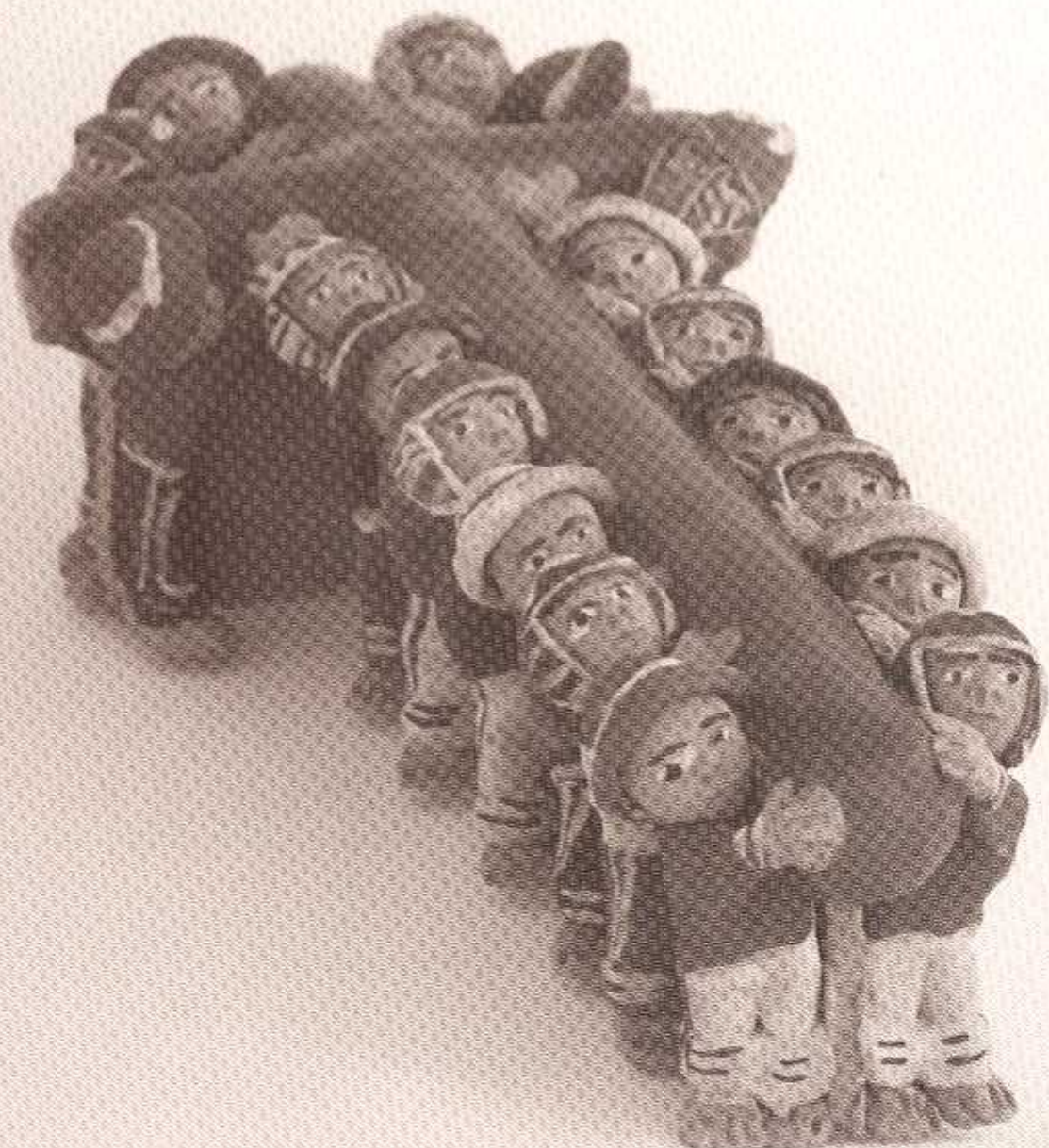


LIFT
HIGH
THE
CROSS:

Organizing
Church Men



HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

This manual is unlike any resource you have ever seen before. It covers twenty topics with a module (double page) of material on each topic. These topics can be read in sequence but they can also stand alone. Some of the material is didactic, linear and “left brain” which many men prefer. But the same information is often presented as well in poems, pictures and essays of a more emotional, expressive, and “right brain” style. The goal is to have something in each module that would appeal to each kind of learner.

1. If you are a typical, linear “left brain” male, read the first or left hand column on the front of the page. It will give you the basic INFORMATION you need to KNOW.
2. If you are a more expressive and creative, “right brain” male, read the right hand column on the front of the page. It will start your IMAGINATION going and you can DREAM on from there.
3. If you like to learn SEQUENTIALLY and are willing to let the writer establish the ORDER in which you learn you might start with the left hand column on the back of the page. You can read right through the manual using only this column of each page and find a brief, traditional “book” on the topic of organizing church men.
4. If, on the other hand, you are impulsive and want to move directly to program plans, turn to the PROGRAM !DEA boxes in each module. They give you immediate, easy PLANS for a men’s gathering.
5. At least one DISCUSSION QUESTION is buried in the text of each module and is identified by an enlarged question mark. You can TALK your way through the full manual as a group.

LIFT HIGH THE CROSS: ORGANIZING CHURCH MEN

This is the official manual of Presbyterian Men

© Copyright 1994 Congregational Ministries Division, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Louisville, Kentucky Compiled and edited by David Lewis and John Hamil

Cover design and layout by Carol Dukes Eberhart

Scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible and are copyrighted 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. and are used by permission.

Modified for web 10/24/05.

