

Lutheran
Building
Men in
Men for
Mission
Christ

foundations

YOUNG MEN ASK "WILL GOD BE THERE FOR ME?"

Generation-to-Generation: Interviews with Young Men

Reeling from society's high incidence of divorce, increased mobility, the busy-ness in our fast-paced 24/7 lifestyle, and other factors, young men today feel disconnected from others around them.

"Their deepest faith questions and spiritual questions are, 'Will anybody be there for me? Will God be there for me?'" said the Rev. Roland Martinson, professor at Luther Seminary, St. Paul.

Young men's hunger for deep relationships is one of the important preliminary findings from about 100 interviews of men 18-34, conducted by Lutheran Men in Mission, to find out what's happening in their lives generally, as well as their spirituality and faith practices.

The recently completed interviews are the first step in LMM's five-step plan to devise a strategy to reach young men for Christ. Although the data from the interviews must be analyzed further, some broad directions for ministry with young men can be charted, said Martinson, one of the researchers.

"If the church is going to be ministering to young men, it has to be with them where they are, and it has to listen,

listen, listen," Martinson said.

"The church has to find ways of being in their active lives and develop relationships there, rather than expect them to come to worship," Martinson said. "Most of them find traditional worship in congregations highly meaningless."

The interviews show that the young men connect well

with God through nature, and they relate to the world visually and kinesthetically – experiences not offered in a typical congregation. As a result, many of the young men seek spirituality and community extreme sports – snowboarding, mountain biking, hiking, etc.

"To live on the edge, have peak experiences, get into

these rituals, dress in a certain way, develop community ... these extreme sports become primary ways in which they satisfy the soul," Martinson said.

These ideas point to a larger challenge for the church, which is how to incorporate some of these masculine avenues for spirituality into the life of the church, said another LMM researcher, Paul Hill, director of the Center for Youth Ministries at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, IA.

"We have to be a church that is more than a feminine culture – verbal, sit-in-a-circle-type organization," said Hill. "That's why we lose boys, because they're trying to form male identity and the church looks mighty female to them."

"If you want guys active in the church, maybe the best thing you could do is put a woodshop, car hoist and gymnasium in the place," Hill said.



(Above) Mark Geery (left) scheduled interviews in Sacramento, CA for researchers David Anderson and Paul Hill.

(Below) left to right: Larry Moeller, Kent Gary and Matt Herlocker assisted in scheduling interviews in Northern California.



Help us meet the \$40,000 Challenge!

See story on page 4





This newsletter is sent to all who contribute to the ministry of Lutheran Men in Mission.

Your contribution will ensure that *foundations* will continue to come to you.

It is our desire that *foundations* will be a source of personal spiritual growth, as well as a source of information for those involved in congregational men's ministries.

Please drop us a line and let us know stories of men's ministry we could use and/or issues you would like to see featured.

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It gives me great pleasure to welcome Sean Forde

Sean has been at the center of our efforts in developing young men's ministry for some time. We have said that our efforts to bridge generational gaps and reach young men for Christ will be developed with five important steps:

- Research and interviews conducted at six sites across the ELCA.
- Gather a council of young men's leaders.
- Empower the council to develop new ministries.
- Call and share a seminary intern with a congregation to develop and pilot new ministries.
- Develop one-day seminary events on male spirituality and men's ministry for future pastors.

Sean has been, and will continue to be, very involved in our research with young men. Sean will serve as staff to the council of young men we are gathering, and will work with them in developing new programs and ministries. On March 8, along with Roland Martinson, Sean produced the "Hunger for the Spirit: New Day in Men's Ministry" event for future pastors at Luther Seminary, zeroing in on the male spirituality and special challenges and opportunities of men's ministry.

I've had my eye on Sean since I saw the leader he was to the men in his home congregation. Along with everything else, I could see that they had fun following him.

