speech, from which new life can spring.

The Trinitarian emphasis of God, who desires wholeness and abundant life for all of creation now, even in the face of limitations and death, is a generous God. Imagine each person of the Godhead: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each person is separate and distinct, yet related in their life together. Now imagine the space of their life together. First of all, it is a space that has spatial and temporal dimensions. It is a large roomy space, generous enough to contain the distinct uniqueness of separate yet connected lives. It is also large enough to hold the past, present, and future aspects of their common life together in abundant love.

Such attentiveness to the contours of the inner life of God is also tending to the trustworthy dimensions of our individual and communal lives. As Christians we confess we are made in the image and likeness of God. We are relational creatures who exist in time and space. We take up a certain amount of room in relation to one another, sometimes squished together so close we can't breathe, let alone be ourselves or feel the winds of the Spirit moving in and among us. At other times there is breathing space that provides us with enough distance and perspective to see the other persons clearly, to hear their voices distinctly, and maybe even discern the presence of God with us. The Trinitarian emphasis upon the radical particularity of each person within the Godhead is

the interpretive key to the “otherness” of veterans as well as the roomy space of encounter. I don’t collapse my experience into theirs. I allow a listening distance into which veterans can speak. I sit close enough to lean into their words.

The army medic finishes his story with a request. “Will you pray for me?” I pray for him. After weeks of praying together for the nation and world, this personal request is intimate and speaks volumes. His words and silence form my spoken words of prayer. The prayer space we inhabit together is large and deep, blessed with God’s loving presence.

¹These comments come from a particular place and time, role and responsibility. The context was the VA Medical Center in Minneapolis where I was a chaplain intern for a semester in 2009, having already graduated with a MDiv. degree from Luther Seminary. As the wife of a disabled veteran who also receives care at that facility, I arrived at that ministry setting with many experiences of having received good medical care there.

The Journey of Traveling Together

We travel a road where the destination is less important than the journey of traveling together.

Neil Hering

Throughout our nation, troops are returning home from the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Their adjustment from military to civilian life has its challenges. My focus in this article will be on providing pastoral care to the returning veteran. I shall reinforce basic principles of pastoral care in engaging the returning veteran. As a chaplain, I am most familiar and comfortable with pastoral care rather than spiritual care. Pastoral care is shaped by the cross and has a rich history within the Christian Church. God's love is revealed and incarnated in Christ. This determines the pastoral care we give. When I use the term pastoral care, I am referring to either a lay person or pastor representing the Christian community who gathers in worship and cares for one another. Not anyone can do this. Pastoral care is a ministry of the church with the person who is chosen carefully, evaluated, trained (Stephen Minister, Befriender, CPE), commissioned and supervised. Within pastoral care the pastoral visit is primary.

The Pastoral Visit: Setting it Up

Setting up the pastoral visit requires us to be available. We need to be willing to take the time needed to build a good relationship. This does not happen overnight or with just one phone call. In being available, we allow the veteran to set the schedule. What works best for them? This means we are committed to regular contacts over an extended period of time. To make that happen may involve failed attempts and repeated efforts. Persistence and flexibility are necessary traits. It is not enough to ask "How are you doing?". We find out how the veteran is doing by being available and committed to spending time with him or her. The pastoral visit is a personal visit. This is a hands shaking, eyes seeing and ears hearing one to one visit. The cell phone and the computer are technological aids that make the personal visit possible, not a substitute for them. To set up the initial visit, and most likely the follow-up ones, we need to be the initiators. We do not wait for the veteran to return our phone call or email. If that were the case, I predict that 95% of the time it will not happen. One of the strengths of pastoral care is our reaching out to people. Most people see that act itself as caring.

Roadblocks

Roadblocks to the pastoral visit rise up. Suspicion comes naturally to the veteran because of their military training and war experience. To be suspicious is necessary for their survival. The enemy is unknown. Returning home, the veteran does not easily or quickly shed that suspicion. To trust the wrong person has the potential for disappointment, great harm or even death. What adds to the mistrust is the strong civilian opposition to the war. What that means for pastoral care is that we need to keep clear the difference between our opinions about the war and our support of the returning veteran. Pastoral care transcends politics and patriotism. Representatives of the church have spoken out against the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Even though support for the veteran is affirmed, that does not automatically defuse the skepticism the veteran may have about our pastoral care. In addition, if their

pastor or members of the parish have not been in ongoing contact with the veteran during their deployment, that needs to be immediately addressed upon their return. For those of us who have not served in the military, we have no idea what the men and women have faced. We are the outsiders. Most likely we shall be tested. Trust needs to be earned. The bottom line is that those of us who reach out to the veteran have the responsibility to build that trust.

