

foundations

Our vision is for all men to become bold and daring followers of Jesus Christ.

"Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples."
—John 13:34-35



Broadening and deepening our vision of ministry with men

A man is known by the company he keeps. That's why John Armstrong is such a wise, faithful, loving and passionate man. In his book, "Your Church is Too Small: Why Unity in Christ's Mission is Vital to the Future of the Church," John talks about three life-changing conversions that have defined the company he keeps—his circle of friends.

Growing up in a conservative church, he consciously decided to follow Jesus at the young age of seven. He describes a second conversion during college and the years that followed as he struggled with divine sovereignty and human responsibility. John wondered how can one embrace divine sovereignty and human freedom at the same time? Then, in his forties, he began to

struggle with the question of what the church really is. He believed the church was primarily the invisible reality that consisted of all who were born of God's Spirit, but what he saw appeared to be the vibrant and visible community described in the New Testament.

Following the lead of the Spirit

While leading a congregation in the Apostles' Creed one Sunday morning, John says he sensed God's Spirit taking him to Jesus' prayer in John 17:20-23. "I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe

John Armstrong, presenter for the BOLD Gathering. John's conviction is that you need to surround yourself with a diverse team to help you be the man God has called you to be.

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Being with men through life's transitions

I recently encountered four men over a two-day period, and each commented on the positive impact the ministry of Lutheran Men in Mission has had on them. But we don't see so much of these men now because of their other commitments. We connected with them when they were in transition. We encountered them when they were in school or as they were starting their families and careers. One, Brian Konkol, was just named Dean of the Hendricks Chapel at Syracuse University. Another developed the ALT year program, providing young adults with a year apart

in intentional community to explore vocation through theological, service-oriented, practical, shared learning. And the other two men are both busy raising healthy families, one becoming a partner in his architecture firm and the other making his mark in his profession. They are busy men!

As I listened to these guys, I was thankful we were part of their journeys, and I told them not to apologize for their busyness because they are fulfilling the calling we helped them discern in their vocations, families and other relationships.

As I thought about the gift that these encounters were, I thought of how we as leaders may need to change some of our ideas and practices of men's ministry. This is not about adding one man at a time so that someday we have a large group; this is about being ready for men who are passing our way in transition, and being ready to send them along equipped and more confident for whatever they encounter in life.

So, what was it these four men talked about when it came to LMM's influence? Well, it wasn't the programs we provided – it was about the relationships with men of all ages. Any programs they talked about were simply the means through which they connected with others, had great times and grew in Christ.

So, you who are leaders – you all are, whether in a formal group or simply a guy engaged in friendships



The Rev. Dr. Brian Konkol and Doug Haugen.
Brian is a witness to the impact Lutheran Men and Mission has on men of all ages.

LUTHERAN MEN IN MISSION®

The *foundations* newsletter is sent to all who contribute to the ministry of Lutheran Men in Mission. Your contribution ensures that *foundations* will continue to be sent to you.

Our vision for *foundations* is that it be a source of personal spiritual growth, as well as a source of information for those involved in congregational men's ministries. Please contact us to share your stories of men's ministry that we can use in future issues, or to let us know what topics and issues you're interested in seeing featured in *foundations*.

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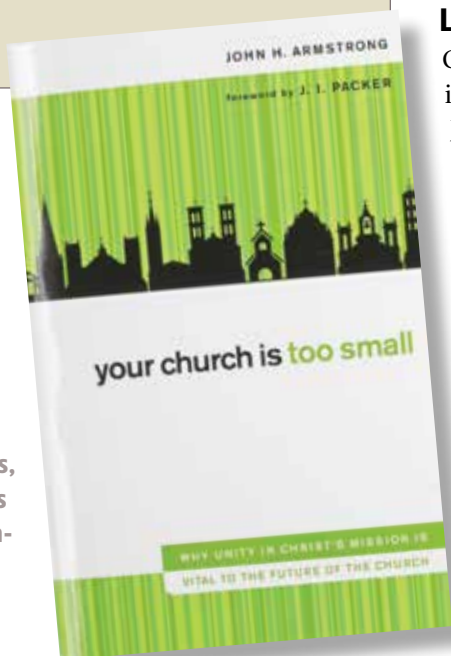
– be aware of the men in your life who are going through transitions.