In a recent article in Leadership Weekly, Rick Ezell, author of *Strengthening the Pastor's Soul* (2003 Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI) shared four actions that good leaders take, based on Nehemiah:

1. **Identify with the people.** Nehemiah didn't say "Look at the terrible situation you are in," but, "look at the terrible situation we are in. If you want to get someone to look at a problem from your point of view, you don't stand across from him and yell, you go to his side and identify with him and then gently guide him to your side.
2. **Acknowledge the seriousness of the situation.** Nehemiah didn't hide anything from the people or try to sugarcoat the problem. He honestly faced the facts.
3. **Appeal for action.** Nehemiah challenged the people to specific action: "Let us rebuild the wall." He had pondered and discussed and investigated and planned and prayed long enough. It was time for action.
4. **Assign the tasks.** Now the people were ready to hear the plan God had placed in his heart. Nehemiah knew that a few people working alone could not rebuild it. But together, united in force, the task could be accomplished. The effective leader has the ability to cut the problems down to size. This is what Nehemiah did. He assigned each family a task that they could manage.

That's Sean ... and when you meet him you will be just as glad as I am that he is with us.

Doug Haugen, Director
Lutheran Men in Mission



“God is working to bring men to faith.”

The newest member of the LMM staff is Sean L. Forde, in his third year at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN. Starting August 1, Sean will serve as intern pastor at Zion Lutheran Church in Anoka, Minn., and concurrently serve Lutheran Men in Mission.

A native of East Rutherford, N.J., Sean is a member of Advent Lutheran Church, Boca Raton, Fla. He has been married for nine years to Susan, and they have three children: Rebecca, 2, Joshua, 4, and Aaron, 6.

We spoke with Forde about his faith, life and work with LMM. (A longer version of this interview can be found at www.elca.org/lmm)

As you begin your work with LMM, what will shape, guide or impact your ministry?

I have spoken with and listened to men across the nation, and they continually tell me that they are yearning for a real, authentic and genuine relationship with God, their families and their friends.

Men are in need of the redemptive grace found in Jesus Christ, who heals our brokenness and restores our souls.

What do you see as the challenges for LMM to bring younger men into the church?

There is the interesting dynamic of men wanting to be transformed, not to be asked to conform. They already have a great many societal forces tugging at them without religion asking them to change who they are to be accepted. We also need to get and keep men connected to their faith through the congregation.

What do you think is the biggest problem facing younger men today? How can the church help?

Fear. Fear of the unknown, fear of failure in a marriage, fear of not being able to support their families, fear of being vulnerable and truly known by others. The men of the church can help by being there to mentor, encourage and pray for other men on the journey.

The church can also help by blessing young men's ministries by having some sort of program for them, much like the other ministries in the congregation.

What do you think the Lutheran Church and LMM can offer young men that they need?

There is no greater gift that we can offer men today than Jesus Christ. I think that the Lutheran Church and LMM can offer men a safe place to be heard and be a part of the life of faith.



Sean Forde with Ken Moats. Ken is the leader of Joshua Men – the men's ministry of Zion Lutheran Church.

The church is also a place that speaks to the brokenness that we experience.

What gifts do you think you bring to the LMM ministry?

I think that faith in God is the essential gift or quality that I bring to ministry. It is extremely important to stay connected to the Word of God in dealing with the struggles and challenges of daily life.

The gifts that I bring to men's ministry in particular are my willingness to listen to the stories of other guys, show a genuine interest in who they are, and share from my past experiences.

More and more men are seeking to create that “safe space” which enables our relationships with God and each other grow deeper.

What excites you about your ministry?

God is working to bring men to faith. I get excited to see other guys grasping onto their faith in ways I never imagined.

I look forward to training and providing leadership to a group of these men and listening for ways to better reach their peers.

Contact Sean Forde at SForde@luthersem.edu

Help us meet the **\$40,000** challenge...

Three of our own Lutheran men have stepped forward to challenge other Lutheran men, congregational and synodical men's ministries to fuel dynamic new men's ministries to reach men of all ages for Christ.

These three men, who wish to remain anonymous, have come together to challenge others with a matching gift. They will match all gifts up to \$40,000, given to Lutheran Men in Mission by individuals, congregational and synodical men's ministries through July 31, 2003.