Land Mines

In the pastoral visit, landmines need to be identified and avoided. When it comes to pastoral care, we cannot be judgmental about the war, combat actions or civilian casualties. Most of us have not been there. We do not know firsthand what the veteran faces or lives with. To pass judgment will have the door slammed shut and padlocked. Closely aligned with being judgmental is giving advice. That is to be avoided like the plague. Again, we have not been there. We do not know what it is like to make life or death decisions in split seconds, to witness horrific war-time acts on the battlefield, to be deployed in a war zone for an extended amount of time or to live with the fear of being redeployed. The lack of confidentiality is to be prevented. Confidentiality is basic to pastoral care. When violated, trust is betrayed. Trust is intrinsic to caring. When we are uncertain about whether or not to keep certain concerns confidential, we talk with the veteran. We share conversations with another only with their permission. The only exception is when the person is a threat to harm self or others. Another land mine is loss of boundaries. We are to be clear what our purpose is. Before each visit, we need to consciously remind ourselves what our purpose is for coming. (e.g. In this visit I am here for us to get to know each other.) Along with that, we need to be clear what is not our purpose. (e.g. I am not here to solve the veteran's problems or be their therapist.) Expectations of ourselves and of the veteran can lead us astray. They get in the way of listening and caring. When we have predetermined what should happen, we can no longer be where the veteran is. To avoid that, we need to be conscious of the expectation we have both of ourselves and the veteran. Do I want the veteran to like me? Do I expect that in this visit the veteran will "bare his/her soul?" Do I expect that I will help the veteran? What do I mean by "help?" Our need to "take care of" someone gets in the way of caring. Remembering for whom we are here and focusing on the veteran help keep expectations in check. Connected to expectations is asking questions. "Why" questions can easily put the veteran on the defensive. For whose benefit are we asking questions? Many times our own curiosity determines what we ask. We wait for the veteran to decide what to share with us, especially personal war experiences.

Building the Relationship

The connection between the veteran and the pastoral care provider is more than just two persons coming together. We not only represent the community of faith, we also restore and build that connection. The veteran may have been isolated and even alienated by what was or was not done. For that reason, we need to provide a safe and welcoming environment. We find out from the veteran where and when they would like to meet. Each person is different and the level of safety may vary from one time to the next. We get to know each other by intentionally remaining with topics that are safe and by discovering what the veteran likes or does not like. In getting to know each other, we build trust. That takes time. How long? We do not know the timeline. To be honest and genuine will mean at times acknowledging our failures and mistakes. We are not going to always say the right thing at the right time. When that happens and we are aware of it, then bring that out into the open. We may or may not have to apologize. That allows the veteran to see that we too are human. What an honor that the relationship can get to that point where we can affirm that as human beings together we are also part of the people of God.

The Pastoral Visit: Listening

Listen, then listen, and then listen some more! To listen is to be actively involved in picking up the depth, intensity and significance of what is being shared. We listen in order to hear. We hear in order to understand. That is the closest we can get to “understanding” what the veteran has gone through. At the same time we admit to ourselves that we shall never fully or completely understand what they have experienced. We listen to hear what the veteran is saying. We listen to hear what the veteran has gone through. We listen to understand what the veteran is going through. Through listening, we bring healing. Listening is a sacred mission of pastoral care. That is a gift from God to them through us. Listening allows the veteran to set the agenda. We go where he or she chooses to go or not go. Many years ago when I was starting out in chaplaincy ministry, I remember what a psychiatrist said to our Clinical Pastoral Education group at the University of Minnesota Hospitals. Referring to cancer patients, he said, “The person will only tell you as much as he or she senses you are comfortable with.” Not only do we work on being comfortable in listening to what is said but also to what is not said, in other words silence. We do not have to fill in empty spaces with words. We become comfortable in being together in silence. The writer of Ecclesiastes is right on in telling us there is “...a time to speak and a time to be silent.” Listening full of care enables us to determine that right time. When we speak, our response is to what we hear from the veteran rather than what we want to say. When Jesus arrived in Bethany too late to prevent his friend Lazarus’ death, He heard the anguish and deep disappointment in Mary and Martha’s words, “Lord, if You had only been here.” In hearing that, Jesus was “deeply moved in spirit and troubled.” That is listening in its fullness when we too are deeply touched by what we hear.

Conclusion

We travel a road where the destination is less important than the journey of traveling together. Sometimes we are forced to take detours, hit potholes and brake as we come upon sharp curves. The road is far from being straight and smooth. In providing pastoral care, we with the community of faith travel the road together with the veteran in the conviction that we are not abandoned. God’s spoken Word of Promise is now fulfilled in the flesh and blood of Christ among us. As Christ incarnates God’s love to us, we too make human Christ’s love for others. As Christ’s disciples today, that makes our care pastoral.

ADDENDUMS

Pastoral Care: Areas of Concern

Within pastoral care and counseling, these are the areas of concern that need ongoing response and further development: signs and symptoms of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD); the moral, psychological and spiritual impact of war, combat, evil, killing; guilt and shame; the pastoral use of Confession and Absolution both individual and corporate; the effect of ongoing exposure to violence; the challenges to reintegration within the family, church, community and society.

Pastoral Care: Referrals

The pastoral care provider needs to be alert to the following signs for referral:

Explosive outbursts of anger

Substance abuse

Risk-taking (e.g. reckless driving)
Losses due to anger, sleep and memory problems (e.g. job loss and school failure)
Domestic violence
Inability to establish/ maintain intimate relationships
Depression
Hyper-vigilance
Intrusive memories
Nightmares
Guilt
Intense anxiety and panic
Chronic headaches
Sensitivity to light or noise
Changes in behavior
Trouble concentrating
Mood changes; irritability
Confusion
Trouble concentrating
Feeling unusually tired
Self-imposed isolation
Emotional shut-down
Sexual dysfunction

Neil Hering graduated from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in 1967; then took a year of CPE at the University of Minnesota Hospitals; after that, Neil received a call to become the first fulltime Protestant Chaplain at the University of Minnesota Hospitals and was there from 1968 to 1980. Neil was with Lutheran Social Service and chaplain at Friendship House, a treatment center for sexually abused teenage girls, from 1980 to 1982. Neil served as a chaplain with the State of Minnesota at Oak Terrace Nursing Home from 1982 to 1990. Finally, Neil was chaplain at the Minnesota Veterans Home, Minneapolis, from 1990 to 2007, and is now retired. email: hering_neil@yahoo.com

Domestic Violence and Veterans: An Increasing Problem

The Rev. Bonnie M. Orth

Domestic violence is a pattern of controlling, abusive, or violent behaviors used with an intimate partner. It may be physical, emotional or psychological, sexual, verbal, or financial and may include isolating the victim, minimizing, denying, blaming, and using children to control the victim. It is an issue of power and control, not of anger and losing control. Domestic violence happens in all communities and crosses all social, economic, and cultural borders. While 90 to 95% of domestic violence victims are female, there are also male victims.

