

# foundations

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

## Summer 2018 Challenge

# RAGBRAI: A Ride Across Iowa for Christ, Men and LMM

By Doug Haugen

**L**MM knows that men's health is made up of physical, mental, and spiritual components. If any one of the three is squishy, our lives are often out of balance. While ministry to men should first point people to Jesus and provide spiritual health care, we know that being in healthy community supports mental health, and men should focus on being as physically active and healthy as possible.

Lutheran Men in Mission is sponsoring TEAM LMM for RAGBRAI 2018. For the past several summers, a group of men and women have saddled up for a 7-day non-competitive bike tour riding across Iowa. It's a lot of fun and is a great workout, but is also a chance

to have great conversations about faith, and raise awareness and support for LMM. RAGBRAI – The Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa — takes place July 22-28, 2018.

The almost 500-mile ride goes through portions of all three Iowa synods. We have 22 riders and five support volunteers on this ride. If you missed the opportunity to sign up to ride, you still have the opportunity to support the team financially to support the mission of LMM and help grow men's ministry throughout the Lutheran Church.

If you talk to the men and women riding on TEAM LMM this year, you

**RAGBRAI**, *continued on page 5*



Doug Haugen and Kyle Pedersen dip their tires in the Missouri River on the western edge of Iowa on the first day of the ride.

LMM's RAGBRAI team of bikers toured Iowa in a 7-day 500-mile scenic ride.



### 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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## Rising to the challenges

**D**on't let anyone ever tell you that Iowa is flat. The first RAGBRAI I rode with team LMM was 2015 with my mountain bike special I had picked up at the local sporting goods store. That was a heavy bike and I could feel its weight along with mine as we chugged up the hills. In 2016 I upgraded my bike only to discover a route that was one steep hill after another.

To prepare I trained, I ate well and I had friends who encouraged me and on the ride. I had the team. With that, I climbed. Even when I am separated from those who encourage, I hear their voices to pedal on.

The steep hills were a grinding challenge, but at the crest of every hill there were rewards — the sense of accomplishment mixed with the inspiring splendor of picturesque farms wrapped in rolling fields and rivers. Then, of course, there was the next hill!

When bicycling, three things are essential:

- The right equipment
- The right people
- Energy and fuel

That is true as well in our ministry. As we look at all that is going on in our families and in our culture today, we see that producing bold and daring followers of Jesus Christ is a steep climb indeed. But the reward is healthy men impacting families and our culture for the generations that follow us.

We have what it takes to make that impact. We are **equipped** with Gospel (good news) of Jesus Christ. We have **the right people** — including you! And we have the **fuel** of prayer, fellowship and, yes, funding.

The great challenge that you read about on the front page is making the ride this year more fun than ever. I invite you to be a part of the fuel to raise \$60,000 by 3 p.m. on Saturday, July 28, so we can meet the challenge of seeing to it that every man becomes a bold and daring follower of Jesus Christ.

With your prayers, and with your gift, you will be with us!

**Doug Haugen**, Executive Director

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*Even when I  
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their voices to  
pedal on.*

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# ***Bold Gathering Goes Digital***

## **First-Ever Streaming Event A Success**

By Kevin Burke

**D**uring the Bold Gathering Streaming event on April 14, Kyle Pedersen compared foxes and hedgehogs. He referred to a story by Isiah Berlin that talks about how the two animals active differently. The fox is, “all over the place.” The hedgehog meanwhile, “does one thing very well... how do we be a hedgehog and focus on that one thing?”

LMM overall is figuring out the things we do really well and are putting emphasis on those. Rather than having everyone scattered, the Board structure has individuals in niche areas. Discipleship, Events, Emerging Ministries and Networking and Communication ministry groups are each lead by an individual that has a passion for that and they are focused on it.

### **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”



Last year at our National Gathering, I told you my goal in my work of being Simple, Consistent and Reproducible. By reproducing, that doesn’t mean we don’t tweak, modify or try new things. LMM actually took our large-scale event, the Bold Gathering, and we modified it. This was done to fulfill some requests, reach new audiences and share important messages in the best way possible.

### **Trying something new**

LMM has never tried to do an all-online, mass-audience event like this before. We weren’t even sure how to accomplish it, but ... we knew we needed to try. Thus, Bold Gathering Streaming was launched. We got a core group of leaders together who had similar visions. They reached out to talented speakers, and asked them to lend their voices to our goal. Then on a Saturday morning in a very cool Omaha church building LMM started broadcasting live all across the country.