These gifts will assist Lutheran Men in Mission in completing a major research project with young men and developing resources and ministries based on the findings of the research.

A team of young men from

across the country will use that information this fall as they gather under the leadership of new LMM Staff Intern Sean Forde and Dr. Rollie Martinson. They will develop a strategy designed to assist congregations in engaging young men and reaching them for Christ.

The strategy will include resources that will help men of different generations grow in relationship to each other, and use audio, video and electronic resources to engage young men in discovering a deeper faith.

"Everywhere I go throughout the church I am hearing about the good work of Lutheran Men in Mission. The work LMM is doing with leadership development and young men's ministry is essential to the life of the



ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson was among the first to respond to the \$40,000 challenge.

larger church," said ELCA Bishop Mark Hanson.

Your assistance in meeting the challenge will help that good work to grow. You may

help by using the coupon on page 7 or by visiting the Web site at www.elca.org/lmm and clicking "ELCA Gift Basket".

TOOLS FOR BUILDING MEN'S MINISTRY

These resources may be ordered by calling Augsburg Fortress Publishers at (800) 328-4648. Prices do not include shipping.

Leadership Development:

Men's Ministry Action Plan: This three-session guide will help your leadership team create, capture and sustain momentum in your congregation's men's ministry. (69-6580) \$4.95

How to Build a Life-Changing Men's Ministry: This book will assist you in planning strategically, getting started, connecting men, growing leaders, and following through in your men's ministry. (69-4930) \$12.95

Men's Ministry Tool Kit: The *Men's Ministry Action Plan*, the *Master Builders Bible*, *How to Build a Life-Changing Men's Ministry* (a four-part video training series for leaders), and more are all packaged in a canvas tool bag. (69-6465) \$50.00



Devotional Reading:

God's Man: A daily devotional guide for men, written by nearly 50 men's ministry leaders. Topics include A Man and His Relationships, Family, Church, Community, Time and Emotions. (69-4350) \$12.95

Bible Study:

The Master Builders Bible for Men: The Lutheran Men in Mission edition of the Serendipity Bible for small group and personal study, assists men in getting to know God, themselves and each other in a deeper way. (69-6543) \$15.00

Building Bridges: Men Dealing Constructively with Anger:

This eight-session guide assists men to identify emotions and discover new tools to deal positively with conflict.

Packet: (1 Leader/5 Participant Books) (69-1253) \$30.00
 Leader Guide (69-1251) \$6.00
 Participant Book (69-1250) \$6.00

Building Bridges: Dreamers and Visionaries

*I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions,
your old men will dream dreams.*

– Acts 2:17

Realize your God-given dreams and visions through a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ by connecting with other men at different stages on the journey of life.

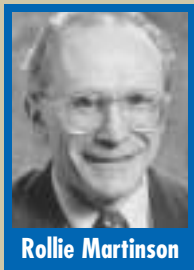
Men of all ages have a common longing to live a life of significance that makes a difference to those around them and the world in which we live.

We are dreamers in search of a goal or purpose that fully satisfies. We are visionaries living with a hope that extends beyond that which we can see and our own lives. Dreamers and visionaries! We need each other! This is a new day! Young men and old men, dreamers and visionaries are coming together.

Come to build that bridge and see what God has in store for you!

Saturday, October 25
9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Zion Lutheran Church
1601 4th Avenue South, Anoka, Minnesota

Live Web cast of this event!
11:30 AM to 1 PM Central time.
Plan your local men's meeting around this time! See LMM Web site for Web cast registration information: www.elca.org/lmm



Rollie Martinson

Rollie Martinson

Rollie is professor of Children, Youth and Family Ministry at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN. A popular speaker, he is also the director of the Young Men's Ministry Research Project being conducted by Lutheran Men in Mission.



Sean Forde

Sean Forde

Sean is currently a shared staff person between Lutheran Men in Mission and Zion Lutheran Church. An experienced men's ministry leader, he is currently developing resources and programs for local congregations and the larger church.



