



## MURRYSVILLE ALLIANCE CHURCH

### 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2019

**OUR MISSION:** *Our purpose within the Alliance Veterans is to love God, and to love others, as we focus on Jesus as the author of our faith. We reach out to veterans in order to teach what is right, and to demonstrate God's love in a practical way. We are interested in helping, not only veterans, but their families as well.*

**MEETINGS: 19:00 the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday each month. INFORMATION: 724-327-7206 or [www.murrysvillealliancechurch.org](http://www.murrysvillealliancechurch.org)**

#### **Remembering Tet**

In January of 1968, more than a quarter million North Vietnamese soldiers and 100,000 Viet Cong irregulars launched a massive attack on South Vietnam.

It was a sneak attack that came under the deception of a truce of peace during the celebration of the Vietnamese New Year. Hanoi expected it would trigger a popular uprising leading to the collapse of the South Vietnamese government. It did not.

After the initial shock, and the capture of a number of cities, the attack was beaten back. It became a major military defeat for North Vietnam.

That is not what many Americans believed. In the minds of some, including influential newscaster Walter Cronkite, this was proof that America was losing the war. In the aftermath, many a person has asked, "Why was the report of an American victory not believed? Perhaps it is because the typical human is inclined to believe what he wants to believe—regardless of the facts.

The significance of the Tet Offensive and America's role in that war continues to be debated. The refusal to accept an accurate report due to bias goes back far before that attack.

The prophet Isaiah addressed that same issue in ~700 B.C. John repeated it when he wrote about the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday (John 12:38). Paul repeated it again when he wrote to the Christians in Rome (Romans 10:16).

The Christian Church of today raises the same question: "Who has believed our message?" Isaiah told the people of Israel that the coming Messiah would be accepted as King by Gentile nations:

"The LORD will lay bare His holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God" (Isaiah 52:10)."

"Like as many were astonished at thee...so He will sprinkle many nations and kings will shut their mouths because of Him (Isaiah 52:14,15)."

There are the facts! History has confirmed them. We are living proof. Most of the people who accept Jesus as the Messiah as their Lord, Savior, and King are Gentiles. The physical descendants of Abraham, the Jews, the people to

whom God first revealed this message still have a bias in our day. They do not believe the glory of the Messiah and His victory over sin, death and the devil.

Once again, "Who believes our message?" We do. To Isaiah's question, "To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" we answer, "To us!" "To me!"

By the work of the Holy Spirit we have seen the glory of Jesus, the Messiah. We have witnessed His power through His Word. With our own eyes we have seen people of all races come to love him as their Savior. To that question of Isaiah, "Who believes our message?" we joyfully and gratefully answer: "By the grace of God—I do!"<sup>1</sup>

#### **RECENT EVENTS:**

**A Soldier's Christmas** – This project started in October and was completed the week after Thanksgiving. It was coordinated with local scouts, sports teams and Pay-it-Forward club. 134 boxes of snacks, toiletries & gifts were packaged and shipped to 15 soldiers/sailors/airmen stationed overseas in time for Christmas.

**Donation Received** – At the January 2019 meeting we received a \$500 donation to the ministry from Interim HealthCare Hospice. This was in recognition of the time and effort put into visits to veterans in hospice care by our MAC veterans.

#### **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

2 March - Fisher House: We will take, prepare and serve breakfast to families of veterans living at Fisher House while their loved ones are receiving treatment at the VA hospital next door.

18 May - Veterans Breakfast: All community veterans are invited to breakfast at 08:30. A guest speaker is included. Tell your friends.

27 May – Memorial Day Observation

4 July – Independence Day Celebration

22 August – Sewing Guild: Veterans provide lifting, hauling, setup and teardown services for the American Sewing Guild as

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from <https://wels.net/dev-military/remembering-tet/>

they sew Christmas stockings for hospitalized soldiers here and overseas.

15 September – Veterans Luncheon: Lunch is provided to community veterans. Meal prepared by deaconesses and served by youth group.