The speakers included pastors and lay men. The topics they brought were well crafted, from the heart and related to

***It was fun hearing how men from the Carolinas, Ohio, Texas, Washington and many other locations were tuning in and engaging the speakers.***

most scenarios men encounter: A man’s identity, how groups need to adaptive and open to healthy change, and several things were

**Bold Gathering**, continued on page 4





## Bold Gathering,

*continued from page 3*

shared about relationships and how we build those in small groups and electronically.

Throughout the process of that day, only a very few problems arose. It was fun hearing how men from the Carolinas, Ohio, Texas, Washington and many other locations were tuning in and engaging the speakers. We heard how groups that met were asked each other questions and going deeper into the subject matter. There were eager voices wanting to know if these speaking periods (Mantalk sessions) were being recorded so they could go back, re-listen and shared with others.



**Kyle Pedersen speaks at the first-ever Bold Gathering Streaming event on April 14.**

Yes, they were recorded! That is one of the great things about these events, and how we are building up a bank of recorded resources. The videos are now available online, 24/7, 365 days a year! Having a conversation with a friend and a similar topic comes and you want to reference an exact speaker statement? Pull it up and watch. Want to start a men's group meeting by watching a Mantalk session and then discuss what was heard? Pull it up and watch. These are LMM tools now available to you.

## And more!

Due to the success of the event and great feedback from those who registered, LMM is now in the process of planning Bold Gathering Online — Fargo Edition. On Saturday, October 27, we will offer new speakers with new topics in similar Mantalk sessions. Details are being drafted out now and speakers are being asked to prayerfully consider being a part of this growing event.

Registration will open this summer. Once you have registered, you will be able to link up that fall day anywhere your electronic device has internet service. You can join in by yourself from your home or a restaurant. However, our planning team is hoping this creates an opportunity for a group of men to gather in experience this together. We want relationships to build

**"Reaching and keeping millenials doesn't have as much to do with being a young, cool & hip church as it has to do with living more like Jesus."**

ROB NELSON

***We want relationships to build as you hear influential speakers, discuss what was said and maybe even share a meal.***

as you hear influential speakers, discuss what was said and maybe even share a meal while you're at it.

Visit the Lutheran Men in Mission YouTube channel to watch any or all of the Mantalk speakers. Join us October 27 as hear from more passionate speakers on how we can live more boldly in God's Kingdom here and now.

## RAGBRAI, *continued from page 1*

will find a common theme among them. They know the importance of being advocates for Christ in their circles of influence in their communities. They know they are bringing the light of Christ into each conversation. Many of our team members participate in other cycling events for causes in their communities. Mark Juhl rides in the Wellness On Wheels ride to support his local community health center. Jim Monkman organizes and rides on a team for the American Diabetes Association Tour de Cure ride in Colorado and in Texas every year. Bill Punyko rides on a team for the Minnesota Multiple Sclerosis (MS 150) 150-mile ride. Kyle Pedersen rides a single-day 200-mile ride called Break The Cycle 200, which raises awareness and does advocacy work surrounding sex trafficking.

Mark, Jim, Bill and Kyle will dip their bicycle tires in the Missouri River on July 22, ride nearly 500 miles and dip them in the Mississippi on July 28. As the team pedals across Iowa, they will share what LMM is doing to keep men spiritually, physically and mentally fit with the 20,000 other riders from around the country and men in every community they pass through.

But the mileage is not the greatest challenge. Four LMM leaders have committed \$60,000 in matching funds, and are personally challenging you and others to match that gift by the time the team dips their tires in the Mississippi at about 3 p.m. central time on Saturday, July 28. We invite you to join us for the live Facebook Live celebration.

To be a part of meeting this great challenge go to [www.LutheranMeninMission.org](http://www.LutheranMeninMission.org) and click "SupportLMM" or text your gift to (773) 917-8167.

Another way you might join in the challenge: Organize a local bicycle fun ride (however long or short you want it to be) on July 28. It could be as simple as calling friends and meeting at a trail. Please take a photo and share it with us. If you raise any funds, consider splitting it between local ministries and our matching effort.

When you consider your circles of influence, who is God leading you to spend time with? Consider your passions, even if it's not cycling, and find ways to put that to use!

Learn more about the history and details of the world's oldest, largest, longest bike tour, which just happens to be across Iowa, check out [RAGBRAI.com](http://RAGBRAI.com). Check Team LMM's daily updates from 2015 and 2016 at [www.ReachingMen.Blogspot.com](http://www.ReachingMen.Blogspot.com), along with updates from this year's ride. You'll feel like you are pedaling alongside them! Well, almost.



