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RETREAT OF A LIFETIME: ONE YEAR TO LIVE

"What I thought were my biggest liabilities are my greatest assets. They're assets because I can share them with others to give them hope," says Mike Maulick, a member of Bethany Lutheran Church in Elkhorn, Neb. Maulick is a former participant and current leader of the One Year to Live retreats being organized by LMM throughout the United States.

Maulick first encountered One Year to Live as a somewhat reluctant participant in July 2008. He says, "It changed my life. I came back a totally different man with a clear understanding of what God wants me to do."

That sort of clarity doesn't visit us every day.

A structured approach to changing lives

Although One Year to Live follows the story of Jacob, it is not a Bible study or singing Kumbaya around the campfire. It's not about getting fixed by an analyst or lectured by an authority. It's regular guys helping other regular guys sort out their lives in a structured way. Participants learn what's really important to them, what's been



Photo from Mike Maulick

The "M.O.B.", Men of Bethany (Elkhorn, Neb.) leadership team, left to right: Jim Hauptman, Jason Krohn, Scott Gray, Steve Schmillen and Mike Maulick.

"Like most men I used to have only passing conversations with other men at church. Now I have meaningful conversations with my brothers in Christ, and I know that they are available to me at any hour of the day."

holding them back, and they leave with a one-year plan centered on how they would live their lives if they had one year to live.

Maulick says One Year to Live changes lives because it teaches men to lead with courage, serve with compassion and give hope to others. Men do this by rejecting passivity, accepting responsibility and sharing their experience, strength and hope with others. Maulick

says, "At some point in my life I have been those things, but not with consistency or conviction. There were things buried deep inside of me, known and unknown, that were keeping me from doing that."

As a result of his participation in the retreat, Maulick says, "Men in the church have approached me to ask how I deal

with things, for example, a relationship at home. I share my experience with them. They're drawn to what appears to be a change in me. I don't know that until I ask, but the response is relatively consistent, 'I've seen a change in you. I see how you interact with others, and I see how you interact with your family, and it appears to be different.'" (continued page 4)



Photo from Dan Rositer

Brent Leu and Phill Tyler participated in one of the Colorado retreats.

This newsletter is sent to all who contribute to the ministry of Lutheran Men in Mission.

Your contribution ensures that foundations will continue to come 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 and let us know stories of men's ministry we could use and/or issues you would like to see featured.

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**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**
God's work. Our hands.

Photo from Doug Haugen



Lutheran Men in Mission Executive Director Doug Haugen with Lyman Coleman, founder and former CEO of Serendipity Publishing House and author designer of the One Year to Live Retreat and follow-up.

I was in my first congregation all of two months working as a lay minister when the pastor invited me to come with him to a conference on small group ministry. It was the summer of 1976.

The conference leader was Lyman Coleman, founder and CEO of Serendipity Publishing House. My life changed in multiple ways that day. With the approach of Serendipity helping people build relationships while opening scripture to them, I became more convinced than ever that small group ministry was key to building community and discipleship in the church.

While working with youth and adults in the late 70s and 80s I saw how small group resources that Lyman produced helped people articulate their faith and grow spiritually. In the late 80s Lyman asked me to be part of a large team of people to write the small group study questions for the *Serendipity Bible for Groups*. After accepting this position with Lutheran Men in Mission, I saw many of our men using Serendipity materials. Lyman and I wondered if we could co-produce the Bible with LMM's leadership guide and cover. *The Master Builders Bible for Men* touched thousands of lives throughout the world. But there would be more.

In April of 2006 I asked Lyman to take his professional and personal experience of 40 years and produce a new retreat model for men. I had two criteria: 1) It had to be life changing and 2) It had to be a lay lead experience. That was the birth of One Year to Live.

Since our board of director's pilot tested an early version of the retreat in the fall of 2006, 15 retreats have been conducted, primarily in the Rocky Mountain Synod (where it was created) and in Nebraska. As more men are equipped, it is spreading to other areas.

I have not seen anything that brings a man to deeper faith and produces men who take more responsibility in their families and congregations than the One Year to Live retreat and follow up. One Year to Live is not for everyone. It is for those men who want to take a serious look at their lives and who are willing to put everything on the line for Jesus Christ.

Back in 1976 I thought I was just going to a conference because the pastor asked me. Pay attention to who you meet today. You don't know what God might have in mind for your life and the church!

Doug Haugen, executive director
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A BISHOP'S PERSPECTIVE

I remember Obert Olia, Eddie Wipperfurth and John Sherman. They were great guys!

