

Wellness: Refiring Vocations as We Age

By Deborah Ann Norrie
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I don't like to think of myself as getting old. I wonder why my mother's face looks back at me from the bathroom mirror every morning! I certainly don't like having to think about retirement either!

Refirement: A Boomer's Guide to Life After 50, by James Gamboni, Kirk House Publishers; Minneapolis 2000, is suggested reading for vocational wellness. It is described as a "positive and optimistic vision of how to live a meaningful life" as we grow older. Instead of planning retirement, we are to refire our lives.

So how do we "refire" our lives in middle age?

- Get your groove back – use music, humor, and life adventure
- Take charge of your own health – create your wellness plan including exercise, mindful food choices and balance in your life
- Work on important relationships
- Explore diversity to find healing and forgiveness
- Be a mentor – what is the most significant thing you are doing that is having a positive impact on another person?
- Find what spirits you – Can you remember situations and experiences that left you feeling energized? Times when you felt energy surge from the top of your head to your toes? What are the occasions when you feel really alive? What activities engage your passions?
- Take time for reflection

Of course we do need to plan responsibly for retirement. But we never retire from our God-given vocational gifts. If you are finding yourself burned out and tired of doing the same things – give some thought to refiring.

Vocations are gifts we have been given through the waters of baptism, the passions that lie within us. Vocation is not just our work from 9-5; it's about how God lives through you in each aspect of your life. (ELCA Board of Pensions on the Wholeness Wheel)



Ministry Profile: Lutheran Men in Mission

By Larry Iverson
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Lutheran Men in Mission (LMM) strives to build "a dynamic ministry that addresses the needs of men of all ages. Statistics reveal that families and congregations are more likely to thrive when men are actively engaged in their faith" (www.ELCA.org/lmm).

LMM is now celebrating 20 years of ministry and will become a financially self-reliant, separately incorporated ministry of the ELCA in 2009.

Every three years there is a gathering of Lutheran men from across the ELCA. The 2008 gathering will be held Aug. 1-3 in Omaha, Neb. under the theme verse of "your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions" (Acts 2:17). It promises to be a good gathering for faith, fun and growth. Tom Osborne, former head football coach of the Nebraska Cornhuskers from 1973 to 1997 leading them to three national championships, will be one of the featured speakers. Music will be provided by Dakota Road, who has been featured at ELCA Youth Gatherings and church family events.

A large focus in the past few years has been a joint effort of LMM and Luther Seminary on the Young Male Spirituality Project, in which a sample of young men across the U.S. were interviewed to see what they had to say about their lives, their faith, and their faith practices. This effort led to the book *Coming of Age*, which shares the information and offers suggestions for how to engage young men in their faith lives.

The Southeastern Minnesota LMM hosts an annual gathering of men at "Breakfast with the Bishop" with financial assistance from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. It has been a great opportunity to bring men of all ages together for a good breakfast at Cabela's in Owatonna and then to hear a speaker talk about the connection to our faith lives as men in our churches and communities. See page 11 for information on this year's event to be held on April 26. The event continues to grow, with over 130 men coming together. This year's featured speaker is an educator from Waseca, John Hanson, who has received national recognition for the teaching of citizenship to students.



Get it Online

- Lutheran Men in Mission - www.ELCA.org/lmm