Domestic violence is becoming an increasing problem for war veterans and their families. In a 2009 article from WeNews entitled, "Veteran Domestic Violence Remains Camouflaged," commentator Stacey Bannerman writes, "Domestic violence among veterans has reached historic frequency." Helen Benedict writes in her new book, The Lonely Soldier: The Private War of Women Serving in Iraq, "... post-traumatic stress disorder rates appear to be higher among Iraq war veterans than among those who have served in Afghanistan or even, many believe, in Vietnam. One of the symptoms of this disorder is uncontrollable violence."

Estimates of the rate of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) among veterans returning from Iraq range from 12% to 20% with less than half of those seeking help. The effect on families also is great. According to a paper presented at the American Public Health Association Annual Meeting, "You see more marital problems, more behavioral problems in children, more family violence, and the potential for the generational transmission of violence." (American Public Health Association 135th Annual Meeting: Abstract 165759.)

According to The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) research, veterans with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder are two to three times more likely to batter their spouses, partners, families, and children than veterans without PTSD. In addition, there are large numbers of veterans with traumatic brain injuries and substance abuse disorders, as well as veterans who are victims of military sexual trauma, largely unreported, both male and female. These are all separate problems.

Treating PTSD does not mean that the domestic violence will stop. Each problem must be addressed individually. The VA works with veterans dealing with PTSD, brain injuries, and substance abuse disorders. However, domestic violence is dealt with on a community level by community agencies. Community agencies and VA's are learning that they must find ways to collaborate and coordinate treatment and care in order to help victims and families.

The Military Power and Control Wheel at http://www.ncdsv.org/publications_wheel.html developed from the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project in Duluth, Minnesota highlights specific issues of power and control that may be unique to military folks. This wheel is a helpful tool for victims and abusers and identifies the most common behaviors that abusers use against their victims. In addition to the Power and Control Wheel, there is also an Equality Wheel which describes changes necessary to move to non-violence. You may find more information on the Duluth Model at www.theduluthmodel.org

What can you and your church do to help veterans and families dealing with domestic violence?

- You can educate yourself about domestic violence and then provide ways for members of your congregation to learn.
- You can get resources for use by your church from PADVN, Presbyterians Against Domestic Violence Network, at www.pcusa.org/phewa/padvn
- Your church can become a safe place where victims and families can come for help.
- Your pastors can receive training in how to respond best and help victims of domestic violence. After training, we encourage them to break the silence and talk about domestic violence from the pulpit, offering prayers for victims and families, using a domestic violence illustration in a sermon and, if they feel comfortable, preaching about domestic violence. PADVN encourages all trained pastors to preach about domestic violence annually and to offer victims and perpetrators of domestic violence up in prayer on a regular basis.
- Your church can display brochures and posters which include telephone numbers of the domestic violence and sexual assault programs in your area and publicize the National Domestic Violence Hotline number 1-800-799-SAFE(7233) or 1-800-799-3224 (TDD).
- You can reach out to your local domestic violence agency and ask how your church can help them.

For more information on domestic violence, or if you are interested in having PADVN offer a training at your church, contact PADVN at www.pcusa.org/phewa/padvn

The Rev. Bonnie M. Orth is a member of the Presbyterians Against Domestic Violence Network of the Presbyterian Health, Education & Welfare Association (PHEWA).

Children of the Racket's Red Glare

The Rev. Ralph Garlin Clingan

Marine Corps Brigadier General Smedley T. Butler's 1933 book, *The Racket of War* (www.theracketofwar.com) exposed the financial, moral and psychological problems the war racket creates. Now published with Mark Twain's 1910, "The War Prayer" (www.racketofwar.com link). He detailed what USA founding ancestor James Madison wrote about in "Political Observations," 20 April 1795 (www.vermontrepublic.org) that war impoverishes a nation by plunging it into debt and the US should avoid it at all costs. I experienced traumas shared with children of combat veterans, the underside of what I read in Butler, Madison, one of my Iona Community mentors George Macleod and seminary mentor, Arthur C. Cochrane, *The Mystery of Peace* (Elgin IL: Brethren Press, 1986). I have included here some seamier aspects of military service and US history. Not only our beloved Presbyterians for Disability Concerns (PDC) network but all of our social justice networks of the Presbyterian Health, Education & Welfare Association (PHEWA) must address the problems created by combat. We children of the war racket's red glare speak and act and want the church to join us.

Combat creates the need to have enemies. Dad always commented that he killed men who looked like him and shared the same religion. His platoon slaughtered an entire company of German soldiers who surrendered at dawn without firing a shot on orders from his Captain. He woke up every night screaming. We, his unwitting and unwilling enemies, grew up with a bunker mentality. Something always made him mad enough to whip me with his belt and I never knew what that would be. He feared every man in town committed adultery with his wife, my mother, and took it out on her, not physically but psychologically. The same pattern continued into his second marriage. He presented the public persona of a family man, competent factory worker, Labor Union negotiator and member of the Masonic Lodge. In real life, we never knew which mood he would manifest among his bipolar options, which ranged from happy, smiling and nice to hateful, spiteful, depressed and at times, suicidal. Our happiest times occurred when he was at work or away at a Union meeting in Detroit or Chicago. We never had friends over unless we knew for sure he would not be at home. Two movies contend for Best Picture at AAMPAS this year, "Avatar," and "Hurt Locker." They depict anti-war messages; the latter very dramatically, if non-combat folks can stand to sit through it. Mother actually enabled these problems by rationalizing his actions away, even at her emotional expense and refusing to get counseling because she feared telling family secrets to strangers. Can the church even admit this is a problem? Are you an unwitting child of the racket's red glare?

