

# foundations

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

## The Master Builders Bible in Action

By Doug Haugen

*Questions enabled the men to go deep in their discussions of what was going on in their lives and build trusting friendships.*

With 60 felt-need courses in 10 categories including Men, Singles, Marriage, Parenting, Youth, Marketplace, Spirituality, Special Needs and Recovery; 16 topical study courses and 200 Bible stories with questionnaires; and 20,000 questions in the margins from Genesis to Revelation, we hear many great stories of how the *Master Builders Bible for Men* is used in many unique settings.

Two congregations in opposite corners of the United States recently used this great resource as the center of their men's retreat.

Mark Dahl was a key man in the men's ministry at St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Beaverton, Oregon. The guys there have been doing their "Real Men Retreat" for over 25 years and Mark was always at the center of it with his friendship, humor and faith. Those and other gifts were never more evident than in the last year of his life as he dealt with cancer. Mark died last March, about the same time he would normally be attending the retreat. This year, to honor Mark, every man attending the retreat received a *Master Builders Bible for Men*.

That gift was appropriate as Mark was also a key leader for our churchwide ministry. He was a member of those early boards that took the courageous step to pay for production of the Bible. He had a love, perception and passion that encouraged his fellow leaders and

moved this ministry forward. He was also the one who brought us into the electronic age as our first webmaster. His ministry lives on through the men he retreated with, and those he served with and through the thousands that have been touched by the printed and electronic pages he helped produce.

While the men of St. Matthew in Beaverton have been retreating for years, the men of Lutheran Church of the Resurrection in Palm Harbor, Florida, just got started a few weeks ago — and what a start it was. Under the leadership of Mark Olson, 33 men of all ages gathered under the theme, "Journey to Godly Significance."

When each man arrived, he was greeted with a *Master Builders Bible for Men* with his name on it. The journey took the men, in large and small groups, through five destinations:

- **The Bible**
- **Discernment:** How do I know God's will?
- **Travel Companionship:** Supporting one another on the journey
- **Mission/Action/Purpose:** Putting feet to God's will in my life
- **Worship:** Praising God as we go

Each part of the journey included large group and small group sessions as well as personal time. Questions in the *Master Builders Bible for Men* enabled

*Bible, continued on page 3*



## From the Executive Director

### LUTHERAN MEN'S 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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## Men's Ministry: It's Where You Are

**T**hink about the men you have connected with in the last 48 hours and go beyond the surface conversations that you may have had. Who are they? What are they dealing with in their lives? What are their hopes and dreams?

While traveling recently I encountered four men over a period of 48 hours. These men ranged from what we might think of as young to old. If you were to sit across the coffee shop from them you might think they were just fine. But sitting across the table I heard major pain — marital and family issues, loneliness and isolation. They would describe themselves as Christians, but not finding much connected to their local church to bring meaning to their life or support them.

*Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. — Galatians 6:2*

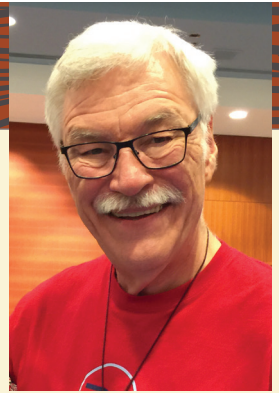
These four men are representative of you and me — and the guys in our lives. Men's ministry is about relationships and the ministry of Lutheran Men in Mission is about creating places and situations for men to connect.

As you encounter those men in your life today, remember LMM's I-Go model: Identify, Invite and Invest. Acknowledge them, invite them into deeper conversation and friendship, and invest time and energy into that relationship.

LMM's events and resources give you tools to Identify, Invite and Invest in others — from the life changing encounters at One Year to Live, to the fun conversations around ManTalk cards to the contemplative interactions the questions in the Master Builders Bible for Men produce.