Obert and John are now with the Lord. I see Eddie once in a while when I visit my home church near Sun Prairie, Wis. Back

in the early 1970s, I was a teenager whose father had died. These men played dartball at the Church Brotherhood meetings and invited me to join them. Along with a few other high school-aged boys, and these guys in their 50s and 60s, we met on Tuesday nights and threw darts against a painted baseball game board. We played dart ball against other men's teams from neighboring Lutheran churches. It was about competition, skill and luck. And yet it was much more.

The nights were about the game of dartball. But the hours spent in that church and in other local churches, as well as in the car driving with these guys to and from the games, were also about life and growing up and faith in God. It was a men's ministry, and it helped shape me as a person and as a pastor.

Twice a year, for nearly 10 years, I have served as the bishop's representative to the churchwide board of Lutheran Men in Mission. It is a wonderful experience.

Yes, the meetings are about budgets, personnel and programs, but it is mainly a weekend about faith and life. Seated with a dozen other men, I hear wonderful stories of how God is at work. These lay people (usually I am the only clergy) are successful and busy professionals and self-employed men who feel called to share the Gospel in their own way. They see a need for men's ministry in this church and want it to grow throughout our congregations.

When I return from these meetings, I tell my wife and staff at the synod office that it was more like a retreat than another business session at "the building" in Chicago. The Spirit is present and alive and well in this church.



The Reverend Tom A. Skrenes is Bishop of the Northern Great Lakes Synod. He serves on the Lutheran Men in Mission board as representative of the ELCA Conference of Bishops.

Some question the need for a specific ministry for men. I do not. As human beings, women, youth and men have special gifts and needs and hopes. Whether it is because of cultural formation or biological similarity, we develop relationships with people of the same sex and age.

I look at our congregations, and the biggest demographic group missing from our worshipping communities is working-age men, fellows from 16 to 60. If a men's group can assist our people and help the guys involved to name and claim God's work in their congregations and communities, I am for it.

I have the same strong encouragement for women and youth Christian groups.

I realize men's ministry is not for everyone. Yet, I have seen with my own eyes the opportunity it presents for people to hear the Gospel and share their lives with others. Some of the biggest supporters of this work are our church women who see the need in their husbands or sons for a living growing Christian faith, and a place where they can honestly talk about the issues in their lives with others who will understand them.

I thank God for Obert and John and Eddie, and for those people of godly faith who saw a need for men's ministry and made it work in a small congregation in southern Wisconsin. It made a difference. And still does!

This article appeared in the Northern Great Lakes Synod supplement of the April, 2009 issue of The Lutheran. The article and picture of Bishop Skrenes appear courtesy of the Northern Great Lakes Synod.

RETREAT OF A LIFETIME: ONE YEAR TO LIVE

(continued from front page)

Identifying and breaking barriers

The retreat helps men identify the thoughts, words and deeds that keep them from being the type of person God wants them to be. Maulick says, "I knew there were things that were probably holding me back, but I didn't know to what extent they were holding me back, or exactly what they were and how many there were."

"This retreat is very powerful. You spend time with God and a group of like-minded Christian men. You are challenged by God and by your group. This caused me to get some things out of my life that don't belong there. It also gave me a gift—Christ's light seen through me by several other men. I highly recommend it."

He says, "As I go through life, I take action based on choices. If I make a good choice I continue on with a sense of accomplishment and a good feeling inside. If I make a bad choice, I don't have a good feeling inside, but I continue on with my life. And for every bad choice that I make, or bad decision or bad

Photo from Dan Rositer



Stuart Stanley appreciates a time of reflection during the retreat

thought, bad word, bad action, I pick up a rock and throw it into my backpack. And as I go through life, if I keep doing the same things over and over again, thinking that the results will be different, or thinking of myself rather than other people, pretty soon that backpack gets so heavy that it's unbearable. This program allows me to "drop those rocks."

"It's a very powerful program. I have men that I trust with my innermost thoughts, men that I know will not judge me, and who will pray for me. I'm not afraid to ask for prayer now." Maulick believes that prayer for him, and anyone, is more effective in the context of having experienced the One Year to Live program.

Maulick is now compelled to share his assets—formerly liabilities—with men who ask, because that's part of the process of moving forward in life. Maulick's historical liabilities help him connect with men currently embroiled in life's inevitable downsides. Seeing Maulick as a changed man, other men have hope, which encourages them to improve themselves, and that encourages Maulick to continue to give hope to those who ask.

Why it works

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.

All small group leaders are former participants. All event leaders are former participants and small group leaders. So, the system creates its own

leadership. Requiring leaders to be event veterans builds trust between the participants and the leaders. Group leaders are role models in helping participants to open up by sharing their life challenges, which helps participants open up and share their challenges.

