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Men's Ministry
Handbook
2009-2010

God's Man Laws

- 1) Love the Lord your God with all your heart, strength and mind;
- 2) The Sabbath day is a holy day;
- 3) A **“Christ-centered”** life is best;
- 4) A **“priest”** is God's representative no matter where he goes;
- 5) **God's kingdom comes all by itself;**
- 6) **God's man seeks God's kingdom;**
- 7) When you wash your face in the morning, remember your baptism;
- 8) Jesus is present when saints and sinners gather at his Table;
- 9) **God's man is a life-long learner;**
- 10) **God's man sees Jesus as the model of the Godly life and hears Jesus' call,**

“Come, follow me.”



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Latest Revision 1/18/07



*"That every man
has a growing relationship
with Jesus Christ
through an effective
men's ministry
in every congregation."*

*- Vision Statement of the ELCA's
Lutheran Men in Mission*



Dear Lutheran Men in Mission,

Greetings to you in the strong name of Jesus—the one who is, the one who was and the one who is to come!!

It is with great joy and hope that I share this handbook with you as a way to assist you and your congregation in strengthening the ministry we have with men in our TX-LA Gulf Coast Synod. Our work is not intended solely for the men of our congregations—our work is **for the sake of the world and we're calling all of our men to join us in this ministry of God!**

Our men's ministry in this synod is growing and moving forward. Each congregation has men at work **for Christ's sake and yet, each congregation is at a unique place in its own journey.** Some have strong and purposeful ministry. Some reflect images of past **men's organizations and some congregations have no organized or identified ministry at all.** But, God's promise to us is to lead us through the work of the Holy Spirit and this is a promise we can trust.

My goal is simple and my hope is strong. I believe that every congregation in our synod has the capacity to build and grow a ministry to and for and with men **for the sake of God's kingdom.** It will require the attention of our hearts and minds and imagination. Will you join me on this journey?

Brian Gige
Synod Coordinator

LUTHERAN MEN IN MISSION'S WORK

Lutheran Men in Mission (LMM) began with hope and enthusiasm in 1987 as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was formed by its predecessor bodies. Over the past almost 20 years LMM has impacted the ELCA at all three levels of ministry—in the wider church, through our synods and in each congregation. LMM provides:

- *spiritual nourishment for the church in the world;*
- *opportunities for men to worship together;*
- *ways to serve through local and synod projects;*
- *local, synod and national gatherings to support the men of our congregations;*
- *leadership training at all three levels of the ELCA*

In recent years three very successful National ELCA **Men's gatherings have been held**—Breckenridge, CO (1999), San Antonio, TX (2002), Charleston, SC (2005) and Omaha, NE (2008). These gatherings reflect the model of our ELCA National Youth Gatherings allowing the men of our church to worship, learn and **share in the** *“mutual conversation and consolation of the brothers,”* as encouraged by Martin Luther in the 1500's. **Another LMM National Men's Gathering will be held in Denver, CO July 22-24, 2011.**

Building on a successful 2002-2003 effort to place Bibles **in men's hands, LMM shipped nearly 6,000 Bibles in** January to the organization's representatives in this church's 65 synods.

Each synod will be able to use six Bibles in each of 15 congregations to start or restart men's ministries. This effort was so successful a few years ago that a commitment to start 1,000 new men's ministries a year for the next three years by distributing the *Master Builders Bible for Men* to leaders. *Men's Ministry Leaders Supplement* is also available to congregations who desire to grow and expand this ministry. The supplement is a 32-page, step-by-step guide to help congregational leaders build an **effective men's ministry**. The *Master Builders Bible for Men* is a special edition of the *Serendipity Bible*, which is designed to facilitate small-group study of the Bible in ways that welcome both the novice and the veteran student.

The Bible distribution program has been good for LMM, And this ministry has become known for our Bible, and that's a great thing to be known for. But, it is important to add that the program is a greater benefit for the men, the congregations and the whole church for as men **encounter Christ through an effective men's ministry**, every area of congregational life receives benefits.

The ongoing ministry of the LMM and the Bible project are made possible through donations from individual **men and from congregational and synod men's ministries**. As in any organization LMM depends on our prayers, our partnership, our personal and corporate efforts and our ongoing gifts.