28 September – Veterans Health Fair: Open to all veterans in the community. Flu shots and haircuts are free. Free lunch. Free examinations by physicians who donate their time; vision, dental, cardiology, dermatology.

October and November – Soldiers' Christmas: This event is coordinated with local scouts and sports teams. Snacks and toiletries are collected from the community, packaged and shipped to soldiers stationed overseas in time for Christmas.

### **Military Benefit**

After my niece returned from her second tour in Iraq, I remarked how beautiful her complexion looked. "What do you use on your face to keep it so smooth?" I asked. "Nothing," she said. "I've been sandblasted."

### **FOR PRAYER:**

Our WWII Vets are now in their early 90's. With age comes physical challenges, aches, pain and discomfort. Lift up our special friends, Ernie Bargiel, Walter Bill, June Fox and Billy Gentile.

### **VA RESOURCES:**

**Veterans Choice Program** – Allows for health care outside of VA facilities under certain conditions.

Contact Shirley Warren, 412-822-3840 or [shirley.warren@va.gov](mailto:shirley.warren@va.gov), Rebecca Balog, 412-822-3840 or [rebecca.balog@va.gov](mailto:rebecca.balog@va.gov), Paula Bibza, 412-360-3614 or [paula.bibza@va.gov](mailto:paula.bibza@va.gov)

**Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans**

Help for Homeless Veterans 412-822-1300

**VA Hospital Transportation** (724) 830-3530

**VA Health Care**

The new online Health Care Application to determine Veterans' eligibility for VA services is now active at

[www.vets.gov](http://www.vets.gov).

**For VA Problems** contact the office of US Senator, Pat Toomey, Washington D.C. office:

Phone: (202) 224-4254

### **County Veterans Resources**

**Westmoreland County Veterans Affairs** –

Claim assistance from accredited veterans' service officers (VSO). Comprehensive knowledge of local, state, and federal VA benefits. DAV Van ride scheduling to VA Hospitals in Pittsburgh. Information and referrals. All services are provided free of charge. Call Matt, Jim, Dane, or Mike @ 724-830-3530.

### **NON-PROFIT VETERAN RESOURCES:**

**Free Tax Preparation for Veterans**

Military One Source-MilTax

<http://www.militaryonesource.mil/-/miltax-free-tax-services-from-military-onesource>

Trained MilTax consultant during tax season (January through April 17) seven days a week from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. EST or EDT at 800-342-9647.

**Veterans Benefits Advisors** – Free counseling and assistance to fill out VA forms to receive benefits. Contact Kevin Bock, 724-837-3553 or [kevinbock@comcast.net](mailto:kevinbock@comcast.net). Web site: [integrityestateadvisors.com](http://integrityestateadvisors.com)

**Network** - Greater Pittsburgh's coordinated network of public, private, and non-profit organizations working together to serve veterans and their families. Web site: [www.paserves.org](http://www.paserves.org)

**Free legal help** for low income veterans:

Allegheny County 412-402-6622

Pennsylvania 717-238-6715

From U of Pittsburgh 412-648-1285

From Duquesne Law School 412-396-4704

Free legal assistance to veterans with other than honorable discharge - Veterans Consortium: Call 202-733-3324, or <https://www.vetsprobono.org/dischargeupgrade/> or e-mail: [upgrades@vetsprobono.org](mailto:upgrades@vetsprobono.org)

**American Legion**

The American Legion department service officers (DSO) offer free advice and guidance for veterans who need the services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). You do not need to be a member of the American Legion. At Pittsburgh office contact: Graham Weiland (supervisor); Ian Corin; Stephanie Doyle; Larry McCalis or Stephani Bengou. [412-395-6230]



MAC Veterans Receiving a \$500 Donation From Arlene Lis, RN of Interim Healthcare Hospice.

*Comments, questions or suggestions for items to include in this newsletter; contact Gordon Israelson 724-858-9334 or [gisraelson@gmail.com](mailto:gisraelson@gmail.com)*