

# www.CareForTheTroops.org

## Addressing The Invisible Wounds of War

### Cluster Meeting

Mission: ... facilitating the spiritual and psychological care of returning war veterans and their extended families

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## Agenda

Time	Speaker	Topic
	CFTT	Introductions and Opening Remarks
	CFTT	Review what CareForTheTroops is and does <a href="http://www.CareForTheTroops.org">www.CareForTheTroops.org</a> Review how congregations can participate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Congregations can start Military Ministry Programs</li> <li>• Explain the role of a VFC* and Lead Congregation</li> <li>• Describe and ask for VFC* Approval Letters</li> </ul>
	All	Open Discussion and Concluding Remarks

\* A VFC is a Veteran Friendly Congregation

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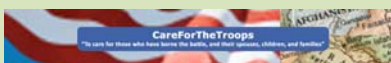
## CareForTheTroops, Inc.



- CareForTheTroops is working to help the military and their extended family members receive mental health services and support from within the civilian elements of our society in the State of Georgia.
- CareForTheTroops is attempting to equip the civilian elements of society e.g. **congregation leadership teams**, with the capacities to be helpful.
- We are working toward “building a better net” to catch those that need help before they fall too far and reach moments of desperation.

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## Causes for Concern



1. Multiple deployments are common causing stress and family attachment issues
2. An April '08 Rand Study reported 37% have either PTSD, TBI, or significant Mental Stress (5% all 3). Some estimate >50% return with some form of mental distress
3. Suicide, alcoholism, domestic abuse and violent crimes rates are rising. Suicide is 33% higher in '07 over '06, 50% higher in '08, and almost equal to '08 by May of '09
4. Military Sexual Trauma (MST) is running at 16%-23%
5. In 2008, military children and teens sought outpatient mental health care 2 million times, a 20% increase from '08 and double from the start of the Iraq war ('03)
6. DoD and VA facilities are stretched ... the Aug 2009 VA claims backlog is 900,000
7. Many more Reservists & Guard than previous wars (54% as of mid '08) and they and families are more distant from DoD and VA support facilities
8. Other mental health, marriage, and family problems often occur with or leading up to PTSD requiring attention so they don't get worse
9. Rand Study estimates that PTSD and depression among service members will cost the nation up to \$6.2 billion in the two years after deployment. The study concludes that investing in proper treatment would actually save \$2 billion within two years

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## Organization



501c3 status has already been approved by the IRS

### Current Board of Directors:

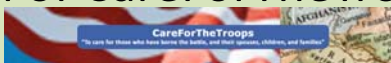
President	Rev Robert Certain, Rector, Episcopal Church of St Peter and St Paul (USAF)
Exec Director	Peter McCall (USArmy)
Member	Bill Harrison, Partner, Mozley, Finlayson & Loggins LLP (USAF)
Member	William Matson, Exec Director, Pathways Community Network, Atlanta, GA
Member	Alan Baroody, Exec Director, Fraser Counseling Center, Hinesville, GA
Member	Joseph Krygiel, CEO of Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of Atlanta (US Navy)
(open)	Presbyterian
(open)	CBF (Cooperative Baptist Fellowship)
(open)	Lutheran

### Current Partners:

The Georgia Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (GAMFT)  
 The EMDR Network of Clinicians in Georgia  
 Pathways Community Network, Inc  
 Fraser Counseling Center, Hinesville, Georgia  
 Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta  
 Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF) of Georgia  
 Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta  
 Presbytery of Greater Atlanta/Presbyterian Women  
 Lutheran ELCA Southeast Synod

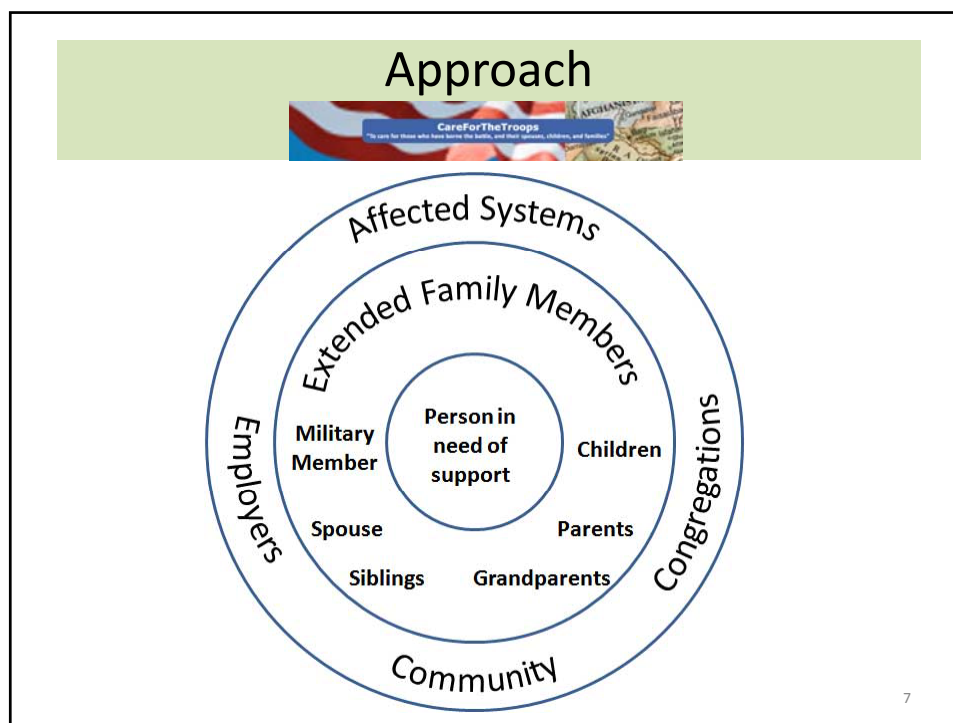
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## Mission of CareForTheTroops.org