This ministry is a gift from one generation to the next and will reach out to the men in our lives—-one man at a time. Contact LMM via www.elca.org/lmm

COMMENTS FROM DOUG HAUGEN National Director, ELCA LMM

The vision of Lutheran Men in Mission is:

That every man would have a growing relationship with Jesus Christ through an effective men's ministry in every congregation.

We have a lot of work to do...

- 5.5 million women in the U.S.A. worship without their spouses.¹ The gap between the men and women worshipping in mainline churches has been growing wider for the last 50 years. The ratio of men to women in mainline congregations was 48/52 percent in 1952. According to ECLA research, now only 38 percent of adults worshipping in ELCA congregations are male. That estimate may be high according to more informal LMM research.
- Many males begin to disengage from the church at about age nine.
- Men age 18-34 are the most un-churched group in America.
- Children are far more likely to continue to practice their faith when both mother and father are actively engaged in their faith.

Children with involved, loving fathers are significantly more likely to do well in school, have healthy self-esteem, exhibit empathy and pro-social behavior, and avoid high-risk behaviors such as drug use, truancy and criminal activity, compared to children who have uninvolved fathers.



- Outdoor ministry sites have difficulty recruiting male staff.
- Females outnumber males training to be youth/family ministers 2-1.8

We do have our work cut out for us, but we are making great strides in reaching more men for Christ. Our goal to start/re-start **1,000 effective men's** ministries this year is nearing 50 percent in many of our synods. *Coming of Age*, our first publication aimed at helping congregations reach young men, sold out of its first printing in two months. Many new resources are being planned to be released at events during the next 36 months. The summer edition of foundations will feature events that we are planning throughout the United States through 2007, leading up to the **Lutheran Men's Gathering in Omaha in 2008.**

All of our plans proceed from our vision of every man having a growing relationship with Jesus Christ. We know that when men enjoy a relationship with Jesus Christ, everyone benefits.

*Doug Haugen, Director
Lutheran Men in Mission
Doug.Haugen@ELCA.org*

Men's Ministry is...

(in no particular order of importance)

- holding your infant daughter and singing her songs of love;
- cheering at your sons baseball game and doing it sober;
- teaching a Sunday School class and your child is not in it;
- visiting another male from your congregation in the hospital;
- being faithful to your wife and showing your children that marriage is hard work but yet important work;
- volunteering your family to work at the homeless shelter on Thanksgiving Day or another day;
- staying in touch with an old HS or college friend for the rest of your lives;
- **taking care of one's physical being through a healthy diet and appropriate amounts of exercise;**
- showing your son or daughter how to bait a fishing hook, find the right firewood and how to break down a campsite;
- playing catch with your son in the backyard for 1000 hours...100 hours...even 10 hours or just 1;
- **taking your daughter to a movie after your son's football team won the night before;**
- taking your wife on dates 5, 10, 15 years after your 5th wedding anniversary;
- having a code & standard of ethics in the workplace;
- **ushering at the church's worship service;**
- **Taking someone else's "grandpa" on a Sunday drive when he no longer able to operate a vehicle;**

Men's Ministry Is... (Cont'd)

- Scheduling a “retreat” with other men each year;
- telling your faith story in 7 minutes at church the next Sunday;
- having your grandchild catch you reading the Bible and then reading that same Bible to them;
- **watching your neighbor's house at the time of their family funeral;**
- giving a gift to support the work of your congregation's men's ministry;
- **telling a friend when he's done something wrong and needs to amend his life;**
- helping that same friend make new choices;
- **taking time to read about the value of men's ministry and research what other men's ministries are doing elsewhere;**
- *adding another example to this list...*



***“Reveal yourself to us Lord
as you once did
in the breaking of the bread...”***

A Biblical Vision for ministry with men:

- Men are “created in God’s image” (***identity***)
- Men are given the charge to be the “light of the world” and the “salt of the earth” (***purpose***)
- Men are called through the Holy Spirit to “build up the Body of Christ” (***mission***)

Biblical Quotes:

- Jethro speaking to Moses...***“Your job is to teach them the rules and instructions, to show them how to live, what to do. 21 And then you need to keep a sharp eye out for competent men - men who fear God, men of integrity, men who are incorruptible - and appoint them as leaders over groups organized by the thousand, by the hundred, by fifty, and by ten.”*** -Exodus 18:20ff
- ***“So select some wise, understanding, and seasoned men from your tribes, and I will commission them as your leaders.”*** -Deuteronomy 1:13
- ***“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and strength and mind.”*** -Deuteronomy 6:4
- ***“As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”*** - Joshua 24:15
- ***“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”*** - Proverbs 27:17