**Doug Haugen joyfully dips his tires (and toes) in the Mississippi River on the eastern edge of Iowa at the end of the ride.**

## *An Accidental Mentor*

# The Father-Son Thing Is Fraught, But Faith Abides

By Vic Williams

**W**hen my son Alex was 10 years old, I was in the third year of coaching his soccer team. The first season I had no idea what I was doing, but the kids did, playing their way to the league championship, where we lost in a squeaker. Our best player, a wiry and speedy forward, cried. I hadn't expected that. I thought he was a "tough guy."

I should have known better — not that he wasn't tough, but that not crying, that sucking it up, was a prerequisite to toughness. But as an American man culturally inculcated into adulthood through sports and action movies and schoolyard boasting, my personal definition of what it is to be a man, while common, was understandably skewed.

Not that I hadn't shed my share of tears over the years, particularly during and after the upheaval of divorce from Alex's mom. In classic Nevada style the divorce proceeding itself was quick and (relatively) painless, and I was blessed to remain an involved and supportive Dad to Alex and his younger sister, as the overwhelming majority of divorced fathers are.

That involvement continued into my second marriage, which now enters its 25<sup>th</sup> year, but those years between marriages tested and expanded my understanding of manhood. I struggled with anger and fear and bouts and self-loathing. My relationship with a truly incredible woman helped me through it, as did Alex and his sister, simply by loving me for who I am.

Back to that third coaching year: A few days before yet another fall match beneath sweet Nevada skies, and more than a year into my second marriage, Alex's mom and I "got into it" as I dropped the kids off after a weekend visit. I won't go into the causes or specifics but suffice it to say the kids saw a decidedly ugly and unmanly side of their old man. I left them gaping at me through the screen door with a mixture of sadness and bleak acceptance. They'd seen their share of flare-ups between their mom and me, but for me, this was a new low. Even God had to be disappointed in me. I drove home shaking with shame.

When I picked Alex up for practice a day or two later, I held in that shame for as long as I could, in my best stiff-upper-lip manner. Then, as I pulled up in a parking spot next to our practice field, I broke down, weeping as I blubbered an apology to my young son. His response?

"It's OK, Dad. Don't cry."

Clearly I'd taught him macho well. Sure, he'd seen me cry before, including at my second wedding as a five-year-old, but as he raced toward pre-pubescence and the male minefield of the teen years beyond, he was echoing my own misguided concept of how a tough guy handles himself.

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*He was echoing my own misguided concept of how a tough guy handles himself.*

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That moment of reversal — boy showing Dad who the true adult American male was — didn't hit me right away, but over the interceding two decades, it has stuck with me. I had stumbled my way through much of Alex's formative years while maintaining, as best I could, a veneer of strength and above-it-all certainty. So when my wounds showed themselves in those tears that night, my only son (I've since fathered two more daughters) tried to push them back under the surface. He didn't want to be witness to his father's weakness.

Over the next decade Alex struggled with securing his own place between the poles of culturally required, emotionally remote "manhood" and vulnerable, flawed and flailing authentic manhood. He got into fights in middle school before finding his academic footing in high school and college, all the while working as many hours as he could to fend off restlessness and channel his anger issues into productivity and making money, which became and remains his main driver in life. He joined the Army, got married, served in Afghanistan and, over the past few years, has worked in Djibouti, Africa, as a private intel contractor. I've seen him in person just a handful of days since 2010, and not at all since summer 2015. We're political opposites, which



PHOTO © ISTOCK/FRANCES COCH

*I still have faith that somehow, some way, Jesus' cleansing and freeing love will find his way to Alex.*

has caused some strain, but our intermittent phone and Skype conversations remain comfortable, light and, at some level, loving. He's been long his own man by now.

Fast forward to this spring, when I got a call from his wife, tearfully revealing that she was divorcing Alex after eight years, most of them separate from him due to service and work. She'd had enough, intimating that his anger issues had something to do with it. She waited to hit him with the news until he had returned home from Djibouti after being reassigned due to a run-in with a Somali soldier. I can't say it was a total shock to me — marriage by 8,000-mile remote control isn't a marriage at all, if you ask me — but I was, of course, deeply dismayed and saddened.

Nor was it a shock to Alex himself, who said as much during our first phone conversation, though I could hear the hurt and disorientation in his voice. But he never hinted at showing his true emotions. He wouldn't cry "in front of" his old man, and hadn't since he wept

in rage after a huge row with his mom back in his later teen years. The tough guy shtick I'd taught him early on, which soldierhood and solitary work ethic had only strengthened as the years blew by, was very much intact.

Or was it? A day after my first conversation with Alex, his sister reported that he had indeed cried when he got on the phone with his mom. "For 45 minutes," she said.

