

Lutheran
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foundations

GOD, GUYS AND GREAT MUSIC

MM favorite Peter Mayer on how faith helps feed his muse

By Vic Williams

To singer-songwriter-musician Peter Mayer, all music is sacred in the end.

"It's a gift of the Spirit," he said while on the road in South Florida with Jimmy Buffett and the Coral Reefer Band; a gig he's kept going for some 23 years along with his solo outings as both a mainstream and Christian pop-rock artist, including a long-running series of shows for Lutheran Men in Mission and ELCA Youth Gatherings stretching back a decade or more. "In most cases, music says what words can't."

Yet, Mayer, who opened last July's Lutheran Men's Gathering in Denver, CO, and whose Peter Mayer Group will act as the house band for this summer's ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans, finds plenty of ways to fit his faith into words. That's true whether or not a song is directly Christian in theme and tone or more secular in flavor, as on one of the dozen solo records he's produced since the 1980s, first with his brother as the group PM, then with his current, incredibly versatile and diverse lineup starting in 1995.

Faith and music

After all the records and shows, he says

he still can't find a clear dividing line between his chief musical muses.

"It's hard for me to make any distinction between them. For instance, our latest album as the Peter Mayer Group are pop songs we've done over the past 15 or 20

shares the stage. Inclusiveness, connecting, and belonging are all key.

"I just can't separate it, because if I do it makes me feel distant from people, like I've built an enclave where my spirituality is supposed to dwell. The second thing is that I find so much of grace in other people, the way they carry God's love, that without staying open to it, I would be cheating myself and a lot of other people. That's what has made it easier for me to be in the Jimmy Buffett group."

In fact, plying his lifelong musical trade among throngs of passionate Parrotheads—fans of Jimmy Buffet—keeps the 53-year-old Mayer grounded as a man, a Christian, and a Lutheran. It might be the perfect place for God's grace to dwell, night after night and song after song; an earthly, modern-day continuation of Jesus' tendency to hang out with "regular folk," including non-believers.

"A lot of people have asked me how I reconcile that—living the musician's lifestyle and a life of faith," Mayer said. "I don't think they're mutually exclusive, but I do think you can walk some thorny paths. I certainly have.

I've been there. But I had a beginning to life being a son of a pastor and my mom [they were missionaries in India when he was born, though he grew up in Missouri], so I was lucky to be sort of 'washed in the water' early in life.



Peter Mayer and Young Men's Ministry Council Member Louis Tilman

*Ever walk with me Lord
Each night and day a rejoicing
With kindness and harmony, justice the beat
You've turned my footsteps to dancing
Oh ever walk with me Lord.*

From "Ever Walk With Me Lord" on the Stirrin' Up The Water album

years, an album that many people perceive to be non-spiritual or secular songs. But I just don't see that separation in my life."

In other words, it's all good, no matter the makeup of the audience on any given night, or the musicians with whom he

(continued on page 8)

This 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.

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 or e-mail us, and share your stories of men's ministry that we can use in this newsletter. We're also interested in knowing what topics and issues you'd like to see featured.

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I have called you friends...

John 15:15 (NRSV)



It's all about relationships

I was sitting with a congregational men's group the other day—just listening. It was a group of about 15 guys, mostly 45 and up with the exception of 18-year-old Ben who was sitting next to his friend, 65-year-old Tom.

The conversation initially centered on “what kind of programs and projects can we do to attract more men”? While a dizzying number of ideas were bantered about the room, I wondered if the same 15 men would be doing all of these things as we were just guessing “what might attract more guys”.

Finally, one of my fellow grey heads directed the question to Ben, “What kind of program would attract guys your age?”

Ben was not there for the food, or necessarily the fellowship. Ben was there because Tom had taken the time to develop a friendship with him. Tom noticed, and took interest in him and has invested his time and energy in Ben. We call that the I-Go model—Identify, Invite, and Invest.

We who are older are not really that much different than those who are younger. In a study done several years ago, George Barna asked 2,000 men what would bring them back to church. One of the three top responses was if there were three or four men they could identify as friends.

It's about relationships, relationships, relationships. The vision of Lutheran Men in Mission is for every man to have a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ through an effective men's ministry in every congregation. That relationship with Jesus Christ is strengthened through and with others.