- ***“I will make you fishers of men.”*** - Jesus
- ***“You are the salt of the earth; you are the light of the world.”***
- Jesus
- ***“Do you love me? Feed my sheep.”***
-Jesus to Peter
- ***“Don’t be harsh or impatient with an older man. Talk to him as you would your own father, and to the younger men as your brothers.”***
-1 Timothy 5:1
- ***“Also, guide the young men to a disciplined life.”***
- Titus 2:6

Some CULTURAL quotes for ministry with men:

- ***“The heart of men’s ministry is like one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread.”***
-a rephrasing of D. T. Niles
comment on “evangelism”
- ***“And as I hung up the phone it occurred to me; He'd grown up just like me. Yeah, my boy was just like me.”*** - Harry Chapin
“Cats in the Cradle”
- ***“Christ is the head of this household; the unseen guest at every meal and the silent listener to every conversation.”***
- framed quote in a Christian home

- “I though I heard my father’s voice in my baby’s new-born cry.”
- Mike and the Mechanics
- “If a man doesn’t get his life together by the time he turns 35, he won’t.” (PAUSE) **“But God was gracious to me...I got my life together at age 45.”** - Robert Bly at age 70
- “Papa was a “Rollin stone” ...wherever he laid his hat was his home (*and when he died*) ...all he left us was alone...” -The Temptations
- **“N F L teams rise and fall from play to play...and the clock goes off at 3:00 PM... but our lives are measured by the one who runs with us—Jesus Christ —the keeper of the clock that never runs out.”**
- Dom Capers, NFL Coach
- “We are looking for daring men to get off the sidelines, join our team, impact lives...and the church...”
-Doug Haugen
LMM Director
- **“I’m always ready to have a cup of coffee and a conversation about life with any man...any age...any place...any time.”** -Brian Gige
- **“...the deepest faith questions and spiritual questions are, “Will anyone be there for me? Will God be there for me?”**
-Dr. Rollie Martinson

A VISION FOR YOUNG MEN'S MINISTRY

by Nathan Anenson, *Lutheran Men in Mission*, 2005

Lutheran Men in Mission (LMM), the men's ministry of the ELCA, has noticed something that many of us would like to ignore: so many young men (ages 18-34) are not connected with God through Jesus Christ **because they can't connect with our existing churches**. Young men are the age-gender group most absent from Christian faith communities. Why is that and what can we do?

It has been the assumption that young men will *return* to churches when they settle down, get married, and have kids. And for many years, this has been true to a certain extent. But we are increasingly entering a time when young men have nothing to return to. They never were a part of a community of believers!

At the same time, major shifts are taking place within society and culture as to how people—especially young people—see the world. And many times, these new and different ways of understanding life conflict with values and structures on which our churches are based.

Therefore, there is something deep down that just **doesn't seem right about many churches to young men**. And it goes much deeper than the style of music.

Therefore, it doesn't make sense to expect young men to come to our existing worship gatherings or men's ministries. Nor will it work to try to develop a new and better program and hope young men show up.

We need to put to rest the “you-come-to-us” model and deeply invest in a “we-will-go-to-you” model. The church needs to be sent out into the world!

What does this look like? When we look across the country in our congregations we see men who have walked with the Lord for more than half a century; men who have somehow stayed married to the same woman for forty years; men who have the wisdom of many years lived; and men who are by no means perfect, but are willing to share their lives. These men have something young men need. Recent research sponsored by LMM shows us that **fathers and other older male figures in a young man’s life are the most significant factors** in shaping their adult spiritual identity. However, sometimes these men do not realize how much they have to offer and how much they are needed.

But what if these men, these men who know what it means to walk with the Lord, these men who have the wisdom of many years lived, were empowered to go to where young men are and build relationships? What if the men in our congregations caught a vision of the impact they could have on a young man? What if the lives of young men all over the country were being changed because men of God were taking risks and accepting the call to invest in the life of one young man? How does this start? There are a number of ways to go about building relationships with young men. Included in this packet are two models to help you start thinking

about what would work for your context and to empower you to make it happen. We cannot expect young men to just show up at our church buildings. We need to go to them. And that means you building authentic relationships. God is raising up the men of our church to invest in the lives of young men. You are needed. Will you go?