Photo from Dan Rositer



Dan Rositer, Jerry Paul, Doug Sutton, Peter Ewers, Mike Krupa

"One Year to Live changed my life. This retreat was the most powerful experience I have ever had. There were so many things in my past that were keeping me from being the man that I knew God wanted me to be. This retreat opened up these hidden parts of my life and made me face them with God so that he could heal and empower me to go forward with my life."

Photo from Doug Haugen



Justin March and Phill Tyler

MEN'S MINISTRY

Photo from Rich White



Men's Ministry Specialist Candidates

The first group of Men's Ministry Specialist candidates met with the Lutheran Men in Mission staff and Executive Committee, leaders from synods in Region Six and several students from Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Seminary at Upper Arlington Lutheran Church in Columbus, Ohio May 14-16. Back row from left: Terry Edwards, Ken Reinhoel, Dennis Hickey, Nate Timm, front row from left: Lowell Krogstad, Todd Little, Tony Serio. The Men's Ministry Specialist is a position that is being developed by Lutheran Men in Mission for use in congregations and synods in conjunction with pastors and bishops.

Photo from Rich White



Red Bandanna

Participants in the "Building Men for Christ" pilot leadership training at Upper Arlington Lutheran Church in Columbus, Ohio included the first seven Men's Ministry Specialist candidates, the LMM staff and Executive Committee, students from Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Seminary and leaders from the synods in Region Six. For the story of the red bandanna, and its relationship to leadership, go to redbandanna.org.

Your Ministry With a Young Man

Lutheran Men in Mission's focus on young men is really about men of all generations connecting. If you are a middle or older age man here are 3 important things to remember in developing a relationship with a younger man.

Identify-Invite-Invest

Identify

What young man has God put in your life? With whom do you have a natural connection—a grandson, an employee? Perhaps it's the guy who works at the clubhouse, your neighbor, or your friend's son. Whoever it is, identify a young man with whom you might connect.

Invite

Take a risk and get to know him. Ask questions. Find out what makes him come alive. Invite him into conversation. Then invite him to do something with you. Maybe it's fishing, maybe its dinner. Make use of shared interests.

Invest

Develop an ongoing relationship with the young man. Host a biweekly Bible study, a weekly golf outing, a monthly time to work on cars together or a regular invitation to have supper together. Find something that works for you. As you do something together, learn his story and share yours. Listen and be real. Live your life transparently and honestly, let him see the real you. Let meaningful conversations just happen. Watch as God changes both of you.

Coming of Age: Exploring the Identity and Spirituality of Young Men, pp 203-204
David Anderson, Paul Hill, Roland Martinson
Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2006

DISTINCTIVES FOR HEALTHY MEN'S MINISTRY

The vision of Lutheran Men in Mission is for every man to have a growing relationship with Jesus Christ through an effective men's ministry in every congregation. Here are twelve characteristics of a healthy men's ministry.

1) Prayer

- Christ centered worship
- Has a well defined base of prayer supporters
- A commitment for prayer strategy

2) Biblical

- Helps men apply truth in practical ways
- Follows the ministry model of Jesus
- Applies lessons from the ministry model of Paul and others

3) Leadership

- Supported/encouraged by the Pastor
- Led by a core team with
- Opportunities for new leaders to participate and develop
- Demonstrates a servant leader model
- Leadership team meets regularly for prayer/planning/team building

4) Planning

- Has mission driven purpose statement
- Is strategic in nature rather than simply following traditions
- The purpose statement focuses on ministry
- Considers men's busy and varying schedules in it's planning
- Sets and communicates clear goals

5) Managing

- Avoids implementing too much too soon
- Regular surveying of the men, church and community
- Well run, but not micromanaged

6) Context

- A clear focus on men only
- Creates an environment that is safe for men
- An environment that allows men to build trusting relationships

7) Relationships

- Focuses on relationships and not on programs
- Leads men in small groups
- There is a balance between larger events and relationship building groups.
- Build trusting relationships leading to a willingness for accountability

8) Discipleship

- Balanced strategies for mentoring and discipling men (process)
- Helping men transfer biblical truth into personal application

9) Outreach

- Outreach that evangelizes men
- Offers entry points that are non threatening to unchurched men
- Community and missions activities

10) Inclusion

- The men in the ministry are ethnically representative of the community at large
- Provides separate opportunities for men at various stages of spiritual growth
- Takes into account, during planning, such things as age, life cycles, interests and needs.