If we model ministry after Jesus' example, it's about relationships. Jesus dealt with groups of hundreds and thousands. But he spent a sizeable chunk of time with twelve men, and really poured his life into three—Peter, James, and John. He invited them to come along, see, hear, and experience life together.

We don't know much about the individuals in the crowds of hundreds and thousands that Jesus dealt with, but those he spent significant time with turned the world upside down, and they didn't even have a program!

Doug Haugen, executive director
Lutheran Men in Mission
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PLUGGED IN: TAPPING INTO THE RHYTHM & SOUND IN YOUNG MEN'S LIVES

There is more computing power in a single smartphone than in the computers that put men on the moon. This technology brings an access to music unknown to earlier generations: satellite radio, Pandora streaming radio, HD radio, YouTube, VeVo, and the unforgettable iPod. Music is a constant in the lives of young adults, without them realizing how immersed in it they are.

Music transports young men to a different place. It can be reflective, and take them back to a happier or more peaceful time... high school, college, old relationships, athletics, hanging out with friends. It can drive them to achieve or get out of the current situation, through a healthy (or jaded) vision of what can be. Lastly, it can invoke the transcendent, ushering them into a place where the Holy Spirit shows up.

As older brothers and spiritual fathers, realize that music is a vessel to connect to the rhythm of young men's lives. Young men pay attention to that which you give your time. As suggested below, find ways to engage young men and walk alongside them to the foot of the cross.

The I-GO* model is useful. **Become the learner:** Ask a young man for a lesson on technology. **Become the audiophile:** Ask a young man to help set up your home theater. **Be the guy with season tickets:** Ask a young man to hit a concert with you. **Go check out YouTube:** Then debate with the young man over what you think this year's new over-played spring-break song will be.



Be the guy with a garage band: Ask a young man to come play bass on a Saturday night, then ask him to play on Sunday morning.

There is a generation starving for authentic relationships and salvation. Let God use you to make heaven crowded!

One final note: As worship planners, pay attention to where lyrics in worship songs can take guys. It is not uncommon to have songs played in a key that many men cannot sing, and the language is not guy-centric or -engaging. While the women around them sing their hearts out to the Lord, guys just

stand there glancing around and feeling out of place.

Allow yourself to tap into the rhythm and sound of today's music and you'll probably find more young men plugging into your men's ministry.

* The I-GO model and other strategies are discussed more in depth in *Coming of Age: Exploring the Spirituality of Younger Men*, a resource of Lutheran Men in Mission. You can find it at www.lutheranmen.org.

Kyle Pedersen

Kyle Pedersen is a brother, a son, and walk-along-sider who is journeying to the foot of the cross with an amazing crew! When not doing his day job in Des Moines, IA, he serves as a Young Men's Specialist with Lutheran Men in Mission.

THRIVENT CHOICE®: YOUR COMMUNITY. YOUR SUPPORT. YOUR CHOICE.

Thrivent Choice, the charitable grant program from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, continues to be a welcome funding source for Lutheran Men in Mission.

If you are a member of Thrivent Financial, you likely are aware of this easy, convenient way to help support what matters most to you. The Thrivent Choice program offers two ways members can recommend where Thrivent Financial distributes some of its charitable grant funds each year.

The first is through Voting Events, which are held one to two times a year. During these Voting Events, all members age 16 and older can recommend how Thrivent Financial distributes a set amount of charitable grant funds among a short list of national organizations. Already, \$2 million has been distributed among 17 national organizations.

The second component of Thrivent Choice is Choice Dollars. Eligible benefit members are designated Choice Dollars which they can direct, thereby recommending charitable grant funding for Lutheran Men in Mission.

If you are eligible to participate in Choice Dollars, or are uncertain about your eligibility, visit Thrivent.com/thriventchoice. Or contact your local Thrivent Financial representative.

Choice Dollars designated to eligible benefit members in 2012 must be directed by March 31, 2013.

Directing Choice Dollars and voting in Voting Events are subject to the terms and conditions of the Thrivent Choice Program. Visit Thrivent.com/thriventchoice for complete terms and conditions.



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LMM PRESENTS GIFT OF SPANISH NEW TESTAMENTS

Representatives of Lutheran Men in Mission distributed nearly 6,000 El Nuevo Testamentos, Spanish language New Testaments, to congregations and ministries from October 2011 through February of this year. Here is the story of one such congregation.

