

Lutheran
Building
Men in
Men for
Mission
Christ

foundations

A HEROIC QUEST FOR BOYS:

Arizona pastor's program helps boys and dads become 'authentic' Christian men

By Vic Williams

Something was happening at Community of Grace Lutheran Church in Peoria, AZ, and Pastor Tim Wright knew it. Among his flock he saw a trend that has cropped up for many ELCA congregations over the past couple of decades.

Young men were disappearing before his eyes.

Through no fault of his own, or anyone else's, his faith community was running low on testosterone. Teenage boys would hit a certain age and stop showing up, and they weren't alone. Twenty something men were few and far between, too, and most of the guys who stuck around seemed just plain stuck, perhaps tagging along with their wife and kids with no roadmap to follow Jesus as mature men—as “authentic” Christian men rather than arrested adolescents. He also saw a growing spiritual gulf between fathers and sons.

Time to fill that gulf, he decided. Time to find a way to bring young men closer to Jesus and help them discover the heroic man—faithful, ambitious, compassionate, confident, creative, empowered, generous, honorable, noble, responsible—that God wants them to be.

That was eight years ago. Then Pastor Wright came across a book by David Murrow called *Why Men Hate Going to Church*. It struck a chord.



“He talked about how churches have become feminized, not in a negative sense, but over the years they’ve begun to cater more to women than men, and men are staying away,” Pastor Wright said in a November interview. “I brought David in to give a sermon about how boys are increasingly being isolated from the

church. We made some changes in our Sunday school program to up the value for boys.”

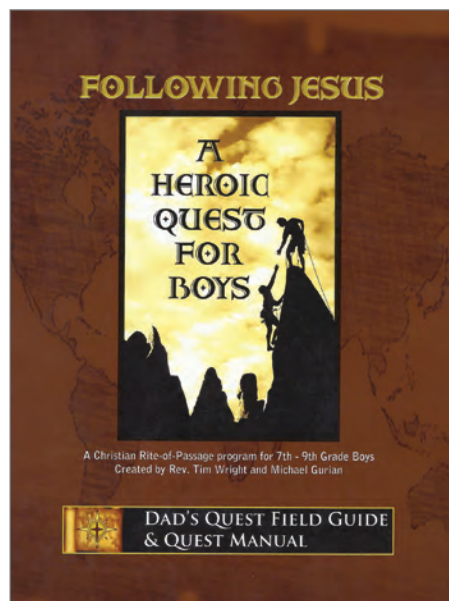
Where are we going with this?

More reading on the subject led Pastor Wright to the work of Michael Gurian, a counselor, therapist, and author whose Gurian Institute is “committed to helping educators understand how boys learn, and how girls learn. His passion really is boys, because they’re falling so far behind.”

He emailed Gurian and asked if he’d be open to consulting with a church. “I entered into a consulting relationship with him, and after three or four sessions he asked, ‘Where are we going with this?’ We dug a little deeper and came up with the concept of creating a rite of passage program for junior high boys that would not only introduce them to what it looks like to be a man who follows Jesus, but also included their dads in the process to give them the tools they need to mentor their boys.”

A Heroic Quest for Boys

The result is “Heroic Quest for Boys,” a simple-to-follow yet comprehensive 14-week program that either takes the place of or complements a more traditional Lutheran confirmation curriculum (though it can fit into any denomination’s youth ministry). Available for purchase since last February with a girls’ version coming out next spring, it’s built around large and



(continued on page 6)

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 am longing to see you so that I may share with you some spiritual gift to strengthen you—or rather so that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine.

Romans 1:11-12 (NRSV)



We have good things to share

One of the great joys I have in my position of Executive Director is connecting with other men's ministry leaders in denominations and para-church groups. I find the fellowship stimulating and I have the opportunity of having a "bird's eye view" of men's ministry resources and programs being produced.

We work with others whenever we can. In fact, you'll note in this newsletter we are announcing that we have been invited to participate in the United Methodist Men's Gathering next summer—*Inside Out: For the Glory of God*.

Working with others also allows me to see what is missing in men's ministry and what Lutheran Men in Mission has to contribute to the work of men's ministry in the Christian church.

Anchored in our grace-oriented, Biblical theology, we are offering at least four things that others admire and often emulate.