11) Variety

- A ministry with flexibility and variety
- Has multiple entry points for men of differing interests, needs and availability.

12) Training

- Training and equipping seminars in focused areas of need
- Developing men in Christian walk, life and ministry skills

from the Master Builders Bible for Men, with thanks to the National Coalition of Men's Ministries.

Yes!

**I want every man
to have a growing
relationship with
Jesus Christ
through an
effective men's
ministry in every
congregation!**

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631-4101



I want to focus on an effort that concerns me and to issue a challenge to you to make a difference. That challenge is our effort to, “Continue and increase our emphasis on reaching out to young men and expanding our outreach to include confirmation age.” As I talk to pastors and lay leaders and visit congregations, I see and hear about a decrease in the number of people under the age of 40 who are attending our churches. This is a serious issue and one that I believe is easily reversed; it is all about caring for others inside and outside of our congregations.

In our book *Coming of Age*, Appendix A is a simple mentoring model called the “I-Go” model. It’s a simple, organic strategy that provides a three-step process for building relationships with young men. It is based on the three “I’s” of relationship-building (identifying, inviting, and investing), and on the conviction that “I will go” and do this. First, **identify** a young man whom God has put into your life; second, **invite** him to be a part of your life, take a risk and get to know him; and third, **invest**: develop an ongoing, meaningful relationship. And as you do this, watch as God changes both of you. As your relationship develops, talk about your faith journey and how God is an important part of your life, share the scriptures and when the right time comes pray together. I have seen this work and it is exciting!

My challenge is for you individually, as a men’s group, congregation and synod to develop mentoring programs using the “I-Go” model and to reach out to men and especially young men inside your congregation and beyond. You may have single parents in your congregation who especially need your help; work with your congregation staff to see where you can begin making a difference.

If you do not have a copy of the “I-Go” model or the *Coming of Age* book, please send me an email with I-Go in the subject line and I will send you a copy of the model (address below). I would also like to hear your comments, successes and questions with I-Go Comments in the subject line.

My prayer for each of you is that our gracious God is with you in all your activities.

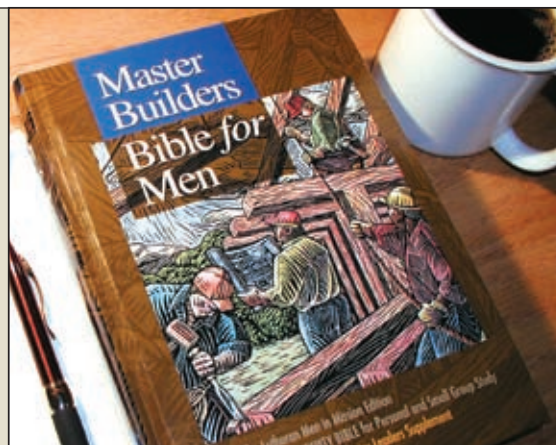
Norm Smith, president
Lutheran Men in Mission
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Master Builders Bible for Men, 2nd Edition

This new international version Bible features the *Men’s Ministry Leaders Supplement* and 20,000 study questions written into the text that assist participants to get to know each other as they get to know God. It also features six courses for men each with six beginner and six advanced sessions. The courses include: Masculinity: Will the Real Jesus Stand Up?; Accountability: Beyond Football and the Weather; Discipleship: Being a Man After God’s Own Heart; Attitude Adjustment: Down but Not Out; Men at Work: Performance Anxiety; For Men Only: Issues Men Face, 200 Bible Stories with study questions and much more!

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LUTHERAN MEN IN MISSION

8765 West Higgins Road / Chicago, IL 60631

Upcoming One Year to Live Retreats

October 2-4, 2009

Camp Santa Maria, Bailey, CO

Contact: Bill Ernstrom 303-746-6312

wpernstrom@msn.com

October 16-18, 2009

Camp Lutheridge, Arden, NC

Contact: Tim Crout 803-261-7011

btcrou@yahoo.com



"After a life altering accident, in which I believe God spared my life, the opportunity to attend this retreat presented itself. I was reluctant to attend. How much more personal growth did I need or want? As things unfolded and we worked the disciplined process, much to my surprise, great healing started to take place. In hindsight it was the best thing I could have done. Please join us if you feel a change in your life's trajectory is in order and you want to connect with other men that have and are going down a similar path. You are not alone and do not have to be."

November 13-15, 2009

Camp Edwards, East Troy, WI

Contact: Lon Buss 608-516-7875

londebuss@charter.net

April 16-18, 2010

Camp Kataki, Louisville, NE

Contact: Mike Maulik 402-650-4606

bogeyguy16@hotmail.com