This past December, the members and friends of San José Lutheran Church in Beloit, WI, celebrated Las Posadas. "Posada" is Spanish for lodging and celebrates the Nativity members considered to be pilgrims seeking lodging. The celebration participants led a procession carrying candles and statuettes of Joseph and Mary to the Nativity scene in front of the congregation's altar.



The men of San José Lutheran Church in Beloit, WI, with LMM's Spanish language New Testament—El Nuevo Testamento.

Prior to the procession and celebration, Rev. Neddy Astudill welcomed and thanked Lon Buss for the gift of fifty *El Nuevo Testamentos* (Spanish New

Testaments). As part of the procession, some of the Bibles were placed in front of the Nativity scene. Lon is the Region 5 Director for Lutheran Men in Mission. San José Lutheran Church was also given the *Master Builders Bible for Men*, *Coming of Age*, and *No Man Left Behind* resources to help their members and friends have a closer relationship with Jesus Christ.

To date, LMM has distributed or sold 25,000 Spanish language New Testaments in the United States and Central and South America to reach out to Spanish speaking communities.

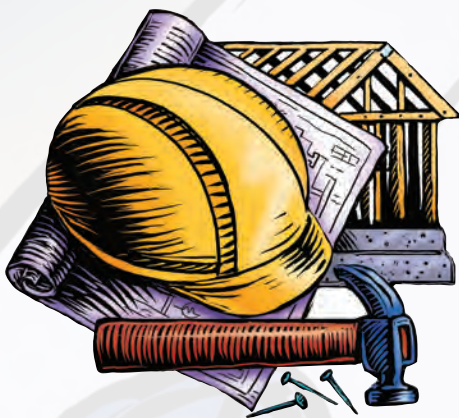


When Lyman Coleman designed the One Year to Live Retreat with Lutheran Men in Mission several years ago, he asked if LMM would share this with other denominations. A group of LMM leaders introduced One Year to Live to the first group of United Methodist Men in Waycross, GA in January. One Year to Live is now a part of the national United Methodist Men's program.

Lutheran Men in Mission HERITAGE CLUB

These members of the Lutheran Men in Mission heritage club have helped to secure the future of this ministry by remembering Lutheran Men in Mission in their will/estate planning. If you would like to know more about including LMM in your will, please contact us at 800-638-3522, ext. 2566.

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Thanks to God working through the wonderful donors listed below, Lutheran Men in Mission took a great step forward with a significant increase in gift income in 2011. We have come a long way, but 2012 will be an even more exciting and challenging year for us. **Two donors have stepped forward with challenge gifts totaling \$20,000.** We are to meet that challenge by summer. Please prayerfully consider how you might help. Please refer any additions/corrections to Kim Moseley at 800-638-3522, ex. 2595, or e-mail at Kimberley.Moseley@elca.org.

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A MEN'S RETREAT YOU'LL NEVER FORGET: ONE YEAR TO LIVE

One Year to Live is a retreat followed up by small groups that encourage men to look seriously at their lives, make significant decisions about their spiritual journey, and work with other men to hold one another accountable for those decisions. One Year to Live is an opportunity for men to explore the difference their Christian faith can make in their lives as they relate to families, people at work, and others in the Christian community.

The retreat is successful because it's designed for men. It's peer oriented, not expert oriented. It's not centered on information, but is process oriented, that is, it's a structured series of conversations to explore who you are.

We hope you'll go online and sign up for a retreat near you. You can email any questions you have to Doug.Haugen@elca.org.

2012 One Year to Live Retreats

For details, go to: lutheranmeninmission.org
and click on Events > One Year to Live.

Charleston, SC
Coastal Retreat Center
March 23-25, 2012

Fremont, NE
Camp Rivercrest
March 23-25, 2012

Grant, CO
Camp Santa Maria
April 13-15, 2012

Clintonville, WI
Imago Dei Village
May 18-20, 2012

Rodgers, OH
Camp Frederick
August 24-26, 2012

Poynette, WI
MacKenzie Center
November 9-11, 2012

CRUTS, CRATS AND THINGS LIKE THAT!