In fact, a great way to connect with some of the men in your life and community would be to gather in your home or church and join us for the live-stream Bold Gathering in April. We will be talking about reaching younger men, tips and strategies to take men deeper, why change with your men's ministry is hard, and so much more.

**Doug Haugen**, Executive Director  
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Reflecting on these conversations, I heard one thing these guys had in common. If there were two or three men, or even just one man, they could trust and talk to, rely on ... they would be empowered.

## 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.

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Bible, continued from page 1

the men to go deep in their discussions of what was going on in their lives and build trusting friendships. Mark and other leaders have scheduled a follow-up to see how each guy is doing in his relationship to Jesus and each other, but some of the men are already meeting in small groups throughout the week.

These men are living the vision of Lutheran Men in Mission — for every man to have a bold and daring relationship with Jesus Christ. Every resource and event we produce is pointed toward that. How have you used the *Master Builders Bible for Men* and how has it impacted you, and those around you? Let us know!

## Speakers for Streaming BOLD Gathering Event

Rob Nelson, Wisconsin: “Reaching young families and singles — creating vital, open and welcoming community for young men, women and children”

Men of Bethany in Nebraska share their OYTL experiences

Jason Adams streaming from Nevada: “Building communities online and in real life”

Ed Nichols, Iowa: “Orphan to Slave to Son”

John Bustard, Nebraska: “Tips and strategies to effectively take men deeper”

Kyle Pederson, Iowa: “Why change with your men’s ministry is hard”

# The Bold Gathering Goes Digital

## First-Ever Streamed Event Slated For April 14

By Kevin Burke

**O**n April 14 Lutheran Men in Mission is doing something new: A Bold Gathering streaming event. We want to impact even more men and be accessible to everyone. If you have an electronic device with an internet connection, you can dial in and participate in our newest event.

Last summer, LMM hosted its Bold Gathering in Minneapolis. Men from all over the country converged and experienced some great speakers and workshops. However, many men were absent and missed.

Right after we got back from Minneapolis, we pulled together a team to tackle something new. Men’s groups from regions across the nation need to be able to gather together and experience a quality event together. There are wise individuals out there who have information that needs to be heard. There are men who are unable to get out for one reason or another, but still want to grow in their faith.

Most people have seen or heard of TedTalk videos. LMM is unveiling a similar style and quality of presentations, but we’re calling ours ManTalk. That should be easy to remember if you’ve every played with a deck of our ManTalk cards. We hope the information you hear on April 14<sup>th</sup> will spark conversations similar to our playing cards.

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**Go to [boldgathering.com](http://boldgathering.com) to register.**

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Each speaker will have a time slot to share their content (*see sidebar*), with brief breaks in between. As a team, we are bringing together a set of dynamic speakers. Topics are specific to their wheelhouse of knowledge and confidence level. Every topic is familiar to men’s groups at churches from coast to coast. These speakers understand LMM and their audience, and this event is a great way to spread their thoughts and expertise.

**Go to [boldgathering.com](http://boldgathering.com) to register.** There you’ll find the times and layout for the day. Gather a group together to watch the live streaming. Start with a breakfast or plan for a lunch buffet that has food they can easily grab. Take some notes to reference key points, and then compare notes after the event is over.

When you register, you will see three different options. We highly encourage groups to watch it together for a \$100 fee. Maybe you’re not feeling well but don’t want to miss out. Register as an individual for \$5. Finally, if you are close to Bethany Lutheran in Elkhorn, Nebraska, you are invited to watch the speakers in person. Register soon for \$10 and that will cover a boxed lunch for that day.

Register and mark your calendar for April 14. Streaming Bold Gathering will begin at 11 o’clock CST and last for three hours. Excitement is brewing over this new way to share content. This is the event we want men talking about and sharing with the people they encounter every day, in and out of church.

With some additional experience, this could be a highly successful tool for the future of Lutheran Men in Mission.

# God, Guys & Golf

## *How a Crazy Little Game Touches the Divine*

By Vic Williams

**O**n any given spring or summer Sunday, that golf course down the street is as close to church as many guys come. And still you can hear them pray.

