

NETWORK NEWS

Equipping Laypeople to Give Pastoral Care

Our Mission

Equipping Laypeople to Give Pastoral Care

God has raised up Lay Pastors Ministry, Incorporated (LPMI) to carry on the following mission: Lay Pastors Ministry, Inc., serves churches by partnering with them in mobilizing and equipping laypeople to provide competent, consistent and loving care for their members.

Our mission includes serving seminaries and other educational institutions, denominations, groups or alliances of churches, local, national, and international conferences by providing resources focusing on congregational care by laypeople.

What it will do for you and your Church

- Provide authentic and effective pastoral care for members of your church.
- Relieve pastors from the guilt of not being able to care for every member of the church.
- Enable laypeople to use their God-given gifts to be “love with skin on” to other members of the congregation.
- Complete the task of evangelism as the members reach out in love in their neighborhoods, communities and market places.
- Fulfill our Biblical mandate “to tend the flock of God....”
- Will help your congregation form intimate relationships of Christian affections which will encourage and sustain them in their daily lives.

Welcome to Christ Memorial Lutheran Church



In 2000 our church hosted the International Conference on Caring, sponsored by Lay Pastor’s Ministry Inc. It is our great joy and privilege to once again serve as the host church for this conference in 2010. We are eagerly looking forward to greeting many of you that attended the conference in 2000, and are also anxious to meet all of you that are attending a Caring conference for the first time.

Much has changed about Christ Memorial since then. In 2005 we relocated from our old church into our new facility. We have many exciting additions in our new

church, including a gym, a fitness center, a bookstore, and many people will add, “No steps.” Yes, we are totally available for handicapped folks, so anyone will be able to come and enjoy every part of the conference. But our Caring Ministry (we call it the Shepherd Ministry) which has been a part of our church since 1992 has not changed. We have lost some of our former shepherds, and trained many new shepherds but our people are still caring for people on a regular basis .

The 2000 conference theme was “Tend The Flock” I Pet. 5:2. Our theme for this conference is “Creating a Caring Community” and it is also based on I Pet. 5:2. So despite many changes in our church and in our shepherd ministry, God’s command is still the same, “Tend the Flock Of God Among You.” It is because of the great need and also God’s command that we encourage you to attend the conference in St. Louis. The mission of the Lay Pastor’s Ministry is to mobilize and equip lay people to provide consistent and loving care to people in your church and beyond. God uses very ordinary people to do His work of Caring for others. This is our purpose at this conference also, to help you to grow in the ministry God has given you. All people are welcome. You do not need to be part of an organized caring ministry. There is always a need to care for people in your church, your neighborhood, all around you.



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“Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care.” - I Peter 5:2

EVENT

Welcome to Christ Memorial... continued

Our keynote speaker is Dr. Kenneth Haugk, founder and Executive Director of Stephen Ministries . In addition we are offering about 25 workshops from which to choose for the 5 different workshop sessions. You will hear workshop leaders from past years as well as many new presenters and topics.

Your registration fee will cover special music and worship, delicious refreshment breaks , a Friday night banquet with entertainment, lunch on Saturday and more. You are also invited to worship with us at our Saturday evening worship service or to attend any of our three Sunday morning services.

Our brochure will be mailed to you in January 2010. It will contain all the information needed for registration, cost, hotels, conference schedules and speakers. Please send your registration in early for the reduced rate. Our shepherds are eager to meet you and hope to make this a weekend where you will be Spiritually nourished, Spiritually refreshed and Spiritually restored.

If you have additional questions,
please contact
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“ Meet me in St. Louis “

at the **LPMI** conference.



INSIGHT



Dear Friends,

As I write this article I am in Williamsburg, Virginia, a city filled with history of the Revolutionary War. History – a time in the past and a time to remember what those who have gone before gave to us.

For Christmas my daughter Kristen compiled a history of my family dating back to 1765. There were family pictures going back as far as 1850.

The above thoughts reminded me that we are all beneficiaries of the work, faith, hope and love of those who have gone before.

The ministry of the lay isn't something new. The foundations can go back to the Garden of Eden when God commissioned Adam to take care of the creation and to name the animals.