The men of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Reno are a positive model for this. They are constantly on the lookout for men who are looking for or losing a job, getting married or experiencing difficulties in a relationship, leaving for college or having a child leave for college – you get the idea. When they identify these men, they do what they call a “home invasion.” Imagine, a bunch of guys coming to your house to reassure you that you’re not alone, and that they are with you and supporting you through whatever is going on in life.

Men’s ministry is not about a big program or a flashy activity, it’s about men connecting with each other as they come to Jesus, walk with Jesus. So, I encourage you to look for transitions in your own life, because they’re opportunities God will use to work in you. And, be aware of the transitions men in your life are dealing with. These are opportunities God gives you to be alongside them, encouraging them as they discover what God has in store next.

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Armstrong’s book “Your Church is Too Small,” presents a vision of the unity possible for Christians across social, cultural, racial and denominational lines, demonstrating God’s character to a watching world.



Broadening, continued from page 1

that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.”

Those were the early seeds of the Act3 Network (Advancing the Christian Tradition in the Third Millennium). John had a growing belief that the way to a new reformation and deep renewal in our generation was through carrying out Christ’s mission in relational unity. Or, in the words of Jesus in John 13:34-35, “Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples.”

An unfolding journey beyond the anticipated

This journey has taken John from being a conservative evangelical pastor, ordained in the Reformed Church in America to being a respected leader worshipping at Lutheran Church of the Master in Carol Stream, Ill. But this ministry has taken him even further.

Holding up the centrality of Jesus’ command to love one another, John’s ministry is a connecting point for Christians who never imagined they had anything in common with each other. John’s “company” now includes Pentecostals, evangelicals, mainline Protestants, Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians. John’s perception of the church today is much wider and deeper than in his early days.

Through John’s relationships and writing, the Act3 Network has become a touchpoint for believers from these varied backgrounds to come together, understand each other, celebrate with one another and fulfill the command that Jesus gave us—be the church.

LMM and the next generation of ministry

One of the ways we see this happening with Lutheran Men in Mission is through LMM’s involvement with the A-Team. John is a valuable advisor for Project XII, the first initiative of the A-Team. This is a group of leaders developing the next generation of men’s ministry. The group consists of men representing multiple Lutheran expressions as well as four other denominations, each bringing their faith, creativity, questions, energy, new ideas and openness to following the Spirit’s lead to their dreaming, planning and work with men.

As you’re thinking about what to do with your men’s ministry in the year ahead, consider talking to leaders in other congregations and ministries in your community, including those of other denominations. Focus on what you have in common and what assets and ideas each of you bring to the table, and just see where it takes you!



Where are we headed?

Where do we go from here? Lutheran Men in Mission has spent a lot of time planning, prepping and putting on this BOLD Gathering. Hopefully new bonds have been created, ears have heard inspiring messages and hearts have been set on fire for ministry. Now the question is, what are we going to do individually and as an organization/ministry?

For now, the pause button is being pushed with respect to planning future national men's gatherings. It's not that gatherings are a bad thing, but we are discerning if we are using our time and resources as wisely as we can. Plus, there have been lots of requests about doing more regional events and activity-focused weekends. LMM is considering these scenarios, issues and more.

Your ideas can help generate great things

It's often helpful when there is a sense of sluggishness or calm to bring in an outside catalyst to stir up activity and new energy. If your group has discussed trying something new or envisioned a change, let's talk and work together to make it happen. Last summer, Kyle and I got an invitation to host a hiking weekend in Colorado. As a result, we had a fantastic week with a small group of men backpacking in the Rockies.

A big push LMM is starting is a focus on discipling.

As an organization, we don't emphasize building churches; churches don't always create disciples. However, disciples always create more disciples, and that often involves growing and strengthening churches. Is your area looking for more guidance in creating and encouraging disciples? Tim

Crout and I can be consulted, and are available to offer suggestions for deepening these skills.

