



Empowering Veterans

ADVOCATING For Veterans

The Veterans Committee is dedicated to its mission: to be more than a place of worship; to be a place of healing for veterans and their families; and to become a force in the community that advocates for, collaborates with, and empowers veterans.

We are looking for others in the diocese to help support this mission by becoming advocates and even members. If you are interested, please contact Canon Toneh Smyth, tsmyth@diopa.org. She can help you get started.

The committee's goal is to enlist 10 churches in the diocese to register as official advocates for veteran ministry. This means your church commits to becoming a place of healing for veterans and their family. Additionally, we ask each church to:

- Host *at least* one veteran committee event at your church. (*See below for examples.*)
- Attend one community training on veteran culture and moral injury. (Listed on diocesan calendar. Next one is May 6, 2019.)
- Include a special prayer for those actively serving, veterans, and their families within prayers of the people.
 - Perhaps have veterans/veteran families create these prayers to be included.
- Take steps to start a veteran-run healing/support group at your parish.

Advocate churches in our Diocese have done the following:

- St. Stephen's, Philadelphia and St. Luke's Germantown both hosted a veterans mass.
- All Saints, Norristown and Trinity, Buckingham organized healing stitches groups, making blankets that went to homeless veterans and veterans in hospice or palliative care.
- Trinity, Coatesville, hosted a community training in addition to their monthly veteran brunches.
- The Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral hosted a veteran mental health first aid training.
- The Church of the Holy Trinity, Rittenhouse Square, hosted a scholarship dinner and fundraiser.

Parishioners can, on their own, participate in "no vet dies alone," designed to assist veterans and their families as a loved one is nearing the next stage of their life. Volunteers are there for veterans when family and friends are not able to be present.

Please contact Canon Smyth, tsmyth@diopa.org, if you are interested in joining the veterans ministry.