"Oh, God, please get over that lake!"

"Jesus, help me make this five-foot downhill putt."

"Lord, just kick me out of that bunker. That's all I ask."

"Give me this birdie and I promise I will go to church *next* Sunday!"

And on and on, threatening to drown out the congregations assembled in actual churches within earshot.

That's what golf does to a guy.

Even the world's best tour players will indulge in his share of selfish and short-sighted petitions when the ball starts to go sideways and doom in the form of double-bogey or worse takes form on the scorecard.

Tournament winners, too, aren't immune to offering prayers of thanks. The occasional outwardly Christian pro will invoke the gift of grace when describing his winning round. "I felt Jesus walking beside me up that final fairway," the smiling millionaire will say at his post-round interview, to which I always respond, "Yeah, but was he there when you three-jacked or sliced one into the forest?"

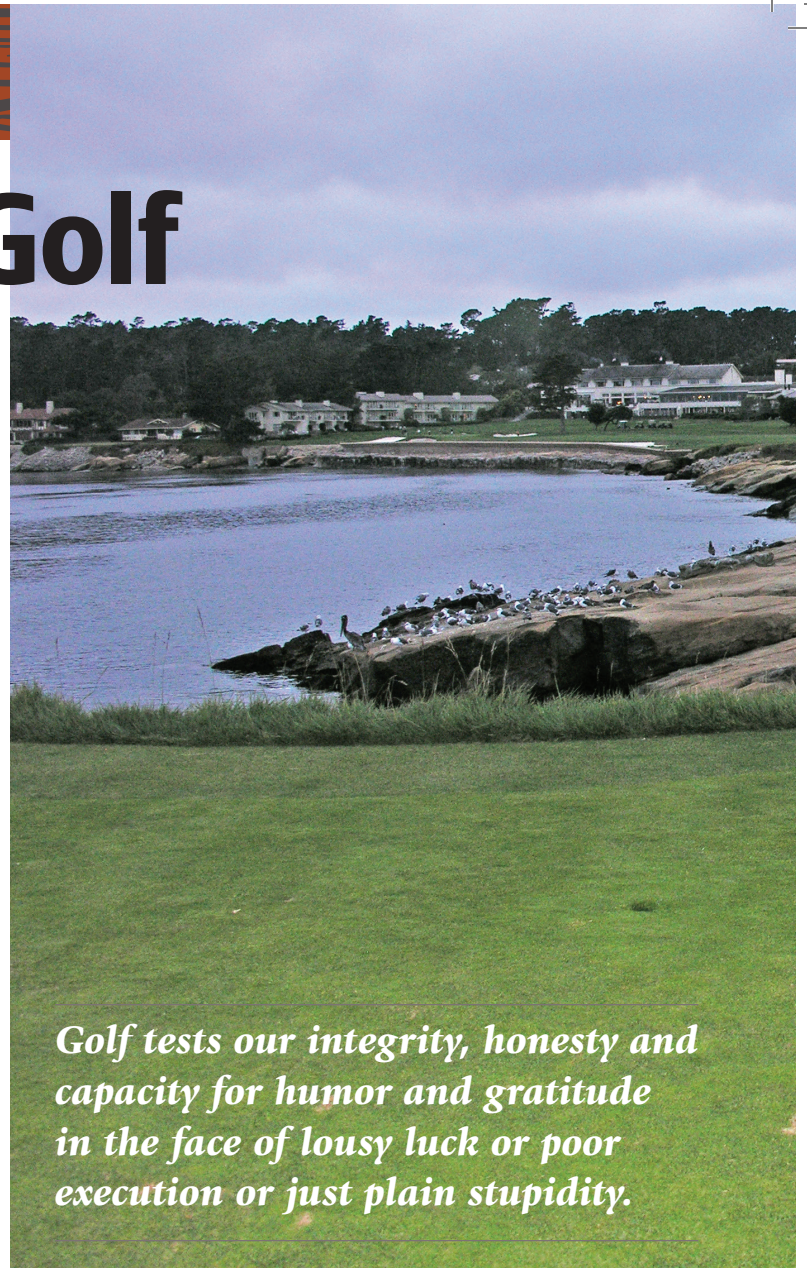
Of course he was. When a round (or life itself) goes sour, that's when we need the Ultimate Caddie the most.