- **The Master Builders Bible for Men:** Once again this year we took a great financial leap to produce 5,000 more copies of this "one-stop shop" for men's ministry. Along with the 20,000 small group study questions it contains a step-by-step guide on how to develop an effective men's ministry.
- **The ManTalk Playing Cards:** Men who may never attend a Bible study are opening up in groups using these cards. With five levels of questions (some of which make some people blush) on each playing cards, men are finding another avenue to talk about their faith and what's going on in their life.
- **The One Year to Live Experience:** More than 500 men have now experienced this rugged, faith-filled, sacramental weekend. Most of these men are Lutheran, but we have also begun to introduce it to the United Methodist and Episcopal Men as well as men from other denominations.
- **The Inter-Generational Ministry:** Look around at our events, such as our Gathering in Denver last year, and you'll see a growing number of younger men. This is because our middle and older age men are beginning to put into practice the teaching that has come about through the research we have done and our *Coming of Age* resource.

As you consider the men's ministry in your congregation, don't just think about the men in your congregation. Consider the men in your community (most of whom are un-churched). Then look up and down your street to the churches that you can partner with. You may not agree on every point of doctrine, but you have a common commitment to Christ and a common mission with men.

As you get to know other men's leaders locally, I'm confident you will feel as blest as I do. You will find that they have a love of Christ and the same basic concerns for men and men's ministry. They have good things to share and they will benefit by what you, as a Lutheran man, brings to the common ministry.

Doug Haugen, executive director
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WINTER SURVIVAL GUIDE

Winter is inconvenient. There is fall yard work, and the hecticness of Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years. We drive to work in the dark and drive home in the dark. At the first hint of snow, a 10-minute commute turns into an hour. And, don't forget the snow shoveling (you can tell where I live).

As guys, activities that help facilitate soul-care such as golf, gardening, flag football, bike riding, and hunting become few and far between due to the colder(er) weather. We are driven indoors for a season. So what good can come of this season of winter?

Being forced to slow down for a season is needed. As the cover article speaks to, winter can be a season to focus on teaching a younger brother (or son) in the faith or learning to follow Christ in deeper ways in our own life. Consider the following, based on a pastor's blog from a couple years ago:

Winter is a time for study. Picture Abraham Lincoln reading his Bible in the log cabin by candlelight in the primeval winters of a younger America. Imagine our great grandparents huddled around the stove reading the classics, with everything pitch black outside. Sometimes we're too busy planting and harvesting during the sunny days to take study and growth seriously.

Winter is a time for relationships. As our men's ministry calendar is askew with busy schedules, we can refocus on eating and praying with those people in our fellowships who mean the world to us. When the task-orientation of spring and summer sets in, it's easy to see relationships as disposable or as back-burner time. In the winter, we have to huddle together for warmth.

Winter is a time for prayer. It's easy to neglect prayer in the frenetic days of summer. The darkest days of Advent and Lent are the time to light candles. Cultivation of a prayer life is hard when church life is at full throttle. Busy leaders never have time to pray. The best time for that is "winter."



Winter is a time for dreaming about the coming spring. Planting season is around the corner. The trees will bud. The robins will return. God will do all kinds of new things among us. Many men will come to faith. But God will do that in his time. We don't know the day or the hour, and can't even predict a simple childbirth, let alone a spring thaw.

Winter is not a bad season—it's just different. Is it time in your ministry to men and in your own life to embrace the good

parts of winter?

And here are some intergeneration ministry take-aways for the winter:

- Reach out to the young men who are home from college. Invite them to lunch and ask them what they are passionate about and how they see God at work in their lives.
- At family gatherings, choose to invest anew in your nephews, grandsons, and the boyfriends or fiancées that show up with the nieces, daughters, and granddaughters. These young men are no longer the children sitting at the kids table of ten years ago. Tell them you will meet up or call them outside of holiday gatherings, and then actually call them!
- Be aware of young(er) men who may need help with a snow blower or winterizing their motorcycle. Show up unannounced and serve them. Don't take anything in return; ask for the chance to take them to dinner and hear about their life.

Now go be the church! Take us young guys with you this winter!

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.