Peter Mayer

Peter Mayer

Peter is the lead guitarist for Jimmy Buffett and a popular artist in his own right. He released his first inspirational CD at the Lutheran Men's Gathering in 2002.

Registration:

One man:

- before September 30: \$45
- after September 30: \$55

Two or more men:

- before September 30: \$35 each
- after September 30: \$45 each

First man's name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Second man's name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Registration amount enclosed: \$ _____

Register online at www.elca.org/lmm

or mail to:

Lutheran Men in Mission/Registrar
8765 West Higgins Road
Chicago, IL 60631

MEN'S MINISTRY

focus

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Roosevelt, N.Y.

A Long Island church finds that when it gets men involved, everyone benefits.

Putting an emphasis on men's ministry has paid big dividends in just a few years for Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Roosevelt, N.Y.

"Our average worship attendance has gone from around 130 to 150 to 200 to 220 now," said the Rev. Jerome D. Taylor, pastor of Good Shepherd. More people worship, and a much higher percentage of them are men, Taylor said.

Moreover, as more men have gotten deeply involved with Good Shepherd, congregational life is more active and vital. The Sunday school that had only a handful of youngsters only a few years ago now has about 30. Taylor credits men's ministry for helping with these positive developments.

"It kind of just spread from the focus being on the men," Taylor said. When men commit to church, their families often commit – or recommit at a deeper level – as well.

Good Shepherd's initiative began several years ago when LMM began to organize around not only getting men to join the men's group or the church, but also to encourage men already in church to get more deeply involved.

"That has been one of our main foci," said Wade Israel, long-time member of Good Shepherd's LMM. "Get the men to be more active in the church." Noting that women outnumbered men in the congregation and also that of many of their husbands were not involved in church, LMM started by reaching out to those men.

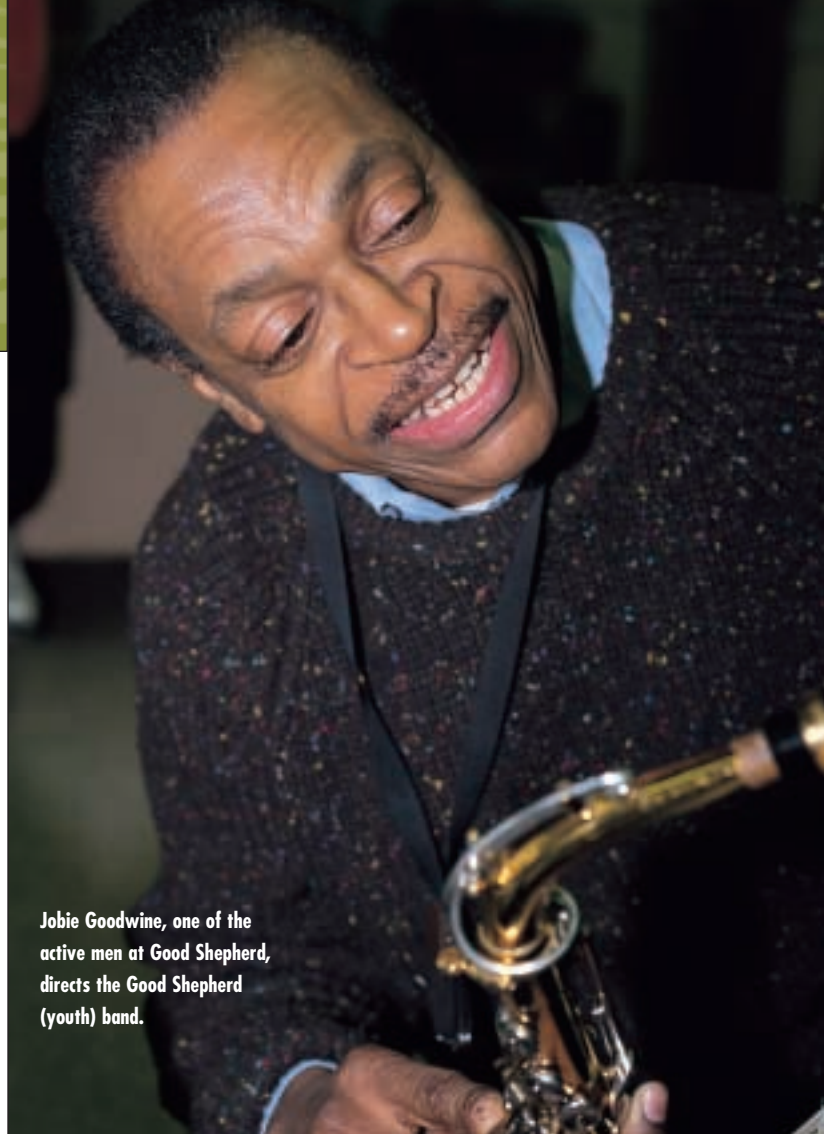
The men scheduled church spruce-up projects, such as painting or renovating or landscaping, that use the vocational talents of the men. While working on the projects, the men have the chance to build friendships and share their life concerns and faith.