That's why, a few summers ago, LMM Executive Director Doug Haugen invited me to talk about the spiritual side of golf — how it's such a great metaphor for a man's faith journey — at a one-day retreat at a pretty little lakeside resort in far western Minnesota, where lots of Lutherans roam just over the border from Fargo.

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***When a round (or life itself) goes sour, that's when we need the Ultimate Caddie the most.***

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***Golf tests our integrity, honesty and capacity for humor and gratitude in the face of lousy luck or poor execution or just plain stupidity.***

As the editor of a golf publication for many years, I was summoned as an expert in such things, though in truth I'm just as marginally enlightened about golf's mysteries as the next poor dude.

Still, there I was, doing my best to convince a roomful of mostly non-golfers why the game is worth pursuing, if not for Old Man Par (who remains an elusive acquaintance for most of us), then for the opportunities for relationship-building and faith formation that it so naturally yet frustratingly offers. Then we went out on the resort's par-3 course and actually knocked around the little white ball. Even Doug and his brother, both of whom had rarely or perhaps never played golf, ventured out there with me, with sometimes hilarious results. But we survived, buoyed by laughter and yes, a couple of beers ... we are Lutherans, after all. I offered a few swing tips along the way, but mostly we were in God's hands.

I truly believe golf brings us closer to our true natures as humble and faithful men than any other modern sport.





**Vic Williams and his son Alex  
on the 18<sup>th</sup> hole at Pebble  
Beach, August 2007.**

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*Dewsweepers*, Dodson takes on the unique friendship among golf foursomes.

I, too, have written about fathers and sons and golf. In 2007 I took my son Alex to Pebble Beach for his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, and it remains among the most cherished experiences of my life, on or off the course. I viewed it as a chance to not only enjoy my grown-up boy's company among a spectacular example

of God's creation (perhaps *the* most spectacular, if you ask me), but to make amends for all those times I lost my temper in his presence, usually with a string of expletives and a chunked club or two after a bad shot. I was finally growing up, too.

We golf writers clearly tend to hold up 18 holes as a mirror of life's journey, with its myriad triumphs and failures, frustrations and revelations — and how we guys deal with the shot-by-shot ups and downs alone and with the support (or playful derision, or knowing silence) of our buddies. Those rolling expanses of green grass are fertile ground for deepening our relationships with each other and with ourselves. Golf tests our integrity, honesty and capacity for humor and gratitude in the face of lousy luck or poor execution or just plain stupidity. We are asked to live and learn, to move onto the next hole with a renewed spirit of possibility. And if we're paying attention, we finish each round a little closer to God.

So my loving advice this spring and summer? No matter if you've played golf since you could walk or don't know a 9-iron from a sand wedge, get a group of guys together at the range or on the course, and see where the game takes you, what it reveals about you, how it mixes hope and resignation, sometimes moment to moment. Just like life.

I have a lot of company: Authors who link the game and the spiritual world are legion. Many of their books have found their way into my golf library; some are purely novels (*Golfing With God* by Roland Merullo), some are performance coaching couched in novelistic form (*Golf's Sacred Journey* and its recently released sequel by David L. Cook), mystical flights of fancy (*Golf In The Kingdom* by Michael Murphy), inventive religious treatises woven into golf form (*Golf And The Spirit* by M. Scott Peck of *The Road Less Traveled* fame), pseudo-religious paeans to the game's "houses of worship" (*Let There Be Pebble* by Zachary Jack) ... even gearhead "good books" (*The Equipment Bible* by Lee Pearce).