Tickling and teasing that hurt. Dad hurt us with really hard tickling. I can still remember his painful pinches of my ribs, stomach and gonads. I can hear the scrape of a hammer against the wall of a room accompanied by his imitation of a roaring bear scaring me to shed tears of abject terror. He chased my younger brother, then 14, around the yard on our subsistence farm one time with a 2 x 4 board. "Oh," he said, "I was just teasing." He pestered us until we all walked away from him. Wounded by his behaviors, we walked from his polarities into problems of our making until we sought healing. Each of us children reached points in our lives when we realized that the way our relationships malfunctioned directly derived from a seriously conflicted family

context in which our emotional needs could not be met. Getting in touch with our feelings and needs became a path to authentic growth beyond the racket's red glare.

Jealous combative rage, hurtful teasing and tickling manifest problems combat veterans visit on their spouses and children whether they come from Australia, Britain, Canada, Croatia or the USA. The data now available provide useful bases for several generations to find support and healing. Other problems demand our attention. In this brief piece, I will mention only two with which I am familiar because of my career as a Pastor and theological educator. Everywhere, I meet children of the racket's red glare.

Don Winkler, a combat vet of WW 2, wanted to confess the sins of murder he committed as part of his recovery from alcoholism. I worked with Don at the Oakdale Addiction Treatment Center at Iowa University. He went from Pastor to Priest and a wide, ecumenical variety of clergy but they rationalized his murders in the name of the so-called "good war." Finally he found a Pastor who believed all murder is evil and would hear his confession and help Don atone for his sins. Our national addictive culture, as our PHEWA network on addictions knows, includes war addiction. The USA must have enemies and tickles and teases peace advocates until they grow sick and tired of failure and walk away from the struggle. Can we stand the heat of the racket's red glare, or will we walk away, too?

The rationalization of sin and evil done in the name of Just Wars includes Rape, both hetero and homo sexual. The shame that rape creates, combined with the failure of our military services to take such complaints seriously, creates delayed, devastating responses. Male victims of homosexual rape, sometimes gang rape, often delay any confrontation of their shame until panic attacks or relational failures finally drive them into therapy or into a Pastor's or Professor's office. Men and women who lived with these events sought me out for help from my college days until my most recent ministries. Internalized heat from the racket's red glare burns many.

Women victims of rape in US military services have several websites; one devoted to Latinas ("The Rape of Latinas in the US Military"). A Korean elder recently related how as a child he saw US soldiers line up to go into Korean homes to rape women. The Geneva Conventions have no provisions to protect the many Italian, German, North African, Japanese, Vietnamese and other civilians raped by armies during combat and we learned how impotent the Geneva Convention ban on abusing combat veterans and prisoners of war were at Abu Ghraib Prison. Brutalizing women and men of color by the European American members of the US military branches is a well documented historical fact and the day has come when they no longer keep silent about it. They exchange the racket's red, glaring pain for the healing fire of the shalomatic struggle for justice and peace.

The US government amended our treaty with South Korea to abandon holding US military personnel free from the Korean judiciary and place them under Korean law. A European American Army Colonel who beat his Korean wife to death was the first soldier prosecuted under the new arrangement. He appealed to the Army Courts Martial on the basis of military exemption. His appeal denied, Koreans tried and convicted him for his crime. The US has military forces in more than 120 nations; wherever they are, the racket's red glare burns in them and in their relationships with their host nations.

Many members of my family experienced combat. Great grandfather David Clingan was a Horse Boy for the Confederate Cavalry and saw rivers at Antietam and other battle sites run red with blood up to the horses' eyes. Great grandfather William Talley was an Abolitionist who came to Kansas and joined John Brown on his sorties to free slaves in Missouri. Uncles on all sides of my family, Dad, brother, two nephews all participated in combat. They all would go again in a second, as in "Hurt Locker," and "Saving Private Ryan." Will we help children of combat veterans and their parents get the honest help they need so they can achieve strong and spiritual health? Too often the church rationalizes the wounds veterans inflict on others, whether in combat or rapine within and outside combat when they volunteer to participate in the red glare of this racket.

The Rev. Ralph Garlin Clingan, PhD, serves on the PHEWA Board of Directors, at large to the Synod of the Northeast.

The Church's Journey: Caring For Our Military Members and Their Families

By Lynn Cox

The stories are many and varied. They come from far back in history to present. Some have been told. Some stay buried deep in hearts and minds. They are stories of our military members and their families and their issues and challenges that they have faced or are living with day to day. These families and/or military men and women live in your neighborhood, attend your local school, shop at your local grocery, and attend your church.....or maybe don't attend your church. In many cases they may travel through days and nights in silent struggles. Some may be a family or service personnel experiencing anticipatory grief, financial challenges, behavioral issues of children, injuries and disabilities that are visible or invisible,and quietly enduring varying degrees of emotional and spiritual pain.

Where are we as church communities ministering to these families? Do we even know who they are?