Disciples always create more disciples, and that often involves growing and strengthening churches.

At the BOLD Gathering in Minneapolis, you're going to be introduced to Project Twelve. This is a group of men looking at men's ministry, what it looks like around the country and how men experience it. They are also trying to find where there are gaps and voids of resources men are seeking but can't find. Project Twelve wants to find ways to fill the gaps or help groups create their own resources, and eventually move into consultation work with groups. Talk to the Project Twelve men about what they are doing. Share what is going on in your ministry, what you need and what you are finding useful for your work with men right now. Ask what Project Twelve can help you with.



Project Twelve wants to find ways to fill the gaps or help groups create their own resources. Ask what Project Twelve can help you with.

Live streaming LMM events and other dreams

Doug Haugen is interested in the idea of doing a one-day event that could be broadcast from and to anywhere in the country. This might have a similar look and feel to a large gathering, but men could watch and participate from their local communities and congregations. Specifics of this will need to be worked on and ironed out, but with today's technology this live streamed type

of event is very doable. Maybe your men already have the skills and venue to pull this off for us. If so, let us know. You could be the very first host site for such an activity!

It's exciting thinking and dreaming about the coming months for LMM. There are some changes and new things to get used to, but I see them as a sign of growth. At the same time, let me reassure everyone that LMM is standing firm in the things we do well. Our Master Builders Bible for Men has been a staple for us since they were first printed. (We know they are more useful and valuable in the hands of men than sitting in our inventory—hint, hint.) And, we can't forget the One Year to Live retreats. To date, we have reached and helped change the lives of nearly 1,200 men! More and more people are hearing about this retreat experience and want one in their local area.

A phrase that I have been relying on lately has been, "Simple, Consistent and Reproducible." Great things will happen with Lutheran Men in Mission through staying true to who we are and reaching every man we possibly can in a simple, consistent and reproducible manner.

Kevin Burke, Discipling Consultant
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Bottom of the ninth inning

I love baseball, and when it comes to the bottom of the ninth inning, it means the game is almost over. I bring it up now because this column is my final one as president of Lutheran Men in Mission.

It is the bottom of the ninth inning for me, as I will complete my second three-year term as president at the Assembly in Minneapolis. Two terms are the maximum number an LMM officer can serve consecutively in the same position.

It doesn't seem that long ago when I was first elected president at the 2011 Assembly in Denver. And it was a real honor to be re-elected at the 2014 Assembly in Nashville. Now I must turn over the reins to someone else during the Assembly in Minneapolis. It has been an absolute privilege to serve and to help lead this wonderful organization as we strive to change men's lives and help them become bold and daring followers of Jesus Christ.

During these six years, we have continued to push the ministry forward as we reach more men. Here are a few tangible examples of the progress we have made:

- More One Year to Live retreats are being held around the country, and continue to receive amazing reviews. Each year over 100 guys have their lives changed by attending a retreat, and we continue to reach men in new areas of the country.
- The Project Twelve Network has brought together men from multiple denominations and age groups. The Network has curated men's ministry resources and made them readily accessible online to men in congregations through a new website.
- Master Builders Bible for Men and ManTalk Cards continue to be in demand and are wonderful tools being used to help bring men together, share their faith and build community.
- Our weekly Bible study email blast has been well received, and our weekly Lenten devotional was deemed a much-appreciated addition to the LMM portfolio.

- We embraced social media with Facebook, Twitter and YouTube and totally redesigned the LMM website.

We have also made internal changes within the ministry, including:

- Adding a full-time Discipleship Consultant, a part-time Emerging Ministries Consultant and a part-time Development Director.
- Updating our 'backroom operations' to provide on-line donations and better tracking of donors.
- Implementing Google Apps for Non-Profits to provide LMM-based email addresses, simplify communication between staff and board members, and provide cloud storage for LMM files.
- Developing a proposed new board structure and bylaws to better position LMM for ministry in the future.