A CRUT or CRAT? What in the world are they? Well, they are agreements that allow you to make a gift to help Lutheran Men in Mission (LLM) continue to draw men into more effective Christian ministry and at the same time receive for yourself an income for life.

CRUT is short for Charitable Remainder Unitrust and CRAT stands for Charitable Remainder Annuity Trust.

These are wonderful tools for donating appreciated securities or property to Lutheran Men in Mission while benefiting in turn from a life income as well as tax savings. By law, the rate of return on a Unitrust or Annuity Trust must be a minimum of 5% but can be as high as 6%, 7%, 8% or even more. The tax benefits include a sizeable charitable contribution deduction plus complete freedom from any capital gains tax. As the securities or property are removed from your estate, there is also freedom from estate or inheritance taxes.

Each Charitable Remainder Trust is its own entity, e.g. the Tom and Alice Smith Charitable Remainder Unitrust. Your gift is invested to provide an income stream for you as long as you live with the Remainder (hence the name) going, at your death, to Lutheran Men in Mission for our charitable purposes. The rate of return is unaffected by age and more than one person can share in the Trust income.

Would you like to learn more about these intriguing gift methods? To help you do so, LMM has available, free of charge, an interesting booklet which describes the many advantages of Charitable Remainder Trusts. To receive your copy phone Doug Haugen, Executive Director, at 773.380.2566 or write or send the coupon below to Lutheran Men in Mission, ELCA, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago IL 60631. There is no cost or obligation.

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GOD, GUYS AND GREAT MUSIC

(continued from cover)

“That seems to have a very negative effect on a lot of people, and I’ve struggled a lot with my faith over the years, but I can’t imagine a day without it—even if it’s just a quick, askance, spiritual way of walking. I depend on it so much for strength, and clarity and vision. That moves me to write. The Spirit moves in me, but what I believe less in is those clear boundaries of, ‘this is spiritual music, and that is not.’”

The first invitation to connect with LMM

The Peter Mayer Group brings many musical influences to bear in their work—classical, rock, folk, country, jazz, gospel—which makes them a natural for events like the Lutheran Men’s Gatherings. Still, when LMM Executive Director Doug Haugen approached Mayer in 2003 to play the gathering that year, he took pause.

“He called me out of the blue at my home in Nashville,” Mayer said. “He introduced himself, said he was with Lutheran Men in Mission. He asked if I’d be interested in playing a couple of men’s events. I said, ‘Well, let me look at my schedule and think

I’ve always been closely tied to and found great strength through the organized church and my faith life. But at the same time, I wasn’t sure how this would pan out. I happened to have The Lutheran magazine that my mother had subscribed to. I read a few articles and had this strange kind of ‘coming home’ feeling, that there was something here—‘so let’s get into this and see what happens.’”

“The first one I did was in Colorado. I did a song and got to be part of two presentations there. It really blew me away; it was eye-opening and uplifting. One of the best things to come out of it was my friendship with Doug Haugen. He not only ran Lutheran Men in Mission but became a friend, a confidante, and a huge supporter. We call each other maybe five or ten times a year as we’re both traveling around. He’s been a very dear friend and very encouraging along the way.”

What the Spirit has done—is doing.

The recurring connection with Haugen and LMM’s army of dedicated-yet-searching Lutheran guys gives Mayer stronger footing in his own faith walk with Jesus—the affirming sense that we’re all in this together.

“It’s taught me never to assume things about other people, or about faith, or God’s work in our lives,” he said. “What I assumed originally was way off base. It’s taught me to always leave an open door in your story for a lot to change, for the Spirit, for God to come in and do really

that they’ve struggled as men, they’ve had victories as men, and they recognize as a family that we all need that life-giving breath, that life of faith.”

So, life just keeps rolling along for



Mayer, and his blessings are many—the Buffett gigs, his solo work (including the newly released live set *Under Your Spell*), and his family life at home. But there’s one road he’d like to travel soon, with other Lutheran men at his side.

“I talked to Doug the other day, and what really excited me is his work with the One Year to Live program, and his work with young people. It’s a wonderful development, opening doors to the young,” Mayer said with palpable excitement. “I haven’t been, but from what I understand, it heavily involves listening to people talk of their lives and their faith. Talk of their struggles and their victories. I strongly believe that Lutheran men need a shift of paradigm from, ‘Let us go in and instruct’ to, ‘let us be companions and community with these people who are God’s children.’ Being a companion also means listening.”