Some of our military families stay near their support systems (such as National Guard members called to active duty) so they may remain as part of their familiar local congregations. Some branches of the service have their personnel contained in a unit where families adapt, bond, and identify themselves in that unit but may be stationed geographically away from their hometowns. They may be looking for a temporary church home. Then there are some branches where personnel (and families) are assigned and moved independently...away from their support systems of family/relatives or communities of origin. Service personnel are often taken away from familiar logistical and emotional support needed in daily life and in most cases are subject to deployments and multiple deployments in war zones. They will return at some point to our local churches.

What about the military families in the neighborhood of your church? Check out some of the statistics:

Data from the Department of Veterans Affairs, as reported by the National BeFriender Ministry, states that sixty people are affected closely and feel the impact of every soldier who is deployed to and returns from a war zone. For soldiers themselves, routine activities seem meaningless after the experience of combat. No one comes back unaffected. Families and friends who have adjusted to the soldier's absence must now adjust to the soldier's presence. It is a time of significant transition for everyone.

We have a major health crisis. The Rand Study reports that 1 in 5 U.S. troops is experiencing major depression or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) from serving in the wars of Iraq or Afghanistan.⁽¹⁾ Other conditions resultant from war include Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Combat Operational Stress Reaction, Military Sexual Trauma and Substance Abuse. For people with brain injuries (common among our vets),

one out of two persons suffers from substance abuse. (2) And those head counts don't even take into consideration unhealed mental health and spiritual health wounds of veterans from previous wars. The Department of the Army reports that suicides are at an all time high. In fact they are the highest since such reports were kept beginning in 1980. (3) Some may be categorically under-reported and some kept at bay.

Published research on how the very young react to parents deployed, details that 1 in 5 preschoolers display troubling emotional or behavioral signs. (4) A report from the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs states that nationally we have over half a million children under the age of five waiting for their active duty parents to come home....the most since WWII. (5) Military dependent children of all ages now number over 2 million. (6) Child abuse and neglect have been documented as 42% higher during times when a soldier-parent was deployed. (7)

There are issues of domestic violence. A growing number of active duty Army and Marine soldiers have divorced their spouses.

Jobs may be hard to find or keep. The Department of Veterans Affairs reports that 18% of veterans recently back from tours of duty are unemployed and of those employed since leaving the military, 25% earn less than \$21,840 a year. (8) Emotional stress and changes in structure/routines (such as being used to giving orders or receiving them) has resulted in job losses and a huge increase of vets that are homeless. Duane Kruger, co-director of Anoka County Minnesota's Veteran's Service Office, states that nationally there are an estimated half-million homeless veterans. Of every ten homeless veterans under 45, one is a woman. (9)

The statistics go on and on.

What are some of their stories?

One story tells of a military family re-located to an assigned town searching for a church home. They wanted to fit into/feel part of the life of a local church community. The welcome was superficially friendly....greetings were a quick "Hi, glad to see you" but then those who were greeting quickly turned away to talk to their old friends. No one wanted to learn more about them and invest in a temporary church member.

Another story speaks to the difficulty of a teen becoming accepted in an already existing "tight friendship groups." Sitting as a teen group in pews for worship there was room for all the group except for one. The "new teen" ended up sitting in the row behind -alone. Did the kids intend to hurt the teen? No, they weren't being mean: they grew up together, had gone to school together. They never intentionally thought to include the teen. The teen's unheard cry was... "Oh please, just don't be friendly...please accept me as a friend. My family has moved 9 times in my 14 years. It is very hard for someone to want to be my friend because I will be moving again in a just a year when my Dad gets assigned to a different military base."

In a neighborhood church there was a special activity event, and all of a sudden a mother of a deployed daughter burst into tears and quietly slipped out the door. Life was moving on at full tilt for others, but she had a sudden flash of worry for her daughter's safety in a war zone and didn't feel comfortable in the midst of a "rah rah" activity.

What are some of their issues and needs and what can churches do for support to military families?

It is commonly stated, "When someone joins the military, their family joins too." If deployment is involved, the entire family experiences the emotional roller-coaster of separation and reintegration issues—sometimes over and over. Some children are raised by grandparents as a result of deployments. The military parent has unusual work schedules, often missing important family events (anniversaries, graduations, birthdays, school concerts/events). The frequent and sometimes unpredictable change of schools for children with re-assignments may bring on the challenge of missing deadlines for enrollments, getting academic credits accepted and transferred, as well as leaving old friends and making new. Pets may have to be left behind in moves.

Spouses moving with re-assignments may find obstacles for their employment (such as finding new jobs, needing to relicense in new states for certain professions, finding childcare). Spouses take over different household jobs and family leadership during deployment which then needs to be redefined when their deployed spouse returns. There may be stress on the couple's relationship. It is a reality that the returning vet may suffer from combat stress, PTSD, or physical injuries. Families may find themselves "walking on eggshells" upon the return of a spouse or parent who has startle responses, anger outbursts, social withdrawal, or traffic and crowd anxieties.

Children in military families may carry emotional baggage far beyond their years. Shifts in recent months (longer and repeated deployments of a parent-s) are causing cumulative effects. Some children complain of insomnia or anxiety and have trouble keeping up in school. Mid-deployment visits can be notoriously rough ...in a short period of time kids are whipsawed between the euphoria of reunion and anguish of departure. Yet, many youth of military families are resilient.

One in four military kids are teenagers. A parent may have left when their son or daughter was fourteen but returns when their son or daughter has physically changed and has his/her drivers permit. A new normal is not the same as before. A teen son has said, "I want to do my own thing, hang out with my friends, but I know my Mom is struggling and I feel I shouldn't leave her at home...I should be helping her more."