God has been calling the laity to serve Him forever. Jesus did the same thing when He called the twelve non-ordained disciples. St. Paul gave us this pivotal truth in Ephesians 4:11-12: *The gifts He gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ....*

In his phenomenal book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, Rick Warren writes on Day 32: *God deserves your best. He shaped you for a purpose, and expects you to make the most of what you have been given. He doesn't want you to worry about or covet abilities you don't have. Instead He wants you to focus on talents He has given you to use.*

God has dreams, plans and a belief in the lay people to be about His holy work ... that includes you!

Pray about how the Lord is, or may be, calling you to serve Him in unique and wonderful ways. Join a band of followers of Jesus and be a great part of God's history of the laity.

Peace in Our Lord,

Thomas W. Corbell
President, LPMI

Believing in the Cause

By Marie Parma

Southeastern Regional Director and LPMI Board Member

Several years ago I had the privilege of watching my grandson develop an interest in running. He entered several “fun” races ... one or two miles ... and had done quite well. Then he decided to enter a 2 mile run to benefit the local Boys and Girls Clubs in the area.

It was quite exciting to hear him talk about his strategy for the race...about setting a pace and maintaining it. It was even more thrilling to watch him as they began the run and then to see him round the bend in the road and race toward the finish line! He was first in his age division and eleventh overall with a time of 15:16 ... that’s a 7:38 mile! I can tell you all about being a proud grandmother when he received his medal!

As proud as I was of Hamp, I was even more inspired by another person in the race that day. His time was a little over 54 minutes for the 2 miles. He finished last. He was 89 years old and walked with a cane. It was the first race he had ever entered. When asked why he participated in the event, he simply said, “I believe in the cause.” What a statement – I BELIEVE IN THE CAUSE. It didn’t matter where he placed in relationship to others. He was faithful to complete the race **because he believed in the cause.**

I believe in lay ministry. I believe in the PACE concept of ministering to our congregations. (Prayer, Availability, Contact, Example) I believe that Christ reaches out to others as we pray, make ourselves available, contact regularly and be an example of love with skin on to them. As we begin 2010 may we show by our words and actions that we “**believe in the cause**”—the cause of Christ.



Thank You!

A simple thank you for all the love channeled my way didn’t seem sufficient. What that meant to me was amazing. Thank you for your love and prayers in this difficult time. Praise GOD!

PRAISE BE TO GOD OUR FATHER!

Since May I have been through debilitating pain, severe medication reactions, back surgery and now recovering, rehabilitating, and strengthening my body and soul!

At my lowest ebb, wracked by pain and despair, prayers were my only consolation. Unconditional love surrounded me and embraced me. As brothers and sisters in Christ have experienced time and again, the wonderful power of prayer; the phone calls of encouragement, the many cards with prayer and love were a blessing, and for many days exactly what I needed to lift my spirits at a lowest time of despair and “Why me, God?” questions.

God has a plan, I’ve always believed and told my children. So He slowed me down, changed my daily life and focused me on things I’ve been neglecting or pushing aside ‘til another day.

As I recover and strengthen, my fervent prayer is to be open to God’s message to me and live it. Again, words cannot adequately express my family’s and my appreciation for the love, cards, emails and prayers from extended acquaintances and family members, work and neighbors; people who took the time to share their faith and support with me. GOD BLESS YOU ALL

Yours in Christ’s name,
Betty Kreischer
Mother of LPMI Board member,
Carolyn Sullivan

Jeremiah 17:14 - “Heal me, O Lord and I shall be healed; save me and I shall be saved. For Thou art my praise.”



WHAT'S THIS ABOUT BLOWING YOUR OWN HORN?

By Dr. Melvin J. Steinbron
Founder, Lay Pastors Ministry

My dear covenant-motivated brothers and sisters,

This morning my pastor, David Lenz, preached on giving – *How to Give Away Money*. You know how sermons about money usually go over, well, this one was a hit! It was biblically nurturing, super- interesting, and homiletically perfect. Preparation must have included praying this song: *Take your truth O Lord/ and let it be/ a river of love flowing out through me*. The river flowed!