Many more books bake various degrees of faith-based world views into their structures. And most deal at least tangentially with the male relationships that golf helps establish and amplify. In *Son of the Game*, well-known golf scribe James Dodson writes about how golf provides a conduit of love between him and his boy; in *The*



## What It Means to Be a Disciple of Jesus Christ

Last year we changed the mission statement for LMM to be more active in how we need live our lives today as a disciple of Jesus.

Our mission centers on a life of discipleship where we strive for every man to model his life after the character of Jesus and turn from an inward focus to being an active participant in our families and communities by loving and serving our neighbors.

As I noted in my last Foundations article, the four LMM ministry areas have this discipleship mission as the central part of our activities and events. We want to establish, promote and sustain a culture of discipleship among men throughout the whole country.

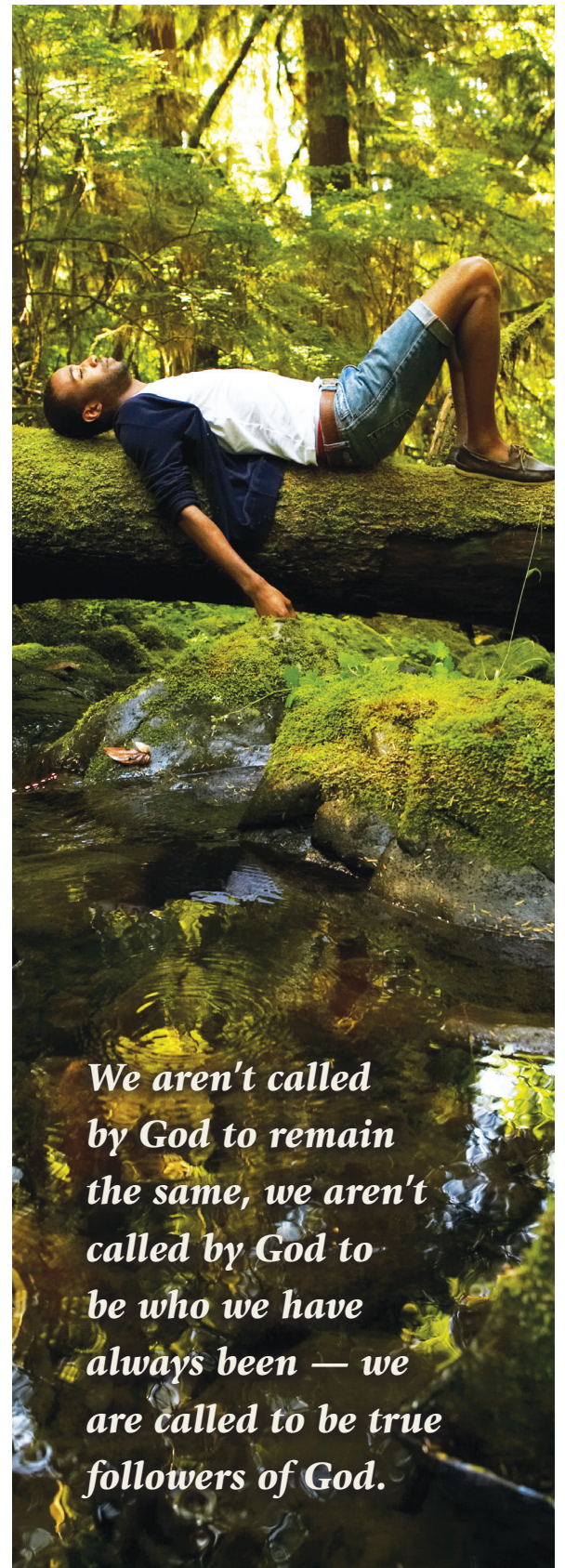
One of our Gospels this season was in the first chapter of Mark, which centers on Jesus calling, teaching and the healing of others. In Mark 1:16-38, Jesus clearly demonstrates how we can become His disciples. He personally calls other men to become part of his small band of brothers and they drop everything to follow Him. During this part of his early ministry, Jesus is constantly in the company of his small band of disciples and he demonstrates for them how God's passion of caring for and the teaching of others should be a vital part of our life as His disciple. We also see that some of the most effective ministry is conducted in small groups and in a person's home. We believe this lesson is a guide for our LMM focus on discipleship. If we truly want to be a disciple of Jesus, we must live out the mission of the teaching and caring for others that Jesus gave us throughout all of the scriptures.