“I-Go”

Identify—Invite—Invest

The “I-Go” model is 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 upon the conviction that *“I will go”* and do this. In this model, you don’t have to wait to get going. You just go and do it.

IDENTIFY

What young man has God put in your life? With whom do you have a natural connection? Grandson? An employee? The guy who works at the clubhouse? Your neighbor? Your friend’s son? Whoever! Identify a young man with whom you think you could 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 is fishing. Maybe it is dinner. Make use of shared interests.

INVEST

Develop an ongoing relationship with the young man. Have a bi-weekly 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. And as you do something together, learn his story and share yours. Listen and be real. Live your life transparently and honestly, allowing him see the real you. Let meaningful conversations just happen. Watch as God changes both of you.

“TOGETHER IN MINISTRY”

Listen—Select—Empower

One model that has worked on a national level with LMM is to intentionally listen to young men, select a few with leadership potential, and then empower them to design and implement ministries with you. **“Together in Ministry” works best using a team of men to carry out the three steps.**

LISTEN!

Start by gathering a team of men (age forty and above) to listen to young men in a non-judgmental way. The purpose of these conversations is to start relationships and to gain an understanding of the men you are engaging in conversation. The purpose at this point is not necessarily to involve them in any activity in the congregation.

Select

- Men age 18-34 who are:
- Members of the congregation, but not active
- Not members of the congregation
- Of various ethnic backgrounds and ages
- Referrals for these conversations may come from:
- Your pastor/church directory
- Your family/friends/relationships
- Some of the young men with whom you talk

Invite a young man to lunch or dinner and let him know you would like to get to know him better. When you meet, thank him for getting together and share a small story about yourself to set the tone of the conversation. Then tell him why you are interviewing **him**: *“We miss young men in our church. Obviously, you are not coming for a good reason, and I can respect that. What I really want to do is just hear a bit more about who you are, just as you are.”* This is important...to say...

The conversations should take place in a casual setting (*like a coffee shop*) outside the church building. Also, have these conversations one-on-one or as a team of two dialoging with one young man, so as to not overwhelm him with a whole group of church leaders. Use the following questions as a guide for you to help initiate conversation and get to know the young man; not simply as a strict interview outline.

LISTEN TO YOUNG MEN'S LIFE EXPERIENCE

1. Describe to me your life situation at the moment.
2. **How do you spend your time...** on weekdays, evenings, weekends?
3. What are your most enjoyable leisure activities?
4. What TV shows do you watch?
5. What type of music do you listen to?
6. How do you spend your income?
7. The people most active in my relationship life right **now are...**
8. Tell me about your family relationships and how they are going for you.
9. Describe a recent experience with friends or family that was meaningful for you.
10. **A current struggle for me is....**

LISTEN TO YOUNG MEN'S SPIRITUALITY

1. Thinking back on your life, what were some events that helped to shape who you are now?
2. Tell me about some people who have strongly influenced you.
3. What really matters to you?
4. What are some values or principles that are important to you?
5. What moments in your life would you describe as being meaningful?
6. Describe an event in your past that you would name **as being "spiritual" in some way?**
7. What are some of your biggest hopes for the future?
8. **What are your thoughts about "God" as a "higher power"?**

LISTEN TO YOUNG MEN'S (FAITH) PRACTICES

1. What refreshes you, or gives you strength?
2. What makes you feel really "alive"?
3. What keeps you going when things are difficult?
4. What is a balanced life for you?
5. What do you do to "get centered", to gain focus in your life?
6. When or where do you have a sense of peace?
7. My feelings about religion are...
8. Ask this...

"If you had one message for the men's ministry leaders in our congregation, what would it be?"

SELECT!

Gather together as a leadership team. Without sharing names, discuss:

1. What were the common themes?
2. What surprised you?
3. **How is your men's ministry/congregation dealing with the common themes?**

Among those you spoke with, who demonstrated leadership capabilities? Those:

1. Able to articulate his concerns
2. Who seem to be a person other guys would follow
3. Who have some sense of what the church needs to be about in order to reach this generation.