To give men more purpose and focus, the men took charge of regular annual congregational events that have become highlights of the church year. One, held in May, brings married or engaged couples together for a dinner dance. The "Celebration of Marriage" fundraiser features not only fun, but also talks and games aimed at strengthening family ties.

The men also "got smart" about how they hold meetings, Taylor said. The vibrant women's groups generally met after services, and leaders noticed men waiting at the church for their wives. Now the men meet at the same time.

"So they're not losing anybody," Taylor said. "They're keeping everybody active that way."

Taylor shared other tips for bringing men into the church. "Always do a one-on-one interview with the men, and when you



Jobie Goodwine, one of the active men at Good Shepherd, directs the Good Shepherd (youth) band.

Photo: Amy Elliott

invite a man to come, it's not enough to invite him, you have to get one or two of the men to go pick him up and bring him," Taylor said. "No one, even when invited, is very comfortable in coming to a group cold if he doesn't really know anyone."

"Befriending, sponsoring, mentoring—that's what has made the difference," Taylor said. More men have joined the congregation or become more involved, and Good Shepherd has brought them into key positions. "The congregation council and leadership roles are not only women any longer."

The men have made a special effort to reach out to the young men and youth of the congregation with after school homework help and tutoring. The congregation is working to establish a computer lab that would be available for youth. LMM is also holding special activities, such as the annual June breakfast for men and boys. Last year, in addition to an inspirational speaker, the men and boys breakfast also featured a fashion show.

"We're trying to be positive role models for the young people because sometimes they do not see that male figure in the home," Israel said.

The idea is to help young men develop faith, character and good values, said John Brown, who, until recently, was president of Good Shepherd's LMM. "We have all types of educational and development things from the point of view of 'the right way.'"

"I'm proud of what we've done," said Brown.



“Come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.”

– Luke 19:5b

Most of us remember the story of Zacchaeus, the short tax collector who climbed up into a tree to get a better view of Jesus. Many of us even remember singing about the “wee little man.” Being somewhat “vertically challenged” myself, I can certainly relate to wanting to get a better view when in a crowd! The radical point of this story is that Jesus wanted to stay at Zacchaeus’ house. I am sure that this was a shock to both Zacchaeus and the crowd.

Most of the time Jesus instructs us to come and follow Him, but this time it was different. Jesus is going to Zacchaeus! I think that this has a certain message for us in both our evangelism and our approach to men’s ministry.

We are constantly told that we must invite, invite, and invite again; in other words, do not give up, but keep asking others to “come.” Jesus certainly did this most of the time. This passage of Scripture suggests to us that sometimes a different approach is needed. We need to periodically re-examine our approach to men’s ministry and how we approach those whom we are trying to reach.

The recent interviews we conducted with the young men definitely pointed this out. Younger men live in a vastly different world today than those of us who are over 35, and especially those of us over 50, 60 and older. Sometimes we expect that everyone should be like we are and share our interests.