- Work to improve the ability of the civilian mental health infrastructure in the State of Georgia, then nationally, to work with military family members
- Facilitate connecting military families to providers of spiritual and psychological services familiar with the military culture and trauma
- Focus on addressing combat stress recovery as well as other spiritual and mental health related problems impacting the marriages and families of military veterans
- Educate and train clinicians, **congregation and community leaders**, extended family, and civilian groups about the military culture and trauma associated with military deployments in order to better assess and treat mental health symptoms, and provide more effective referrals and care
- Provide opportunities for additional trauma treatment training to clinicians
- Operate in an interfaith, non-political manner, focusing on the humanitarian interest that benefits the veterans and their extended family members

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## Why Congregations

CareForTheTroops  
The care for those who have served our nation and their families, children, and families

- "...With research consistently showing that clergy - not psychologists or other mental health experts - are the most common source of help sought in times of psychological distress..." based on a Baylor University study Oct 2008  

*The results were published in **Mental Health, Religion and Culture.***
- Congregations already know their local community which is important if we are to address the needs across the entire State (and Nation).
- Often they already belong to a local interfaith community, e.g. the local Covenant Churches of East Cobb
- There is the opportunity to access the existing "networks" within the larger faith communities, e.g. the Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta with the help of the Catholic Charities Atlanta network.

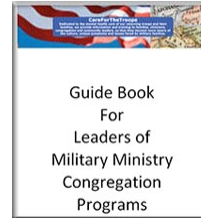
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## Military Ministry



### Purpose

The ministry approach is intended to address all the extended family members associated with the person that is or has been in the military. The ministry has the following goals:

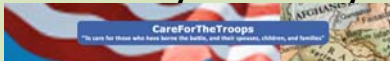


- Help the congregation members maintain an **awareness** of the existence and needs of those sacrificing their time and effort to support our country
- Create an **environment of acceptance** within the congregation for any extended family member who worships or visits the congregation; acceptance of their needs (physical, material, and spiritual), and a willingness to join in their struggles, whatever they might be

The Military Ministry is a commitment by the congregation to the military families and to themselves to provide support. It is not a commitment to the CareForTheTroops organization.

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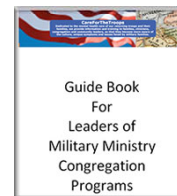
## Military Ministry



### Each Congregation Can Act on Their Own

The way this is setup:

- no faith has to act in any way like another faith
- no congregation has to act like another congregation
- no congregation has to have a Ministry like any other congregation
- every Military Ministry is completely customizable to each congregation's desire to act



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This is the Home Page

The menu for Congregation Leaders is opened up.

In this case, selecting the About Congregation Programs page

Top of the About Congregation Programs Page

Click on the picture and this presentation is available

About Congregation Programs - CareForTheTroops providing education to mental health professionals on treating the military and information to civilian groups, so they better understand

leaders, or any visitor to this web site.

The content can be original or found on the internet where we can link to it... It's an opportunity to be creative and helpful at the same time. Please send to [ctt@careforthetroops.org](mailto:ctt@careforthetroops.org)

**Our Partners**

Training Development  
 -Prayer Counseling Center  
 -Mental Health Foundation  
 -ICM Clinicians of GA  
 -Heritage and Family Therapists Society  
 Congregation Outreach  
 -Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta  
 -The Atlanta Presbytery and Presbyterian Women  
 -Catholic Charities and the Archdiocese of Atlanta

**VETERAN'S HEART GEORGIA**

There is an excellent non-profit that began operating in late 2008 that is very complementary to the mission and goals of CareForTheTroops

Veteran's Heart Georgia fosters the healing of veterans of all wars by attending to the spiritual and emotional needs of veterans, their families and our communities.

We urge you to [link to their web site](#) and take advantage of their training and support activities. CareForTheTroops is inclusive and believe that

**Related Articles of Interest**

An overall Guide Book is available which helps a Congregation Leader set up a Military Ministry in their congregation, access, print, and download this Guide Book you should click on the image on the left

This Guide Book is designed to help leaders of congregation based military ministries and also leaders of Lead Congregations. The workbook-style was used to make it as easy and simple to understand the steps to follow and the elements to consider when bringing CareForTheTroops to the local congregation level and to the surrounding communities.