Invite 2-4 of those with leadership potential to meet with your leadership team.

EMPOWER!

Agenda:

1. Share your notes from the last meeting, telling the younger men what you *think* you heard, and ask them for validation or correction.
2. When you have been assured that you have heard what the young men were saying, talk about the kind of activities/programs/ministries/relationships that will deal with the issues and themes you heard the young men talk about.
3. With newsprint, cluster the themes/issues that surfaced.
4. What do the young men think are the most crucial issues to deal with first?
5. What is needed to address these issues?
6. How, who, when?

Remember, the point of this is not for the older men to provide programs/ministry for younger men. It is to give permission and empower younger men to develop ministry (in addition to and along with middle and older age men).

Many young men will be suspicious of what you want from them. You must earn their trust. As you do, be open to what ministry with young men looks like and make it happen together!



BUILD INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

1. Young men are the group most disconnected from Christian communities.
2. Young men say they want older men in their lives.
3. Faith and what it means to be a man is passed down from one man to another.
4. **Many young men don't** have dads because of divorce, death, or because the father is absent emotionally and spiritually.
5. **Many young men don't** have extended family nearby (grandfathers, uncles, etc.).
6. **Many young men don't** trust institutions/organized religion. Faith and masculinity must be passed down organically through relationships. Young men must witness real men live real lives (in all its messiness) with the real Jesus.
7. Many young men are confused over the difference between the way the world should be (the way they want it to be) and the way the world is. Intergenerational relationships can provide some clarity amongst the confusion.
8. Young men have a sense that at some point they will need to step up and make a difference. In other generations this was more defined. Now young men wonder, **“how?” “why?” “can I?”** Intergenerational relationships can help answer these questions.
9. Older men are blessed with experience and wisdom to be a blessing. They get to make a difference in **young men's' lives.**
10. Young men can be a wonderful blessing in the lives of older men, bringing purpose, life, and energy.

***Some Random Thoughts about LMM...
...not in any order of significance...***

- All the data available to us indicates that any effort to reach young men ages 19-32 will be both difficult AND yet effective as this is the most unchurched segment of the US population;
- The ELCA LMM has good leadership, and a desire to make LMM stronger around the country, synod by synod, congregation by congregation, one man at a time;
- A network of contacts exists but a greater effort to strengthen this network is needed;
- The average congregational gift to the ELCA LMM in 2004 was \$14.
- All pastors and lay leaders will be blessed in a reading of the book, Why Men Hate Going Church.
- **Men's ministry is seen as life-long and never-ending; —“Run the Race — Keep the Faith!”**
- A concern for the coming generations should always be rooted in men's ministry;

- A key component to “men’s ministry” is providing an atmosphere for each man, regardless of age, to do personal faith-journey work;
- Providing avenues for men to create, build and sustain growing relationships with other men in their congregations, their synods and around the country have value beyond price;
- The ELCA LMM’s mission statement is:

““That every man has a growing relationship with Jesus Christ through an effective men’s ministry in every congregation.”

What steps can we take to help make this happen in our congregations?



Ministries in Need of Attention:

1) 2005-2008 Endowment Fund Challenge

A gift of \$500,000 has been given the LMM with the provision that the rest of the ELCA LMM match this between the gatherings in Charleston, SC and Omaha, NE. An additional matching grant is being sought by other Endowment agencies to bring the total to \$1.5 million allowing ELCA LMM to be independent of benevolence gifts and in turn be able to **“gift” the ELCA**. Another meeting with Dr. Charles Oestreich will provide additional information on our seeking out of potential gift sources in our congregations. [NOTE: *This campaign was successfully completed in 2008! Thanks be to God!*]

2) “ROUND ‘EM UP” Campaign

In 2005 the LMM of the 2 Carolina synods entering into a campaign called “Measure Up” as men were gathered for a meal and presentation and then had their waistlines measured and asked to “give \$1 per inch”! They did and will share over \$100,000 to the Endowment Campaign as a result. I’m confident that our 3 synods can do better and would like to suggest a similar approach that will seem a bit more biblical and Trinitarian in form:

“ROUND ‘EM UP” = gathering the men of each of our congregations for a faith-deepening and fellowship experience and to tell the story of LMM and what ELCA men around the nation are doing. During this event, men will have their hat size taken along with **the chest size as well as their shoe size... WHY????**