Jesus was willing to go against what the crowd thought he should do and visited Zacchaeus (a “sinner”) in his own house! If those of us who are older really do want to reach out to the younger men in our society, we must also be willing to go with them to their environment. We need to show them that we really care about what is happening in their lives and not expect them to act just like us. We need to be open to different approaches to men’s ministry. In addition to relationships, today’s young man is interested in being involved in things that matter or make a difference. This is an important lesson for all of us.

Let us learn from Jesus and realize that at times we may need to issue a “reverse invitation” and invite ourselves into the life of a young man, rather than invite him into ours. We must be willing to see him on his turf. Come, I want to visit you in your house... or coffeehouse... or skateboard park... or concert arena today!




*Heber E. Rast Jr., President,
Lutheran Men in Mission
herast@aol.com*

Help us meet the \$40,000 challenge!

- Enclosed is my one-time gift to help meet the challenge: \$ _____
- I would prefer to pledge \$ _____ per month
- Send information about including Lutheran Men in Mission in my will/estate planning

Method of Payment:

- Contribute online at www.elca.org/lmm by clicking on the “ELCA Giving Basket”
- Check payable to Lutheran Men in Mission

-     Expiration Date: _____

Card Number: _____

Amount to be charged: \$ _____ one-time per month

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City/ State/ Zip: _____

Signature: _____



**Division for Congregational Ministries
Lutheran Men in Mission**

8765 West Higgins Road
Chicago, IL 60631

YOUR FIRST STEP TO DYNAMIC GROWTH

Our men's group had been meeting for close to 30 years and had dwindled to six men.

Tim and I joined the group with an offer to conduct the study for them. Fourteen months ago we began to use the *Master Builders Bible*. It has been such a hit with the men that our Bible study attendance has grown to 36.

We have a different facilitator at each study. With the wonderful way this Bible is set up to do so many varied studies, no one feels unprepared or very nervous about conducting a study.

We are now looking at other activities to get involved in. We had our first annual men's retreat last September. Some of us have volunteered to help in a community clean-

up of a kids fishing hole. On Mother's Day, our men's ministry led both of our worship services and performed all related duties. At last Saturday's men's breakfast, volunteers signed up for almost all of the worship service responsibilities.

The *Master Builder's Bible* is so well organized that a Baptist friend of mine bought one from us to help in his

small group bible study. I can't emphasize enough how blessed we feel to be able to have this tool to put some real organization into a great study of the Scriptures. Whoever developed this study Bible deserves accolades!

Bob Hilde
bbhilde@attbi.com

Dynamic Ministry With Your Men!

Would you like to have more men involved in your congregation? Would you like participation in your men's ministry to grow by as much as six times?

If you are among the first 15 congregations in your synod to contact your LMM synod leader, you may be eligible to receive up to six of the *Master Builders Bible for Men* with the Men's Ministry Leaders Supplement.

With assistance from the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA, the churchwide LMM office has distributed over 5,600 copies of the *Master Builders Bibles* to synod men's leaders so that they can, in turn, personally distribute them to congregations in their synod.

Along with distributing the Bibles, in many cases, the synod leaders are also providing instruction on developing a men's ministry. In many synods, more than half the Bibles allotted them have already been distributed to congregations committed to developing an effective men's ministry.

If you are among the first 15 in your synod to respond, there is no charge – but there is a commitment. That commitment is for four to six leaders to work through the 32-page Men's Ministry Leaders Supplement and develop an effective men's ministry that will eventually fully engage men in the ministry of the congregation. We also ask for the names and addresses of those who receive the Bibles to keep leaders informed.



If your congregation is committed to developing an effective men's ministry and would like to receive this great resource, please contact your Lutheran Men in Mission synod leader. If you do not know who that leader is, go to www.elca.org, click "contact us" and find your synod leader or contact Kim Moseley at the LMM office: (800) 638-3522, Ex. 2595 or at Kimberley_Moseley@elca.org