The following individual programs are suggested in the Guide Book. However, these are just suggestions. We are welcome any new ideas and suggestions and certainly do not want you to give up any programs which your congregation may already have started. In fact, be sure to tell us about any!

**Document Contents**

To give you an idea of what this Guidebook contains and how it can be helpful to you, we are showing below the Table of Contents as well as the open introduction letter to the reader.

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**Table of Contents**

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 II. Lead Congregations  
 III. Additional Notes  
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[Letter from Congregation Leadership to Congregation, Example 2](#)  
[Letter to a Congregation Member in the Military or Related To One, Example](#)  
[Example of Article in Congregation Newsletter or Email to the Congregation](#)  
[Part 2 – Congregation Program Templates](#)  
[Program 1: Prayer List Identification - Spiritual Support and Care](#)

Moving down the same page gets you to the Guide Book info we have introduced in this presentation. It also shows the TOC and the Intro Letter in the document

Clicking on the picture of the book will let you download it.

# Military Ministry Programs



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## Veteran Friendly Congregation (VFC)



[www.CareForTheTroops.org/about\\_programs.php](http://www.CareForTheTroops.org/about_programs.php)

### **Program Requirements**

Any congregation that meets the following criteria qualifies on an annual basis. Once qualified, a certificate will be sent to the Congregation Leader which is suitable for framing and can be displayed in a prominent location so that it can be seen by visitors, members, and leaders of the congregation alike.

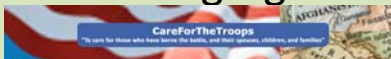
*“Becoming a VFC is making a commitment to have a Military Ministry”*

### **Annual Criteria**

- Agree to adopt or implement one or more Military Ministry Programs.
- Agree to advertise the existence of the Military Ministry Program(s) in one or more of your congregation’s publications (service bulletins, newsletters, etc) at least twice a month, all year long so that their existence is easily visible to visitors, members, and leadership of the congregation.
- Annually, renew your agreement with the provisions above by sending a letter to the CareForTheTroops office address shown on the web.

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## Lead Congregation



### **Program Requirements**

Lead Congregations are the **LEADERS** in their geography and become the organization responsible for spreading the word about this help. We can't rely on a group in Atlanta to spread this across the State and the Nation.

### **Annual Criteria**

- Be an overall advocate and emissary of the CareForTheTroops initiative
- Recruit congregations of all faiths on the merits of developing a military ministry
- Providing feedback to CFTT on how the programs are being used and any improvements that are needed to the documentation
- Feedback on new ideas and programs discovered while speaking with other congregations that they have already implemented
- Assistance to the Regional Trainers with scheduling presentations and events
- Help with fundraising if local foundations or private benefactors are involved. They would not be asked to participate in other parts of the State where other Lead Congregations exist.

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## Military Ministry Programs - Examples



- St Peter Chanel Catholic Church Website – Roswell  
[www.stpeterchanel.org/ministry/military/index.html](http://www.stpeterchanel.org/ministry/military/index.html)

- Good Shepherd Episcopal – Covington  
 Operation Sandbox



- St Thomas – Columbus  
[www.booksforsoldiers.com](http://www.booksforsoldiers.com)

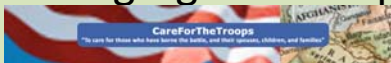
- St Thomas Aquinas – Blue Star Group  
 Banner and Care Packages



- Pens and School Kits initiative  
*Brothers at War* Movie  
<http://operationinternationalchildren.com>

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## VFC vs Lead Congregation Responsibilities



Responsibilities	VFC	Lead Congregation
Establish a Military Ministry Team within the congregation	X	X
Establish at least 1 program approved by CFTT or LC (more desired)	X	X
Advertise the programs in your congregation all year	X	X
Provide an annually signed VFC Commitment Letter to CFTT	X	X
Agree that we can list congregation information on the CFTT site	X	X
Be an advocate and emissary of CFTT in an agreed to geography		X
Recruit congregations of all faiths in the community		X
Advise VFCs on how to get started		X
Communicate with established VFCs and CFTT quarterly		X
Assist Regional Trainers in scheduling training		X
Help with fundraising within the geography agreed to with CFTT		X

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## What did we cover? NEXT STEPS ...

### Reviewed CFTT's plans for congregations

- Congregations to start Military Ministry Programs
- Explained the role of VFCs\* and Lead Congregations
- Described and asked for VFC\* Letters
- Next Steps ...
  1. Gain Agreement from the Congregation's Leadership for the Ministry
  2. Assign a Ministry Leader
  3. Recruit and Form a "team", "group", "committee"
  4. Decide which Programs to begin and/or enhance
  5. Sign-up as a CFTT VFC\* – connect with the Lead Congregation
  6. Consider being a Lead Congregation and work with CFTT

\* A VFC is a Veteran Friendly Congregation

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