BECAUSE—Jesus said, *“Beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news”* and quoted Deuteronomy 6:5 reminding his disciples to *“love the Lord their God with their whole heart”* and St. Paul told his friends in Rome, *“transformation comes from the renewal of your mind...”*

Using this approach will increase our gifts to support LMM and each congregation can determine how they can go about this project. [NOTE: *This project fell way short of its intention. We will try again!!!*]

3) Master Builder's Bible Distribution

A third printing of the *Master Builders Bible* is underway and congregations in each of our ELCA synods will be targeted to begin or renew an effective ministry with men. [NOTE: *This is one of LMM's greatest attributes and noticed by non-Lutherans, too!*]

4) Young Men's Ministry

Following the lead of the National LMM Young Men's Council each synod is going to be asked to seek out young men ages 19-34 to help develop and promote the ministry to men in the coming generation. Even today, we have 2 distinct understandings of men's ministry. The men of the 50's and 60's will not be around in the next 25 years to participate but they can leave a legacy for their sons, grandsons and great-grandsons. Utilizing the “guided faith dialogue” developed by Rollie Martinson will be a first step in approaching this generation of young men.

5) *Building a network of leaders*

Since 1987, no network of congregations and leaders within has been identified and developed. In a time of high tech communication, LMM has a great opportunity to bring men of all generations together for the common purpose of being and making disciples in each generation. This will take time but must be addressed immediately. Advocates and communicators in each congregation will be sought out, provided training, and nurture in order to sustain the long-range goals of LMM. **Today's meeting is an attempt to provide the plan to put this concept into motion. It is both a "pastoral" model and a C21 model.**

6) *Gulf Coast Men in Mission BLOG site*

In August 2007 a *weblog (BLOG)* site was created for the men of our synod and their friends to learn, discuss and converse together about the ministry we have been given. All efforts to share this site with others is appreciated!

7) *Other ministry ideas to be considered*

*What else requires our
prayers and attention?*



Recipes for Strengthening Men's Ministry

1) Worship Opportunities

A) *Celebrating Father's Day*

Each year the third Sunday in June provides an opportunity for shining the spotlight on ministry to men and through men in the congregation. God is our FATHER and we hold his standard of love, grace and presence as the example in our own attempts to be a father and to honor our father either in life or in death.

The Worship service can include the following:

- i. A litany of confession and forgiveness for fathers past, present & future;
- ii. Hymn and songs that accentuate the male human spirit and witness;
- iii. A special guest speaker to highlight the work of the men of the church;
- iv. Special prayers can be spoken for vocations, work and family;
- v. Holy Communion can be celebrated with all male assistants;
- vi. A ***"men's chorus"*** can be formed in advance to lead the singing during the gathering for worship, during the offering and during Eucharist;
- vii. Pastors and preachers should be free to deviate from the appointed text for this day to share a special message for men (that woman and children will want to hear, too!)
- viii. Special "Father's Day" gifts can be given to each man present;**

2) Weekly, Monthly & Seasonal Opportunities:

A) *Weekly/Bi-weekly Bible Study Gatherings*

Each week around the USA men from our ELCA gather for what Martin Luther called the **“mutual consolation and conversation of the brethren.”** He likened these efforts and moments to a **“sacramental”** action for people of faith. In fact, we live much better in community than in isolation and even more so with joy and purpose when we gather intentionally to support and strengthen one another.

The LMM Master Builder’s Bible is a key to this ministry offering study formats that reach men age 19 to 109. Each congregation’s men’s ministry will benefit by implementing a systematic gathering of men to share their faith, risk telling their stories of life and ultimately growing the church and strengthening the local ministry they share. Meetings can be held on any weekday morning, a Saturday or Sunday morning. When two men (or more) gather, **God’s Holy Spirit is present & men’s ministry is at work!**

B) *Celebrating “Men’s Day” (at another time of the year)*

Each year the WELCA holds its annual **“thankoffering”** service and a special offering is received to support the national efforts of our women’s organization. A similar service can be held in the Fall (SEPT-OCT) or just before Lent each year. In addition to the items listed above, men’s vocations can be highlighted, a gift to the church can be presented for **“special projects”** and a gift can be shared with the wider church’s expression of LMM.