The Perfect Study Bible for Men of All Ages

The *Master Builders Bible for Men*, Second Edition, is a special New International Version Bible that provides you with:

- 20,000 study questions.
- Bible stories with study questions.
- Ready to use Bible studies for men.
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It's an invaluable tool for helping men of all ages connect God's Word with their lives and faith. Order enough for your group, as gifts for young men, and to use as an outreach tool for visitors and men in your community.

Price: \$20.00/Bible (plus handling/shipping) Item No: 1574941526 or \$15/Bible (plus handling/shipping) if 10 or more are ordered.

Order at 800-638-3522, ext.2580 or online at www.elca.org/resources.

LMM LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

By Lon Buss

Men from ten states gathered at the Lutheran Center in Chicago, IL, on October 12-13 for the Lutheran Men in Mission Leadership Summit. The men participating learned about the latest Lutheran Men in Mission resources and events, as well built relationships and networked.

Lutheran Men in Mission is a 501(c)(3) ministry with and to men in the Lutheran church and beyond. We work to strengthen men's Christian faith, relationships, witness and service in their homes, congregation and communities.

Our Mission is, by God's grace, to build men's faith, relationships and ministry through men's events, the resources we produce and ongoing leadership development.

Our Vision is that every man have a growing relationship with Jesus Christ through an effective men's ministry in every congregation.

Our Commitment is to assist every congregation in establishing an effective, life changing men's ministry.

Doug Haugen, LMM Executive Director, shared "What Makes LMM Unique" in the world of men's ministry. The answer is grace, in addition to LMM's resources and events. LMM leaders from across the country shared how they carry out LMM's mission in synods and congregations using a variety of models and methods. Listening to the diversity of approaches used for men's ministry helped

leaders understand that there is flexibility and creativity in how ministry develops based on the unique needs, circumstances, and resources of local communities.

The Summit also included:

- Information about the One Year to Live Retreat and Building Men for Christ Workshops. Summit participants were encouraged to attend the retreat and partner with LMM leaders to host a workshop in their local area.
- The latest about ministry utilizing social networking and technology.
- An opportunity to use the new ManTalk Cards (each went home with a deck).
- A presentation on event planning strategies to help attendees with planning events back home.

At the closing of the Summit, the men gathered for a commissioning ceremony in the Lutheran Center Chapel. Each man was presented with a cross made of nails representing how we are bonded together by the blood of Christ.

The LMM Leadership Summit was an experience and opportunity to help carry out LMM's vision in synods and congregations by continuing to build an active network of Synod Leaders, Reps, Developers, and Communicators.

Lutheran Men in Mission is grateful to Dave Rustad of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans for attending and providing a grant that allowed Summit Sessions to be recorded for future use and sharing with a broader audience.



The LMM Board. Front row, left to right: Larry Clark, Larry Moeller, Tim Crout, Dan Joy, and Jim Monkman. Middle row: Betty Brandt (Women of the ELCA representative), Lon Buss, Terry Edwards, Tom Green, and Kyle Pedersen (Young Men's Ministry Specialist). Back row: Fred Bohls, Doug Haugen, Tom Ness, Les Robbins, Bernie Bresson, Rich White, and Keith Langford (Young Men's Council representative). Not pictured: Jeff Mason and Tom Skrenes (Council of Bishops representative).



The role of the Lutheran Men in Mission Development Council is to assist the leadership in developing the funding to carry out our ministry. Back row, left to right: Larry Nines, Jeff Kuchenbecker, Larry Moeller (chair), and Doug Haugen. Front row, left to right: Hal Derrick, Mark Vaughan, and Tim Crout.

Benefit From Making a Gift of Life Insurance to Lutheran Men in Mission

Have you ever considered using life insurance to make a gift to support the ministry of Lutheran Men in Mission?

There are many advantages and benefits in doing so, not the least of which is you will be assuring the vitality and future of this vital organization.

You may have a policy that you took out many years ago but the protection is no longer needed. You can assign ownership of that policy to Lutheran Men in Mission. At your death, Lutheran Men in Mission will receive the full proceeds to use in strengthening and expanding its work.

You will benefit, not only from the satisfaction of having made a significant gift to assist this vibrant organization, but

also from receiving a charitable income tax deduction for the value of the policy. If you are still paying premiums on the policy, you can make an additional tax-deductible contribution each year to Lutheran Men in Mission so we can pay the premium and keep the policy current.