And playing. And singing. And believing.

You can find out more about Peter Mayer’s life, music, and upcoming events at www.petermayer.com.



Vic Williams is publisher of Fairways + Greens Magazine and a member of Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Reno, NV.



about it.”

“Originally I was, ‘Oh my gosh do I really want to get into this?’ My vision of Lutheran men was tied to some old notion of a church-backed men’s club of an era gone by. You go through your own story without knowing their story. It wasn’t that I was a stranger to church; we attended church regularly, my father was a minister.

life transforming work. A lot of it seems to be peeling away layers of what we’ve put on over years. It’s taught me to be more open; to see that this work in men’s lives is really transforming and inspiring. They mean it, but they don’t claim to have it all ‘down,’ which I really count on, because I get irritated when people claim to have it down. I like their humanity in the sense

The 2012 Presidential campaign has started in earnest, and we hear the electorate asking the various candidates, “If I vote for you, what will you do for me?” As men involved in Lutheran Men in Mission’s leadership, we are often asked a similar question, “What will LMM do for us?” (Feel free to substitute me, my church, or my synod for the word us.) This question is often raised when we ask someone for their financial support.

Let me answer the question by highlighting what LMM has done over the past few years:

- Distributed 10,000 *Master Builders Bible for Men* at no cost to help churches start or restart a men’s Bible study.
- Sold another 40,000 *Master Builders Bible for Men* at a great price (\$15-\$20) to further promote Bible study among men.
- Given Bibles to seminarians who are going out on internship.
- Distributed or sold 25,000 Spanish language New Testaments in the United States and Central and South America to reach out to Spanish speaking communities.
- Helped develop and conduct the One Year to Live retreat to provide life-changing opportunities for men to re-evaluate where they are in their life and faith. We’ve reached almost 500 men, so far.
- Developed and conducted the Building Men for Christ workshop to help churches start men’s ministry for men of all ages. 250 men have participated, to date.
- Reached out to young men, ages 18-35, with the research we funded that resulted in the book *Coming of Age: Exploring the Spirituality and Identity of Younger Men*, and the formation of the Young Men’s Council and the LEAD program, a year-long leadership development and discipleship program for young men.
- Held a 2-day gathering for men of all ages in Denver, CO, under the theme Called! Equipped! Sent! that reached out to 400+ men.
- Distributed via email a weekly Bible study based upon the upcoming Sunday’s Gospel lesson.
- Published a quarterly newsletter with copies sent to every ELCA congregation and a mailing list of an additional 10,000 people.
- Created a new, independent Web site www.lutheranmen.org and established our presence on both Facebook and Twitter.



I could go on with other things such as becoming a separately incorporated non-profit organization with 501(c)3 status, but that is not the point. What I have listed above is ministry: Lutheran Men in Mission reaching out to achieve its vision of establishing a life-changing men’s ministry for every man in every congregation. Stay tuned for future developments!

Yours in Christ,
Rich White, President
Lutheran Men in Mission
rwhite743@aol.com

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ONE YEAR TO LIVE RETREAT MODEL SHARED WITH UNITED METHODIST MEN



Lutheran Men in Mission introduced the United Methodist Men to the One Year to Live retreat program this past January. The LMM leaders involved were (left to right): LMM Vice President Tim Crout, Secretary Bernie Bresson, author/designer of the One Year to Live retreat Lyman Coleman, LMM Executive Director Doug Haugen, and LMM board member Jim Monkman.



The combined Lutheran Men in Mission and United Methodist Men's team in a briefing with Lyman Coleman before the OYTL retreat.



Lutheran Men in Mission Executive Director Doug Haugen with Lyman Coleman and United Methodist Men's leader Larry Malone.



Lutheran Men in Mission online!

www.lutheranmeninmission.org
www.elca.org/lmm

Follow and join the conversations on these Lutheran Men in Mission (LMM) channels:



- YouTube: www.youtube.com/user/LutheranMenInMission
- Facebook
- Twitter at @LutheranMen

Photo gallery for the 2011 Lutheran Men's Gathering:

- Photoprose PhotoGraphics, www.photoprose.org