The book, *Welcome Them Home Help Them Heal...Pastoral Care and Ministry with Service Members Returning From War*, summarizes:

"No two veterans have the same war experiences, nor upon returning from war do they face exactly the same re-integration challenges. Likewise, veterans heal and recover in

their own ways and along their own timelines. Caregivers who understand the healing powers of listening to one's story can offer hope."

Learning to be caring listeners is paramount...not to be interrogators for information on how a vet is feeling or doing now that they are back home but alert and open when it comes to be the time that they are ready to unload. Pat answers such as "time will heal the problem" are not helpful and only show that we don't want the discomfort of dealing with their pain. It may take years and years for some to put aside their trauma.

Military families want to fit in and feel part of their neighborhood and church community. What a vote of confidence if a church can be intentional with welcoming a new family and investing care and non-judgmental listening to their stories even if they are temporary....being treated as if they would be long term members.

Ask families what they want or need. Invite and keep the door open without pressure to participate. A particular week just might not be the right time to start something new. Maybe a family could use help with yard work, household repairs, or transportation but through such service-providing tasks consider building relationships/friendships. Some families may not want extra help for reasons of safety, vulnerability, stigma, pride, timing of help offered, or confidentiality. Ask permission to specifically list names of servicemen deployed. Be aware of the stages and issues that families go through in pre-deployment, deployment, reintegration and the long haul. Engage youth pastors, if available, to facilitate new children into activities and existing groups of children. Help the existing group of children to be intentional of including the new children

There are some very helpful websites such as www.k12.wa.us/OperationMilitaryKids and literature on supporting military kids during stages of a parent's deployment, teacher intervention strategies, helping kids cope with stress at different age levels and strategies to help kids cope with stress.

Laura Bender, Command Chaplain of the USS New York providing care for crew and their families reminds us:

"It will take us training to understand the issues of military vets and their families and come up to

speed with information on such topics as post traumatic stress and traumatic brain injury.

It will take patience to refrain from giving returning vets easy answers, especially if the issues

become burdensome or overwhelming.

It will take love for them that transcends your position on war and allows you to struggle with

them through difficult spiritual and moral issues in spite of your politics.

Finally, it will take faith and hope to help them find the peace that passes all understanding so that

having returned from war, they can finally make the journey home.

As people of faith, it is our task to facilitate that journey, to make the way clear, to remove impediments, to stand with our hearts, our minds, and our doors open.”

Footnotes:

- (1) Pauline Jelinek (Associated Press). “Major Health Crisis: 1 in 5 U.S. troops report stress disorders”. *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. December 20, 2008.
- (2) “Exploring the Connection Between Brain Injury and Substance Abuse” *Independence*. (publication of Vineland National Center). Winter 2009 p.12
- (3) Erica Goode. “Victims of An Internal War.” *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. August 2, 2009.
- (4) Associated Press Release. “War Deployments Make Kids More Aggressive”. *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. November 4, 2008.
- (5) Ibid.
- (6) Gail Rosenblum. “Troops Kids Have Their Own Struggles”. *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. November 8, 2009
- (7) Associated Press Release. Op cit.
- (8) Stephen Barr. “Veterans Return to Bleak Job Market”. *Washingtonpost.com* April 1, 2008.
- (9) Paul Levy. “Veterans home and homeless.” *Startribune.com* November 18, 2009

Lynn Cox is a Presbyterian deacon and elder who has walked in the shoes of a military Mom and Grandmother. She is a member of PHEWA’s Presbyterians for Disability Concerns (PDC) Network Leadership Team and the Disability Concerns Task Force of her presbytery.

Aid to Veterans Follows the Way of Love

By Amy Blumenshine

Many family members and loved ones of recent veterans wonder how to be helpful to veterans after their deployments. Unfortunately, in the realm of human behavior, one size does not fit all. There is no guide to what to say. Veterans will have had very different experiences in war-time deployments. The nature of how they have been impacted by their experiences may take time to realize.

Those connected to veterans are encouraged to let their love guide them in their actions. Reaching out in love- even clumsily- is better than doing nothing for fear of doing the wrong thing. Family members often feel powerless when confronted with bewildering behavior. The power of their concern and love can be an important part of helping the veteran “come home” from the war experience.

According to author Philip Yancey in *Where is God When It Hurts: A Comforting Healing Guide for Coping with Hard Times*, “love instinctively detects what is needed.” Following the way of love, we have the wisdom of Christ to guide us to connect with those we love who are hurting.

Communicate that you are available for the veteran through words and deeds – even if you don’t get much response. Yancy explains: “People who are suffering often times feel an oppressive sense of aloneness. They feel abandoned, by God but also by others, because they must bear that pain alone, and no one else quite understands. Loneliness increases the fear, which in turn increases the pain, and downward the spiral goes.” Veteran and social worker Raymond Monsour Scurfield has developed some excellent suggestions for families in his chapter, “The Return Home and the Ricochet Effect on the Family,” in *War and Trauma: Lessons Unlearned, from Vietnam to Iraq*.

He writes that most veterans return wishing to get on with their lives, wanting not to dwell on their war experiences. They appear to be just fine. Another group returns preoccupied with their war experiences, but while obviously troubled, also don’t want to talk about their experiences and prefer to move on with their life. Family members, however, can be very tolerant and forgiving of difficult behavior if they have a sense of what their loved one has suffered. They can say, “I don’t need to hear about what happened now, but I need to know that sometime you can share some of that with me.”

A third group reveled in the war and now disparage civilian life. Writes Surfield: “Help is required in dealing with such veterans, and they need help (if they have any interest in being back in the normal world), but in all likelihood will not avail of it.