Or you can take out a new policy through your favorite life insurance agent, making Lutheran Men in Mission the owner of the policy. Then each year make a tax-deductible contribution to us so we can pay the premium.

You can also select a single premium policy, making a single tax-deductible gift to Lutheran Men in Mission for the amount of the premium.

Or you can designate Lutheran Men in Mission as a partial beneficiary of an existing or new policy.

You will be astounded at how large a gift you can make at a relatively small annual cost by using life insurance to make your contribution!

If you would like to know more about making a gift utilizing Life Insurance, call Lutheran Men in Mission at 1-800-638-3522, ext. 2566, or write to Lutheran Men in Mission at:

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A great opportunity has been given to us! Four wonderful partners have offered matching gifts totaling \$40,000 to the rest of us. This match promises that every new or increased "Builder" gift will be matched dollar-for-dollar up to a total of \$40,000, resulting in a total of \$80,000! Here's the list of donors (as of November 1) who have stepped up to the challenge. **Send your gift by January 31 to be included in our list for fiscal year 2012.** We will publish the complete list in our next newsletter. Please refer any additions/corrections to Kimberley Moseley-Cannon at 1-800-638-3522, ext. 2595, or email Kimberley.Moseley@elca.org.

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A HEROIC QUEST FOR BOYS:

small groups of boys and fathers or father figures, plus two other adult mentors that complete a Quest Fellowship. Over the first few weeks, the entire group learns its core concepts and male archetypes: the “Honorable King,” “Responsible Servant,” “Creative Explorer,” and others. The boys read the Gospel of Mark and present a Jesus Project to the group, their families, and friends to illustrate one of Mark’s stories through a video, game, or a comic book. They also perform a mission project. Meanwhile, dads keep a journal about their relationships with the men in their lives—sons, fathers, and friends. “It’s essentially the story of their lives together, in dad’s handwriting, which he does over the course of the 14 weeks,” says Pastor Wright.

The program wraps up with a celebration

for each boy during Sunday worship involving 10 minutes in front of the congregation with their dads and mentors at their side.

Powerful results!

Pastor Wright is into his third year of leading the Quest at Community of Grace, and the results have been powerful and rewarding for all involved.

“The boys love it; they are engaged because it’s brain appropriate. The dads are jazzed; it’s a really positive experience for them. I’ve had a few that, in terms of their own faith development, were Christian men but that was about it. They learn a lot. It gives them entree into their sons’ lives that they might not have otherwise.”

Pastor Wright is at work on a “Heroic Quest for Boys” book that he’ll self-publish this winter after being turned down by several Christian publishing houses who mistakenly believe “there’s no market for a book on boys for parents.” He’s also developing a “follow-up program, shorter and not as intensive, geared for dads and their sons from 10th grade on up.”

It all leads to one vital goal: Helping modern boys and men regain the tools, awareness, passion, and spiritual strength to realize their promise as earthly men



and as followers of the ultimate male role model—Jesus.

Clearly Pastor Wright is filling a big and troubling void in today’s Christian community.


For more information:
www.heroicquestforboys.com



Vic Williams is Editor-in-Chief of GolfGetaways magazine and a member of Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Reno, NV.



THRIVENT CHOICE: AN EASY WAY TO SUPPORT MEN’S MINISTRY

Thrivent Choice, the  Thrivent Financial for Lutherans® Choice is Choice DollarsSM. from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, continues to be a welcome and helpful 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 DollarsSM. Eligible benefit members are designated Choice DollarsSM 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 no later than 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 to see how you can direct your Choice Dollars to support the work of LMM and for complete terms and conditions.



I am excited!

I just returned from the Fall LMM Board meeting and I am pumped. This was one of the best, if not the best, Board meetings that I have attended in my nine years on the Board—everyone was into it. We had invigorating discussion, thoughtful deliberation, and challenging debate. But the most exciting thing is that the Board decided to take an aggressive step and move Lutheran Men in Mission to the next level!