Just two weeks ago, a woman in my church was turned out of her home by an angry partner. All of her possessions were thrown into the yard and she needed immediate help. A group of LMM brothers were asked to help and the very next day, three men with a truck and two SUVs showed up at her former home to gather up her possessions and take them to a safe place. Being willing and able to help and care for others in need, no matter the circumstances, is being a disciple of Jesus.

There are many other stories we can all recall where someone has stepped up to be your brother in Christ. The 2 a.m. calls for help must be answered and as disciples, we can demonstrate Christ's compassion and caring to listen and respond to their urgent need. Following Jesus and being His disciple is not always easy and we will need our own band of brothers to help and support us on this journey. At LMM, we want to be part of that band of brothers and to demonstrate how we can live out a life of discipleship. Finally, we will always ask for your prayers, your participation and your financial support as we move forward together to become true disciples of Jesus.

Your Brother in Christ,

**Hal Derrick**, President, Lutheran Men in Mission  
[hal.derrick@lutheranmeninmission.org](mailto:hal.derrick@lutheranmeninmission.org)



*We aren't called  
by God to remain  
the same, we aren't  
called by God to  
be who we have  
always been — we  
are called to be true  
followers of God.*

**Lutheran Men in Mission Online** You can find us online at our website [lutheranmeninmission.org](http://lutheranmeninmission.org), or on:



and the **Reaching Men** blog at [reachingmen.blogspot.com](http://reachingmen.blogspot.com)





# ‘God Knew What He Was Doing’

## *How OYTL Fed One Young Man’s Faith*

*Editor’s Note: The following account is compiled from a talk given by Josh Stevenson, 26, who attended a One Year To Live retreat in South Carolina.*

**H**ave you ever thought about what you were called to be? Have you ever thought of how you will be remembered?

I often thought about this question and spent a lot of time looking at other people and other books and outside forces to find out what this was for me. It isn’t about being told what is important; it is taking time alone and with God asking what you have been called to be.

We have a choice as to who we are going to be. We have a choice of who or what we listen to, and it is often the body that we like to listen to. If there is an ache or a pain or other problem, we want to listen to it so that we are reacting to life — rather than responding to what we have been called to be.

The One Year To Live men’s retreat is an opportunity to get away and go on an adventure that will change your life. That change is important because we aren’t called by God to remain the same, we aren’t called by God to be who we have always been — we are called to be true followers of God and called to our true identity in Christ.

**I** was sitting there as we were placed into small groups. I imagined the process as if we were playing spiritual kickball — trying to pick teams but you aren’t the team captain. So I looked around and chose who I really wanted on my team, and of course who I didn’t want on my team. I chose who I thought were star players and who I thought wouldn’t be so helpful.

Well, it turns out I got who I wanted. But I also got who I didn’t want. God knew what he was doing because the ones I didn’t want taught me so much that weekend and still teach me today.

We are called into relationships and connection.

***As iron sharpens iron so one person sharpens another.***  
— Proverbs 27:17

**H**ave you ever heard the song, “Live Like You Were Dying?” What would you change if you only had one year to live?

With this retreat I was able to witness the change and deep power that God has over the lives of other men. To listen to stories about change that turned these other men from what they were to what God was calling them to. It was a powerful witness to the power of Jesus. There was singing, there was sharing. There was time to stop and think — to ask questions and not just move on to the next distraction. It was a powerful time that I knew I needed but wouldn’t have taken without this trip.