Family members who are troubled in relating to veterans who cannot leave the war behind need to take care of themselves in order to sustain themselves in connecting with the veteran. Many Al-Anon groups provide support for loved ones of those with mental health and behavioral problems, as well as for those who struggle with addiction.

Scurfield says that the veteran has the responsibility to inform their loved ones when they are able to connect, but that families may need to accommodate changes in contact and withdrawal. Persist in showing that you are available when the veteran is ready. Do not press anyone to tell traumatic stories before they are ready.

It is important to remember that veterans vary greatly in their mental condition after war. For those who have post-traumatic stress disorder, however, their chances of recovery are greatly improved if they can receive love.

Author Amy Blumenshine, MSW, coordinates services for the Coming Home Collaborative of the Minneapolis Area Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Article published in September 2008 Interacts, monthly newsletter of Minneapolis Area Synod-ELCA

www.mpls-synod.org

Moving On
By Kelsi C

Driving down the highway
Don't know where I'm headed to
Not sure where I came from
Searching for a clue

Street lamps shining down so softly
With pools of yellow light
Illuminating the snowflakes falling
Through the darkness of the night

And I start to feel it in my heart,
As the miles are flying by,
I start to feel so strongly,
Oh, please, won't someone tell me why,

Why I'm so lonely,
Somebody,
Please tell me why I'm here.
I thought this was where I was supposed to be
But now it's all coming clear.
I close my eyes, but I still know
That I'm once again alone
My old hopes and dreams smashed into pieces
Are the only things I own

--

Rising up above the mountains
My world is clouded gray
I'm moving on, forgotten
From every place I want to stay

What is the purpose of this pain
That I'm always going through
Every friend is temporary
'Cause I'm just passing through

Each time I think it will be different
Somehow a little easier
But as I'm flying above the earth
I can't deny that all I feel

Is lonely
Somebody,
Won't you please
Just tell me why I'm here.
I thought this was where I was supposed to be
But now it's all coming clear.
I close my eyes but I still know
That I am here alone
I try to hold onto each hope, each dream
But they're broken one by one

I'll never find home.

--

Looking back I can not smile
I also can not cry
I've braced myself against this feeling
If I did not, I would die

Where is the God I used to know
That said He'd always lead me through
Well yes, God, that's what this feels like -
That's all you ever do.

I get through each day, each month, each year,
Get through but nothing more.
I've learned not to make attachments
My old wounds are still so sore.

Suddenly I hear the voices
Calling down from way up high
They tell me to listen to what they say
After that, I can decide

"I know you feel like you're alone,
But I'm with you every day
I feel the pain just like you do
I know you wish that you could stay
In one place for more than just awhile
But you don't seem to understand
That I need you other places
To make a difference throughout the land
I know you feel so useless
But I haven't forgotten about you
You're one of a kind, you're special

And the love I hold for you is true.”
It’s true... It’s true...

--

So here I am still driving down the highway
Still don’t know where I’m headed to
Still not sure where I came from
Still searching for a clue

Street lamps shining down so softly
With pools of yellow light
Illuminating the snowflakes falling
Through the darkness of the night

And though I still feel temporary,
As the miles are flying by,
Finally, I realize that somehow,
It’s easier this time!

My hopes and dreams put back together
I’ve safely stowed away
For a time when I can take them out
And put them on display

There’s still so much I need to do
And miles and miles to go
Though I’m not quite sure why I’m driving this way
There’s one thing I definitely know

I have a reason to keep going
To put my foot down on the gas
Because the strength, hope and love that I’ve been given
Forever, they will last.

Kelsi C is a fourteen year old child of a military family.

Selected Resources

The Wounds of War: The Church As A Healing Community

General Organizational Resources/Support

Re-integration/PTSD	<i>Hearts Toward Home International</i> , a non-profit providing support, counseling, training, education. Classes, materials, re-integration workshops/forums for military personnel (active duty and veterans) and their families after wartime Service. www.heartstowardhome.com
Outreach to Vets and Families	<i>National BeFriender Ministry</i> . Contact Barb Schwery about partnering pastoral care with outreach to military families 952-767-0246 or barb@befrienderministry.org
Care Team Ministry Supporting Families	<i>Presbyterian Health Network (PHN)</i> www.pcusa.org/phewa/phn.htm www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/iraq/remember.htm
Veterans Ministry	<i>Coming Home Collaborative</i> Amy Blumenshine 612-871-2967 listen tovets@comcast.net (E-mail newsletter and updates on vets ministry events; Annotated bibliography of books, materials, online video/ audio clip
Pastoral Care Info	<i>Presbyterian Association of Specialized Pastoral Ministries (PASPM)</i> www.pcusa.org/phewa/paspm http://caringconnectionsonline.org An Inter-Lutheran Online Journal for Practitioners and Teachers of Pastoral Care and Counseling www.mpls-synod.org Click on "Healing Wounds of War" for additional links
Children/Youth Support	http://www.parenting.umn.edu/militaryKids/index.htm www.militarychild.org www.operationmilitarykids.org http://www.k12.wa.us/operationmilitarykids
Active Duty Military	<i>Military One Source</i> . Highly trained and caring consultants provide information, referrals and support to active duty service members and their families. Free/private 24/7 1-800-342-9647 www.militaryonesource.com
Presbyterian Military Chaplains	<i>Presbyterian Council For Chaplains and Military Personnel</i> Edward Brogan, Director. www.pccmp.org 202-244-4177
Post-traumatic Stress Disorder: Worship Resources and Educational Information	<i>Calvin Institute of Christian Worship:</i> Resources especially for those who suffer from PTSD (Psalms for Those Under Stress, Prayers for Use for Those Who Are Hurting, Devotional Books) http://www.calvin.edu/worship/resources/ptsd/psalms.php PTSD Prayer Request List http://www.calvin.edu/worship/resources/ptsd/prayer.php

PTSD and Veterans: Suggestions for Pastors

<http://www.calvin.edu/worship/resources/ptsd/pastors.php>

Vital Worship Feature Stories: Becoming a Veteran-friendly Church:
Pacifists Can Do This Too.