Perhaps I had mentored him in that way, too, at some level, way back when — the way of true, open, fearless manhood. But the fact remains he won't let the real Alex, the wounded little kid who still lives in his heart, show through to me, because guys just don't go there. It's somewhere in the unwritten masculine mask handbook. Instead he keeps his ass-kicking hat on, hiring a take-no-prisoners lawyer and pledging go to the mattresses with his soon-to-be-ex-wife since she wouldn't accept his initial, generous offer (monetarily, anyway) to make the divorce as painless and quick as possible. It could get ugly,

and that truly hurts my soul.

But I still have faith that somehow, some way, Jesus' cleansing and freeing love will find his way to Alex. I have a feeling I'll be called upon to be a catalyst for whatever turning to the light Alex will experience, a vessel for the change of spirit he so desperately needs. He still says he loves me every time we talk, and I cherish that. But there's so much more I can do and be for him, with Jesus' help, and perhaps a little help from my fellow men. I'd love to get him to a OYTL retreat, for instance, though the dark part of me insists he'd never do it.

On that note, I extend my hand to you: If you've experienced such crossroads moments with your son, or brother, or father, or friend, and found your way to a place where two men can be authentically themselves with each other without all the cultural masculine baggage so many of us lug on our weary backs, I'd welcome your voice, your encouragement, your open spirit. E-mail me at [fg.vwilliams@gmail.com](mailto:fg.vwilliams@gmail.com) anytime.



## Building Our Way to a Bold, Bright Future

**T**he Annual Meeting this year was highlighted by presentations from nine of your LMM officers and directors as well as a moving, personal testimony from one of our One Year to Live alumni brothers, Tim Snyder, from Hendersonville, North Carolina. The meeting was unique as all of our speakers were in different locations, coming from both coasts and many points in between. Our sincere thanks goes to Steve Brown of Omaha, Nebraska, who was the webmaster for our meeting. He made sure that all of our presentations went seamlessly across the

*All of our speakers were in different locations, coming from both coasts and many points in between.*

country and that everyone was able to see and hear all the presenters in real time. We used the Zoom chat line to address some comments raised by participants during the meeting and answers to their comments were provided while the meeting was being conducted. Finally, the entire meeting was recorded and will soon be available for everyone to view on both the LMM YouTube channel and our LMM Facebook page. A link to the meeting will also be available on the LMM website.

### Gathering Gains

At our Tri-annual LMM Assembly in Minneapolis last year, we changed our Bylaws to call for an Annual Meeting of all LMM voting delegates to inform everyone of our progress in living out our vision and mission as well as reporting on the financial condition of LMM. Further, we will conduct any official LMM business at the Annual Meeting, including, but not limited to, the election of officers, presentation of any formal resolutions and adoption of any changes to our Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. At the 2018 Annual Meeting no elections were necessary and there were not any resolutions or changes to our legal documents that needed the approval of the voting delegates. However, we anticipate that the election of officers will be needed in future Annual Meetings.

### Giving With Grace

While LMM remains in sound financial condition and our net assets increased last year by over \$154,000, we had a \$35,493 shortfall in operations for the fiscal year ending January 31, 2018. Our donor contributions did not reach the anticipated

goal and our expenses from the 2017 Bold Gathering in Minneapolis exceeded our income by over \$17,000. However, we are forecasting a small surplus for the current operating year as we believe with your help, our revenues will exceed expenses. Our expenses are lower this year because we now only have two full-time staff members — our Executive Director, Doug Haugen and our Discipleship Consultant, Kevin Burke. Further, over 71 percent of our planned expenses for the current year are being devoted to our four ministry areas: Discipleship, Emerging Ministries, Events and Networking/Communications.

In addition to a report from Doug on LMM's overall operations, each of our four ministry directors gave us specific information on the current activities within their respective ministry areas. Jason Adams gave us an update on Project Twelve and what is happening on their website. Bernie Bressen provided information from our April Bold Gathering and announced the next national event will be the Bold Gathering from Fargo, North Dakota on October 27. Our Networking and Communications Director Sean Forde gave us an update on the LMM Ambassador program and invited any participant at the meeting to join in with that group. Tim Crout reported on the significant impact that our One Year to Live retreats continues to have on individual men's lives and how he is making progress with the small group discipleship training. Our Vice President Tom Lucas gave us an update on LMM's initiative to provide Disaster Recovery Efforts for the people in the US Virgin Islands. Finally, Jeff Kuchenbecker, Chairman of the LMM Development Council, thanked everyone for their support for all of our ministries and gave an impassioned plea for additional support to help us grow each of these ministries as described earlier by each director.