As David approached the pulpit, loud blasts from a trumpet nearly jolted us out of the pews. All heads immediately turned to two men parading down the aisle, one blowing his trumpet, the other waving a sign, I'M GIVING; I'M GIVING! This action ignited my imagination, I saw myself pushing a dollar bill into the Salvation Army kettle slot and shouting to those pretending the kettle was not there, "See me, I'm giving." I was ready for the sermon. The Scripture was part of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount:

.... *When you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets... to be honored by men ... But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you openly* (Matt.6:1-4).

Secret and **reward** caught my attention. These two words of Jesus nailed down forever two major principles for Giving. David masterfully (translate: "filled with the Spirit") sculpted his sermon out of them. I'm borrowing the Secret principle and the Reward principle for this letter, after all, he borrowed them from Jesus. But first, we'll hear two of Jesus' other teachings: the *act* of giving, the *treasures* to give, then the *principles* for giving.

The act of Giving – "**WHEN YOU GIVE.**" Note Jesus' three words: **WHEN**—not **if** you give; **YOU**—this is you, your **self**, choosing the purpose and amount; **GIVE**—divesting one's self of something tangible like food, clothes and/or money to the needy. Giving is a majestic feature in God's nature which seems to have survived "the fall" in better shape than many others. God must have considered giving as needed more than many other practical acts for the survival of the human race. One example of giving in our area is the annual Toys for Tots drive, carried out by the U.S. Marines. Close to Christmas (20 days from today) they will distribute thousands of gifts to needy children in the seven-county Twin Cities area. Though dire needs plague children all year long, the Marines act is significant. They surprise the children with hope as well as toys. Between Christmases, the Salvation Army, churches, and community organizations help families with food, clothes ... and hope.



LETTER TO LAY PASTORS

The treasures to give – MONEY AND SELF. Two of the 26 issues Jesus preached on the Mount were on giving (no 15-minute three-point sermon here). If preachers are to fulfill their call to “Preach the Word,” they will preach what Jesus preached. On this day Jesus included giving money and giving self. Because money and self are so big in our lives, giving money is giving self, and giving self is giving money. Consider Jesus’ comment about the widow who put two copper coins in the collection box—*All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on* (Luke 21:1-4). (Now to simplify my wording from this point on, I’ll use two words instead of five—“giving self” in place of “giving money and giving self.”)

Many are in a Catch-22 dilemma (a situation presenting two equally desirable alternatives). It is spiritually, emotionally and psychologically impossible to give self to the true God while also giving self to the bogus god of self. For our own sanity and peace of mind we have to decide who is #1 – God or self. Tony Campolo tells about a troubled man who came for counsel, “I’ve got this terrible problem, it’s tearing me apart: I love my wife and I love my secretary. It’s killing me.” Tony’s counsel: “You don’t have a problem, you have a decision.” His counsel applies to Christians trying to give their hearts to both God and self. When you give your heart to God, all other things, including self, are secondary. When lay pastors struggle between giving self to God to do lay pastoral care and giving self to *self* to do its own agenda, they have a huge decision to make. Let Jesus have the last word: *If your first concern is to look after yourself, you’ll never find yourself. But if you forget about yourself and look to me, you’ll find both yourself and me* (Matt. 10:39 in *The Message*). Say, “Yes Jesus, you are Lord!” No more struggle.

The first of the two principles of giving – THE SECRECY PRINCIPLE: *Be careful not to do your acts of righteousness before men to be seen by them.... So when you do something for an individual or family of your flock, do not announce it loudly with fanfare so that giving your self may be in secret* (my paraphrase of Matt. 6:1-4). In other words, do not toot your own horn. If we do “acts of righteousness” for the purpose of being seen as a good guy, we’ll more likely be seen as an egotistical guy. Jesus’ acts were seen by thousands, but he didn’t do them for the purpose of being seen and praised. In fact it was just the opposite, in Nazareth he was treated like trash (Lk. 4:14-30), and in Gadara the people asked him to leave, valuing their pigs more than the healing of a troubled man (Matt.8:28-34).