It has been a great experience that I will always treasure. I especially want to thank the LMM staff, Doug, Kevin, Kyle and Dale for the privilege of working with them. I also want to thank the LMM officers, Tim, Jeff and Mike, and the LMM board, Hal, Tom, Bruce, Jay, Mark, Bernie, Dave, Terry, Pastor Larry and Louis for their support and dedication to the ministry. God has blessed me with an incredible group of people in this ministry. Lastly, I must thank my patient wife Chris for her unbelievable support as I spent untold hours on LMM phone calls and emails, and days away from home at meetings.

While the faces of the leadership team will change, the vision of Lutheran Men in Mission will not: "For all men to become bold and daring followers of Jesus Christ."

Your servant in Christ,

Rich White, President
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Lutheran Men in Mission Online You can find us online at our website lutheranmeninmission.org, or on:



and the Reaching Men blog at reachingmen.blogspot.com

Challenging BOLD Lutheran men. Are you in?

Great things happen when Lutheran men gather together in ministry!

- There's a mission in Omaha, Neb., where Lutheran men gather to help people with addictions.
- Lutheran men come together in Bryan, Ohio, to build beds for children.
- Men of Grace Lutheran Church in Hendersonville, N.C., continue to provide donations of food, furniture and clothing for people still recovering from Hurricane Matthew.
- You'll find Lutheran men in church kitchens and fellowship halls cooking and serving great meals for a variety of causes in their neighborhoods and regions across the country.

As I travel the nation, I am privileged to meet "bold, daring followers of Jesus Christ" at work in their congregations and communities doing important work and encouraging others to join them in contributing time, service and dollars to a variety of causes, ministries and needs.

And, it's my job to challenge Lutheran men everywhere to contribute dollars, offer time and resources, and support new ministries and endeavors. Your financial support, work and prayers is critical for encouraging and furthering the ministries mentioned above, and so many more.

So, as we get ready to come together in Minneapolis at the BOLD Gathering, we are posing the question and challenge, "Are you in?"

In addition to the workshops, service projects, dynamic speakers and meaningful worship together, a very special challenge has been put before us by five men. These men have stepped forward and committed gifts totaling \$50,000 to LMM's ministry and mission, and they are challenging the rest of us to match that by our Saturday evening offering at the Gathering on July 22. Are you in? Remember, you can donate online at lutheranmeninmission.org. Click on the "Support" tab.

A very special challenge has been put before us by five men. These men have committed gifts totaling \$50,000, and are challenging the rest of us to match their contribution by Saturday, July 22. Are you in?

I am looking forward to seeing and sharing time with many of you as we celebrate the ministry of Lutheran Men in Mission and boldly step up and move forward to new endeavors and opportunities to serve others.

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UPCOMING LMM EVENTS & programs

Go to lutheranmeninmission.org for updated events, program information and registration details, or to submit LMM-related events to be posted.

One Year to Live Retreats

Learn more at lutheranmeninmission.org/events/one-year-to-live

One Year to Live retreat participants learn what's important to them, what's been holding them back and leave with a one-year plan centered on how they would live their lives if they had one year to live. One Year to Live changes lives because it teaches men to lead with courage, serve with compassion and give hope to others.

September 15-17

MacKenzie Environmental Education Center

Poynette, Wis.



Support ministry with men through IRA charitable rollovers

Newly enacted legislation named the Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act of 2015 permanently extends the IRA charitable rollover going forward. The provision allows individuals age 70½ or older to make a tax-free gift every year up to \$100,000 from a traditional IRA account directly to a qualified charitable institution, like Lutheran Men in Mission. While you can't claim a charitable deduction for the IRA gift, the distribution does count towards your RMD (required minimum distribution) with no income tax payment by you.

Since this IRA charitable rollover has no sunset clause, you can give to LMM from this year forward.

If you would like to do a IRA charitable rollover, please contact your IRA provider for further instructions. Let me know if you need any help or instructions on how you can use this IRA charitable rollover to support the work and ministry of Lutheran Men in Mission.

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