We continue to ask for your prayers, your participation and your financial support as we move forward together to live out our vision for every man to be a bold, daring follower of Jesus Christ.

Your Brother in Christ,

**Hal Derrick**, President, Lutheran Men in Mission  
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**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)

## Join the Heritage Society

**W**e would like to thank these generous donors who have guaranteed the future of our ministry by remembering Lutheran Men in Mission in their estate planning. If your name should be on here, or if you would like to include Lutheran Men in Mission in your estate planning, please contact Doug Haugen at [773-380-2566](tel:773-380-2566) / [doug@lutheranmeninmission.org](mailto:doug@lutheranmeninmission.org)

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### Book Excerpt:

## How To Disciple Men

**L**utheran Men in Mission's Kevin Burke was one of 45 men's ministry leaders from a wide variety of men's ministries to author the recently released book, *How to Disciple Men*. Here are some excerpts from Kevin's chapter titled *Reaching Men on the Fringe*. Permission granted by Broadstreet Publishing.

How do we define "the fringe"? Someone beyond our standards or expectations? Is it a unit of measurement set by society? Is it set by the Bible? If so, Old Testament? Western translation or Eastern?

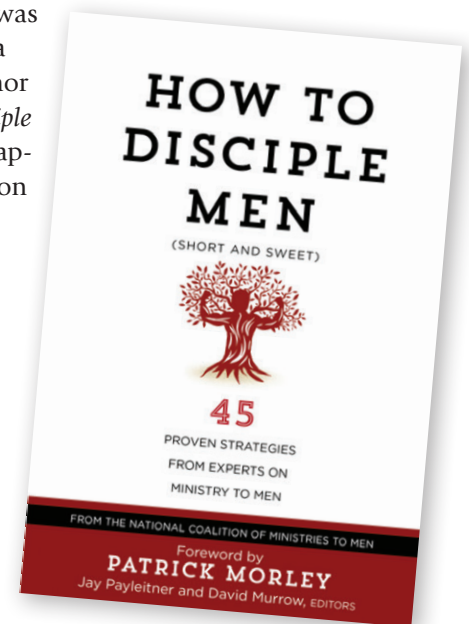
Often people on the fringe feel as if they cannot be heard. Or perhaps worse, they feel they are heard and are ostracized because of what they say or how they present themselves. In many cases, an individual may have values virtually identical to most of the members of your men's group, but he simply feels like an outsider. In other cases, he is wrestling with unrepentant sin in his life, trying to sort out right from wrong. Of course, Romans 3:23 confirms, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." But as a church, do we exclude some sinners more than others? Are there sins that would prevent you from inviting another man to the table? Those who steal, covet, or commit adultery? What about murder?

It's also worth remembering that we can thoughtfully invite and warmly love, but there will still be those who don't feel welcome. Never forget, anyone who views himself as an outsider is an outsider. If you are committed to reaching these men, then you must also commit to affirming their feelings.

Finally, check your motives. Don't seek out men on the fringe – or any man – with the goal of "saving them" or convincing them to join your church. Your motive should be relationship for the sake of relationship.

Relationships are not based on ulterior motives. We are called to talk about discipling in a church classroom, but what about when you are awakened by a 2 a.m. phone call? Are you willing to get into the crap of life with them then? As a friend and pastoral leader, do these men know they can call you anytime, for anything? As difficult as that is, that's the goal. Once you've acquired that awesome bond, you know it. It's the I'd-walk-through-fire-wearing-gasoline-boxers-for-you type of bond (an actual quote from a men's retreat).

*How to Disciple Men* may be purchased at [broadstreetpublishing.com](http://broadstreetpublishing.com) for \$14.99.



# foundations

## Lutheran Men in Mission

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## UPCOMING LMM EVENTS & programs

### One Year To Live Retreats

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>September 14-16</b> | Egan Camp, Tahlequah, Oklahoma                  |
| <b>September 21-23</b> | Mackenzie Camp, Poynette, Wisconsin             |
| <b>September 21-23</b> | Tracy Camp, Pine Wood, South Carolina           |
| <b>September 28-30</b> | Highlands Camp & Retreat Center, Allenspark, CO |
| <b>October 5-7</b>     | San Diego, California                           |
| <b>October 26-28</b>   | Camp Shaw, Manteno, Illinois                    |
| <b>November 2-4</b>    | EWALU Strawberry Point, Iowa                    |
| <b>November 2-4</b>    | Emmanuel Pines Camp, Prescott, Arizona          |

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