The Board said that the time has come to add a new staff person to the ministry. This full-time position, called a Program Director, will be the first staff person in

addition to the Executive Director to focus on LMM's ministry. The Program Director will work to develop and support networks of men's ministry leaders in synods, regions, and congregations. He will also develop and implement the Men's Ministry Specialist (MMS) certification process that we have envisioned for several years. Finally, he will conduct research on how congregations are effectively engaging men and the impact on the congregation. This may sound like we are looking for Superman, and maybe we are, but the Board believes that the time is right and God will help us identify the right person.

I am excited because the Board decided to hold four events next year that reach out to men in four distinct parts of the country. These are in addition to our One Year to Live retreats and our Building Men for Christ workshops. Our 2014 Triennial Assembly and Lutheran Men's Gathering will be held July 17-20 at the "destination" location of Nashville, TN. And, we are contemplating starting an annual nationwide event around Father's Day that you can participate in with guys from your congregation and synod.

I am excited because our annual giving continues to grow thanks to our faithful and generous supporters! When our books are closed for 2012, we believe that we will reach the \$300,000 contribution level for one year. Considering that the total giving in 1989, our first year as LMM, was \$25,000, LMM is definitely moving forward. This new level of giving is what is allowing us to expand our ministries. Thanks to the successful Building for the Future endowment fund drive in 2005-2008, we can report that LMM now has over \$1,000,000 in assets.

So I invite you to become excited with me—it's contagious! Attend one or more of the events in 2013, organize a men's event in your congregation with resources from LMM, and contribute financially to Lutheran Men in Mission so that we can move this ministry onward and upward with the excitement that can only come from the presence of God's Spirit among us.

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

Mark your calendars

Go to www.lutheranmeninmission.org for additional information and LMM events.

2013 Events

**Building Men for Christ
Workshops**

Mauldin, SC

Messiah Lutheran Church

January 19, 2013

Gladstone, MI

First Lutheran Church

February 9, 2013

2014 Events

**2014 Lutheran Men
in Mission Assembly and
Lutheran Men's Gathering
Loews Vanderbilt Hotel
Nashville, TN**

**July 17-18 (Assembly) and
July 18-20 (Gathering)**

Lutheran Men in Mission online!

www.lutheranmeninmission.org

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



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- Twitter at @LutheranMen



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
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NEW POSITION OPEN: LMM PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Lutheran Men in Mission is a leader and innovator in confronting the challenges to men in a culture that values competition and aggression as preferred male characteristics. Through deepened understandings of the scriptures, men find more meaning in living as counter-cultural beacons.

We are seeking a push-the-envelope Program Director to build on our twenty-five year history and further the spiritual health and wholeness of men. A seasoned communicator, this individual will embrace a broad array of tools to engage the culture, including innovation through social media. Caring, coaching, mentoring, challenging, leading—these traits are at the core of this person's interactive style. Versatility in personal interaction is key, with a demonstrated history of interaction at all levels and across all functions in diverse organizational settings. Grounding in Christian principles is essential.

Required Qualifications:

- An *outside-the-box* market innovator with a knack for embracing fresh approaches.
- A seasoned do-er with *demonstrated organizational skills* in setting priorities and meeting deadlines amidst the constant flood of well-intentioned demands.
- Thorough grounding in *network and team development* from concept to realization with an ability to identify, invite, and invest in individuals comprising a network spanning North America.
- An innate *drive and initiative* requiring little in the way of direct supervision, able to function effectively with minimal direction, and able to instill those traits in others.
- A *co-traveler on the Christian journey* who cherishes moments of intimate encouragement in time of deep need.

For more information or to apply, go to www.elca.org/hr and click on the "ELCA Job Board" link.



ManTalk® Cards

Poker, Cribbage, Bridge... and ManTalk? Add a new dimension to game night with this deck of cards. Each card features questions written by men—for men—that help move the conversation beyond the latest sports scores. Card topics include:

"Manships" (Relationships), "Man-O-Man" (Sports/Leisure), "Manmories" (Lessons/Reflections), "Wild Man" (Spiritual/Cosmic/Ethics), and "Wild Card" (Bad Men). They're just \$7.95 a deck.

Twitter: @mantalkonline Email: mantalk.online@yahoo.com

Face Book: Man Talk Online page (mantalkonline.org)

Order your ManTalk® Cards at: lutheranmeninmission.org, or by calling 1-800-638-3522, ex. 2580.

Also available at: vibrantfaith.org or 1-877-239-2492.