<http://www.calvin.edu/worship/stories/veterans.php?source=hiliter>

Selected Articles

Presbyterians Today

Recent articles:

Jan/Feb 2010 in the News Section (pg 31) "...Congregations urged to pray and care for soldiers and their families (Ft Hood Shootings)"

December 2009 (pp 18-20) "Healing Music, A Chaplain Discovers Spiritual Benefits in the Ancient Art of Harp Playing"

July/Aug 2009 (pg 8) Spotlight Section. "Prayer Shawls for Iraq Families. Chaplain carries handmade gifts....."

November 2008 (pp 14-18). "Taking the Word to the War Zone"

Tom Williams

"Ministry on the Homefront: Milwaukee Presbytery explores outreach to soldiers, veterans, and their families"

<http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08381.htm>

Ken Moe

2005 paper as Executive Presbyter's Report to the Presbytery of the Grand Canyon on the topic of church's ministry to veterans

<http://www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/iraq/ravageswar.pdf>

Mark Koenig

Blog of 9/15/08 that includes information about weekend workshops for veterans.

<http://presbyterian.typepad.com/peacemaking/2008/09/caring-for-vete.html>

Hershel Don Yancey

"Ministry to Military Families in Our Communities: Caring for Those Who Keep Us Free"

<http://www.pcusa.org/ministers/militarytomilitary.htm>

Washington State
Family Policy Council

"Welcome Home! How to Make a Difference in the Lives of Returning War Zone Veterans" (Article about 3 Levels of Transition, Helping Whole Families, Understanding PTSD in the Family, Strategies for Family, Friends and Neighbors, Employees, Clergy and Faith Leaders, Lawyers and Judges, Fellow Veterans, Educators, Health Care Providers, Social Service Providers, Media, and First Responders, Government Responsibilities, 8 Battlefield Skills That Make Life in the Civilian World Challenging.

www.fpc.wa.gov (Publications menu then Education)1-360-902-7880

Selected Book/DVD Resources

Welcome Them Home, Help Them Heal...Pastoral care and ministry with service members returning from war, (May 2009) John Sippola, Chaplain, LTC Ret. MDiv, Amy Blumenshine, MSW,MA, Donald Tubesing, Ph.D., MDiv, Valerie Yancey, Ph.D..RN . Order from www.welcomethemhomebook.com

Down Range to Iraq and Back. Bridget C. Cantrell, Ph.D. and Chuck Dean. (2005) Over ½ million in print. A book dedicated to addressing the challenges of reintegration from combatant to civilian. Hearts Toward Home International. 1-360-714-1525 or www.heartstowardhome.com

Once A Warrior Wired For Life. Bridget Cantrell, Ph.D. and Chuck Dean. (2007). Turning negatives into positives helping military personnel utilize their potential in achieving success/happiness after discharge. Hearts Toward Home International 1-360-714-1525 www.heartstowardhome.com

Souls Under Siege—The Effects of Multiple Troop Deployments- and How to Weather the Storm. Bridget C. Cantrell, Ph.D.. (2008). Helping military personnel and their loved ones find ways to survive, support and encourage those living with pressures of multiple deployment in war zones...awareness of issues and finding tools for relief. Hearts Toward Home International 1-360-714-1525 www.heartstowardhome.com

Courage After Fire- Coping Strategies for Troops Returning from Iraq and Afghanistan and Their Families. (2006) Keith Armstrong, LCSW, Suzanne Best, Ph.D., Paula Domenici, Ph.D. Extraordinary toolbox of useful insights and coping exercises to help men and women returning from Iraq and Afghanistan rebuild their lives. ISBN-10:1-56975-513-2

Surviving Deployment...A Guide for Military Families. (2003) Karen M Pavlicin. ISBN 0-9657483-6-7 51995 <http://www.survivingdeployment.com>
Available from www.MilitaryFamilyBooks.com

Life After Deployment...Military Families Share Reunion Stories and Advice. Karen M. Pavlicin. (2007) ISBN 978-0-9657483-7-7 51495 <http://www.lifeafterdeployment.com> Available from www.MilitaryFamilyBooks.com

When Duty Calls: A Guide to Equip Active Duty, Guard, and Reserve Personnel and Their Loved Ones For Military Separations. (2001) Carol Vandesteeg (Enumclaw, WA:WinePress Publishing) Practical advice for nearly every situation a military family faces. Sections on “reunion” and “Some Don’t Return” are particularly helpful for those who must deal with the trauma of military service.

War Trauma: Lessons Unlearned from Vietnam and Iraq. Raymond Monsour Scurfield (Algora Publishing 2008). The author, a veteran and social work professor, devotes a chapter to “The Return Home and Ricochet Effect on the Family.”

Coming Home A Guide for Spouses of Service members Returning from Mobilization/Deployment Available from the Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Chaplains, 2700 Army Pentagon, Washington D.C. 20310-2700

A Call to Prayer for a Nation at War: Prayers of Blessing and Protection for Those Who Serve (Lakeland, FL: White Stone Books, 2003). More than 40 meaningful prayers are provided for a variety of circumstances.

Coming Home: Supporting Your Soldier. (DVD or VHS) Produced by Twin Cities Public Television and NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness- MN). Order from www.namimn.org or 651-645-2948