There was a very real connection with other men that wasn’t just about a game or other external thing, it was about crap I had dealt with, stuff that was going on in my life and stuff that had gone on in my life. Yes, those things had made me very strong. This wasn’t a time for weaklings.

**O**ne of the aspects of the trip is that electronic devices aren’t allowed. At one point we were sitting around in rocking chairs, and I surprised myself. We had some questions to discuss, and we had answered those questions. We had said all that we needed to say and were then just sitting there rocking. And you know what my first reaction was? I reached for my phone because I was quite sure it had rung and someone needed me. And I went to reach for my phone because I didn’t know what to do.

I was searching for a distraction so that I didn’t have to deal with the uncertainty of the situation. Distraction is a way that allows me to be apathetic to a situation or person and not be connected to them. But connection is so very important for relationships and life, and that is what I found on my retreat and afterwards.

This wasn’t my first spiritual retreat that didn’t allow me to have my phone. But this was one of those times that I realized how much truer relationships can be when they are biblically based and founded on trust. That was a huge aspect of the retreat. Whenever there was a moment of concern for trust, we automatically all promised to hold everything that was said in total and absolute confidence.

*One Year to Live, continued on page 8*

# foundations

## Lutheran Men in Mission

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[lutheranmeninmission.org](http://lutheranmeninmission.org)

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*One Year to Live, continued from page 7*

**A** big part of the OYTL retreat is building a personal mission statement, and I'm blessed to offer mine:

**Who am I?** I am a Warrior for God, a Husband, a Father, and a Christian Brother.

**Why do I exist?** I exist to Serve God and my brothers, love my wife and lead my family.

**How will I do this?** I will do this by seeking after God with all my heart, dating my wife on a weekly basis, playing with my son each day, and generously giving to my community.

What if all young men had a personal mission statement to follow and a close group of men to support them and hold them accountable?

I came here looking for guidance.

I didn't know I needed peace.

I'm leaving with peace and guidance.

I've always been settling for a nominal group of men to be a part of. After this retreat, I now know what a band of brothers truly looks like.

**T**he stuff that we deal with in life is real, and it helps to have other iron to sharpen us as we deal with it. You don't want to be too soft, just clay that gives in. You don't want to be a rock that doesn't move until it shatters and breaks.

Iron is what you are called to be — strengthened, forged, able to be sharpened ... and able to sharpen other iron.

## UPCOMING LMM EVENTS & programs

### One Year To Live Retreats

**April 20-22** Tracy's Camp in Pinewood, SC

**April 20-22** Camp Carol Joy Holling in Ashland NE

**April 27-29** Camp Santa Maria in Grant, CO

**May 4-6** Lutheridge in Arden, NC

**May 18-20** Camp Feliciana in Norwood, LA

**Sept. 14-16** Mackenzie Retreat Center in Poynette, WI

**Sept. 21-23** Tracy's Camp in Pinewood, SC

**Oct. 12-14** Sierra Nevada Journeys Camp in Portola, CA

**Oct. 26-28** Camp Chrysalis in Kerrville, TX

**Nov. 2-4** Camp EWALU in Strawberry Point, IA

Visit <http://www.lutheranmeninmission.org/events/one-year-to-live/> for more information

**RAGBRAI** (*The Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa*)

**July 22-28** Begins in



# Grateful for our Donors

We are grateful for these faithful donors listed below who shared gifts in fiscal 2017 (Feb 1, 2017-Jan. 31, 2018). Lutheran Men in Mission continues to take great steps forward producing men who are bold, daring followers of Jesus Christ. Please prayerfully consider how you might help with a gift today. Refer any corrections/additions to [jeff.kuchenbecker@lutheranmeninmission.org](mailto:jeff.kuchenbecker@lutheranmeninmission.org). **Thank you for your generous support!**

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