C) ***Using a “RETREAT” Setting***
for Building Faith with Men

Our synods have access to quality camps and members of our congregations have camp houses, lake houses and beach houses where groups of men can gather together to build friendships and strengthen faith.

Outside guest speakers are effective in stirring the hearts and minds of men and retreat settings have no **phones, no TV’s, no pagers or bosses!**

D) Service projects to Congregation & Community

There are people in our congregations who need our help. There are people in our community who need our help. Projects can involve men of all ages and be a very wonderful venue for building friendships. After all, when was the last time you went to the grocery store and saw another from church and said, **“hey, I know you...we sang *A Mighty Fortress* together at church last month?”** Projects can include:

- sponsoring an AA group at your church
- connect with Thrivent and Habitat for Humanity
- **Sponsor a “mission” trip to a “poverty” zone**
- Host a semi-annual Blood Bank Drive
- **Start a men’s softball team**
- host a breakfast for the WELCA
- **fix up the exterior of a ‘senior’ member’s home**
- Install a wheelchair ramp in a home or office site
- **share in the “work day” at your synod camp**

GULF COAST MEN IN MISSION

A vision and 5 year plan for ministry with men:

ONE MAN AT A TIME

- Who can you invite to join you on this journey?
- What steps do you need to take to move from **being a “participant” to becoming a “leader?”**

CONGREGATION BY CONGREGATION

- Identify 2-3 key leaders in each congregation
 - o—communication details/ph #/ address/ e-mail, etc.
 - o—know the name of each secretary/office manager to promote ministry
 - o—encourage pastors (male and female) to be **advocates for men’s ministry**
- Provide materials and ideas for leaders to build, maintain and grow
 - o—**celebrate “Men’s Day” each year (guy songs, testimonies, service)**
- Cluster the congregations by geography and/or size 3-5-7
 - o—use the Peter, James and John principle...**“we’re better together”**
 - o—use the 5th Sunday (OR OTHER 5TH DAY) of each quarter (4 of them) annually for **“clusters”**

SYNOD-WIDE

- Publicize the synod leaders to all congregations
- **Provide “flyers” and other visual aids to promote men’s ministry**
- **Host an annual “business” meeting to discuss the ongoing mission of LMM** Schedule a series of **“retreats” for men by age, life experience, season** and make good use of Camp Lutherhill
- **Schedule a “work day / work weekend” @ Lutherhill**
- **Provide opportunities for “work projects in LA, the Valley and metro areas**
- Promote Bible studies for young men at UH, Rice, HCC and TSU led by a rotation of male leaders from synod congregations
- This could also be done at LSU, UNO and Tulane
- **Create a reproducible “quarterly” men’s magazine** for all congregations
- Establish a web-site for Gulf Coast Synod Men in Mission
- Synod Gathering @ Grace, Conroe FEB 6, 2010

CHURCH WIDE

- Continue the ministry of disseminating nationally **the Master Builder’s Bibles;**
- Encourage participation in LMM National Gatherings (Omaha in 2008)
- **Encourage participation for young men’s “ROAD TRIPS”**
- Participate in the ELCA LMM Endowment Campaign matching \$500,000.00 (*additional gifts continue to be given...*)

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VALUES FOR 21st CENTURY MEN'S MINISTRY

Based on reflections from Dr. Joe Renzuli
Professor of Educational Psychology @ UConn

Question?

"How shall we prepare leaders for the 21st century?"

- Consider the "time blocks" of our lives?
 - o— How busy must we be?
 - o— cell phones, e-mail and Fed EX rule
 - o— materialism prevails
 - o— > 31 minutes for the care of children / week
 - o— > 5 minutes for romantic interlude w/ wife
- Success is not measured by the people we rub shoulders with but is a result of our worthwhile work coupled with our worthwhile pleasure
- The best way to predict the future is to create it!
- We live in a time which demands:
 - o— moral courage
 - o— vision linked to optimism
 - o— hope
 - o— a sense of power to change (in and around)
 - o— having a clear sense of destiny
 - o— concern for the environment
 - o— being passionate about a topic or cause
 - o— having enough conviction to attract others
- Question? - ***"What must we do to shape our own destiny vs. reacting to the world around us?"***

Jesus said,

"Take my yoke and learn from me; my yoke is easy and my burden is light."