Two realities emerge at this point: First, about your motives, be sure you’re not giving yourself to be seen by people so as to be praised, but giving yourself for the sake of your people and for the sake of Jesus whose sheep they are. Peter told shepherds to check their motives for willingness, eagerness, and humility (I Pet 5:2-3). Second, secrecy does not mean you don’t tell anybody. You may need to share with a few Christian friends and other lay pastors—respecting the rule of confidentiality, of course—to encourage them and be encouraged by them. Jesus told his “friends,” formerly called servants, what he did and what he was about to do (John 15:14-15). The principle of secrecy avoids the Jack Horner syndrome: “He stuck in his thumb and pulled out a plum and said, “What a good boy am I!”

The second principle of giving – THE REWARD PRINCIPLE: *Your Father, who sees what is done in secret will reward you openly.* Being loving and faithful in **Praying, Availability, Contacting** and **Example** are not intended as ostentatious acts for admiration but are bona fide acts of giving self, which pleases the Father who sees your integrity and rewards accordingly. The “Great Charter” of the Lay Pastors Ministry promises a reward – *When the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away* (I Pet.5:1-4). Receiving the crown assumes the covenantal motivations: *willing, eager, and humble*, which, because they are inner qualities, are secretive. Your acts may not be secret (most of Jesus’ were public because that’s where the people were), but, if you blow your trumpet, i.e. believe you have “earned bragging rights,” you expose egotistical motivations rather than covenantal. Of the egotistical, Jesus said, *You have received your reward in full* (Matt. 6:2). Of the covenantal, Jesus said, *Your Father, who sees what is done in secret will reward you.* Which of the two should we prefer, the one which *soon* fades away or the one which will *never* fade away (I Pet. 5:4)?

I believe most lay pastors shrink away from the idea of rewards. They don’t give themselves to God, and his people to be rewarded. The joy and privilege of ministry is sufficient reward! However, to God, rewards are important for he wants to show how pleased he is with what you *are* and what you *do*. It took me years to learn how important it is to accept appreciation from people graciously with a sincere “Thank you.” I learned that refusing the gift is refusing the person. Knowing God is a Giving God, we ought pray something like this: “God, the joy and privilege of making a difference in people’s lives is enough reward for me, nevertheless I’ll cherish forever your reward of the “crown of life.” God’s reward is given without our soliciting it by tooting our own horn.

Your covenantally-motivated brother,
Mel



Prayers for the people of Haiti

It is hard to know how to pray when you see the devastation from the earthquake. How could this happen? What do we do? How do we help? Where do we start?

My Church home, the First Presbyterian Church in Mt Holly, NJ, has had a relationship with Haitians in the past. Adult members and members of our youth group have gone on mission trips to Haiti.

We also have a Haitian church in our neighboring town of Burlington. Many there have family in Haiti and have either not heard from them or heard that they are now homeless. Five of their church members on a trip to Haiti are, as of this writing, still missing. Through the Haitian church we have developed a direct link to Haiti, so any support we provide will go directly to the people who need it.

The need for prayer is great! The news we hear from Haiti is hard to take in. How can the survivors go on? Will they be able to rebuild their lives? We can be thankful for the way governments, organizations and individuals have stepped up to help.

Yet the Haitian people seem so helpless and alone in the midst of their tragedy. Their faith, however, is alive. God has not forgotten his people in Haiti. When you hear the singing and praises from the people gathered in the streets and even as they are pulled from the ruins and in great pain you know God is at work.

Let's join our faith with their faith and partner with them in prayer.

Else Rodland



Dry? Dull?

By Rev. Phil Olson
Former Minister of Mission
First Presbyterian Church of Mt Holly, NJ

You've heard the saying, "You can't squeeze water out of a dry sponge." The same is true for your personal ministry, especially as a shepherd. You can't give spiritually unless you have something spiritual to give. As a shepherd, you can often give so much but fail to refill in order to keep fresh spiritually.

In an article in Discipleship Journal, Jean Fleming suggests 10 questions to help you replenish your spiritual reservoir:

1. Do I expect too much of myself, my Christian life and/or my church?
2. Do I need to confess & repent of sin?
3. Am I doing things that make me spiritually insensitive to where other people are coming from?
4. Do I consistently practice spiritual disciplines (meditation, prayer, fasting, Bible study, simplicity, solitude, confession etc.?)
5. What used to help me feel close to God that can help me recover my "first love"?
6. Am I just going through the motions?
7. Are physical problems getting me down?
8. Am I praying about my spiritual life & asking others (including my sheep) to pray for me?
9. Am I connecting with others who are alive in Christ?
10. What does God want to teach me through this period in the "wilderness"?

Singer/songwriter Jackson Browne has a song called, "Running on Empty." That does not need to be true of your life. If you need help (and who doesn't at some point), don't be afraid to cry out to God, another person or you shepherd, lay pastor and/or pastoral staff. We want you to "be filled with the Holy Spirit." Eph. 5:18

From Shepherds' Staff Notes 1992

Creating a Caring Community

Are you looking for encouragement, training and renewal of commitment in providing competent, consistent and loving care for your flock? Do you feel that you need a spiritual refill?

– or –

Are you looking to start a Lay Pastors Ministry in your church?

Now is the time to register for the **LPMI International Conference, April 23-24 2010, at Christ Memorial Church in St. Louis, MO.**

If, for some reason, you have not received our brochure, you can download it from our website: laypastors.com or contact Else Rodland in the LPMI office. Phone 609-261-0904 email: lpmi@comcast.net





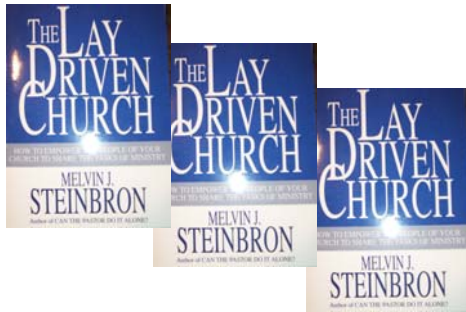
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By Mel Steinbron

Used as a text by hundreds of churches to start their Lay Pastors Ministry. Includes 12 units to equip lay people for ministry. (258 pages)

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The Lay Driven Church

By Mel Steinbron

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Ways To Give



These are a few ways you can support this ministry:

- 1. Cash/check donation sent to:**
 Lay Pastors Ministry, Inc.
 P O Box 368
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- 2. The giving of stock**
 As you evaluate your giving options, you may consider contacting the individual that manages your financial portfolio to donate stock. This allows you to deduct fully from your taxes the value of the stock upon giving, regardless of your original cost basis. You will not be required to pay capital gains upon that stock if the value has increased.

- 3. Remember LPMI in your will**
 A person may specify in their will to have a portion of their assets given to LPMI.

- 4. Gifts may be given in memory of or in honor of an individual.**

Your support of LPMI with your gift will be a blessing to you and to those who will benefit from our services.

The Lord Jesus himself said:

"It is more blessed to give than to receive."
 - Acts 20:35

WHAT'S NEW?



Dr. Mel Steinbron, the founder of the Lay Pastors Ministry is completing his third book, LETTERS TO LAY PASTORS. This book will be published by WinePress Publishing and expected to be available at the **International Conference in St. Louis, April 23-24**. Samples have been printed in the last three issues of Network News and one in this issue. His other two books, CAN THE PASTOR DO IT ALONE? and THE LAY DRIVEN CHURCH were listed as Best Sellers for three years by the then publisher, Gospel Light (Regal Books).

To be added or deleted from the mailing list, to offer suggestions for content, to submit writings, or to inquire about the Lay Pastors Ministry, the Network News, conferences or resources for your lay pastoral care ministry, contact:

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One Year (4 issues) - \$ 15
Two Years (8 issues) - \$ 28
Three Years (12 issues) - \$ 40

You may still order multiple copies. However, these copies will be sent via Bulk Mail instead of First Class. The cost of 10 or more multiple copies will be \$10.00/person for each subscription. To subscribe, contact Else Rodland, Director of Ministry Operations, at the above address.

Purpose:

To share lay pastoral care ministry information and resources with churches, individuals, denominational leaders and seminaries.

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