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
100 Witherspoon Street
Louisville, KY 40202-1396
502-569-5435
888-728-7228 Ext. 5435
Babrams@ctr.pcusa.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MODULE 1	Motivation Avoid the Status Quo The First Step Why Have a Men's Program: Five Reasons
MODULE 2	Reaching Men, 13 Strategies Look for Discontentment Step Two The Plus Factor
MODULE 3	Group Building Give Men a Hearing! Step Three Friendship
MODULE 4	Strategic Planning Get a Vision! Step Four The Abilene Paradox
MODULE 5	Men's Concerns Speak Up! Step Five The Threshold Experience The Big Impossible
MODULE 6	Growth Expand Your Core! Step Six Are We Growing?
MODULE 7	Support Groups Cut a Covenant A Caring Option Helpful Resources
MODULE 8	Project Groups Pray With Your Hands! A Helpful Option Vocational Volunteers
MODULE 9	Fellowship Groups Rapid Response Teams The Friendly Option An Action Agenda
MODULE 10	Time Management Quality Time Other Options Men-Toring

MODULE 11	Leadership The “I”s Have It! Executive Committee Two Good Resources Growing New Leaders
MODULE 12	The Pastor Your Mission to Pastors! Pastor Advisor/Minister Member? Three Good Resources
MODULE 13	Program Success Stories! The Program Chair Grass Roots Programs
MODULE 14	Finances Pay As You Go! The Treasurer Fasting, Sharing & Praying Presbyterian Men Fund
MODULE 15	Promotion Highlight Men Visualize! The Promotion Chair PresbyNet
MODULE 16	Job Descriptions Your Man in Havana! Duties: Congregational Presbytery and Synod Representatives A Service of Installation
MODULE 17	History of Men’s Work Honor Old Timers Council Helps You “C” Better Who Are We?
MODULE 18	Resources Try the New! Masculine Spirituality Sixteen Men
MODULE 19	Relationships Make the Connection! Forming a Men’s Council Relationship Chart
MODULE 20	Partnerships Brothers and Sisters! Think Tanks for Men The Story of the Chalice
BACK COVER	Vision Statement for Men

MOTIVATION

Where Is My Energy?

Motive: Something (as a need or desire) that causes a person to act.

Synonyms:

IMPULSE: driving power from personal temperament

INCENTIVE: external influence (as reward) leading to action

SPUR: increase of energy or ardor

Ask Yourself and Others:

What internal and external factors are impacting me right now? Where is my energy?

Men are dynamic; we are always changing and growing. That which motivates us at one stage may not have much meaning at another. But whatever our situation, we each need reasons for our actions. What motivates men?

Start with yourself. List the issues you face today, the needs you have that don't seem to be met. Where are you in your life journey? Are you looking for friendship, for significant things to do, for clearer understanding? How are you relating your Christian convictions to these everyday experiences?

Think about the men in your church. Some are just getting started in life; family and job can be their most important concerns. Others have just retired and have a new set of challenges. The church is where these life situations can find meaning.

Motivation theory says we meet basic needs first and when they are met they no longer motivate. We move on to seek success, influence, and affiliation. Men's work in the church begins here, with our basic convictions about what is important. The major motivator for most men is meaning, a sense of purpose and value in their lives.

For Christian men, meaning is centered in Jesus Christ. We seek to understand our ages and stages, our needs and goals in the light of Christ's call upon our truest, deepest selves. Helping men make this connection is central. The specifics may change but the underlying purpose of life remains, to "lift high the cross" of Christ in each and every moment and circumstance of our lives. Finding the meaning in each moment is what life is all about.

AVOID THE STATUS QUO!

Nothing is more dangerous for men than the status quo, the way we have always done it, the way we have always been! Cultural norms for men have buried them in roles and rules that can smother the truly good news of freedom in Christ which sets all people free. Too often church life has replicated secular life by putting men in traditional places with "normal" expectations. Men today seek a new experience of the spiritual, an entirely different way of making their lives count. No program for men in today's church can succeed unless it begins where men are, in a state of deep prayer and longing for "new life" in Christ. This booklet is a guided tour through the steps that men are taking to find this new freedom, this enriched life. It is practical and honest. The problems we face as men cannot be buried in organizational talk nor step by step conformity. Our daily lives are the arena of our ministry and our everyday energies are all we have to give to the church. They will be more than enough if the church in turn gives us a practical, honest course of action to explore.

It Is Time to Risk!

It is time to risk—for the sake of men and for the sake of Christ! All over the country men have already started to risk more to find more (see Module 5). We want the church to be involved in that risk-taking because we believe that it has the truth about fullness of life. If you are ready to try something new, to trust God to lead you toward more than you have yet found, then this guidebook is for you. Do not be afraid to ask questions, do it your own way, even to fail in trying. We are taking this journey together. Men are hungry for spiritual growth and the Spirit of God will guide them in that hunger beyond the guidebooks, the complaints and the obstacles. The only thing that can stop us is the status quo.

THE FIRST STEP

To get men's work started in your church you will need to find a "few good men" who are currently eager to let Christ be the basis of their lives. Who are these key men you need to reach? Most likely they are already busy men. What would catch their attention? Such men need a challenge, a question that is not easy to answer. They are motivated by possibilities.

You might pose your question this way, "I've been wondering why many of our church men don't seem involved; what could we do to open doors for new men to find greater meaning for their lives?"

Invite a small group of these key men to have lunch with you. Be sure the pastor is included. Explain that you are concerned to improve the lives of men in your congregation. You do not want the pastor to feel obligation for another program; you want his or her input on what needs to be done—in the lives of men and in the ministry of the congregation.

Ask the men in your core group to go over the membership lists and get a picture of who your men really are. Divide them into categories that make sense to you. Don't leave out single, young and often absent men. Daniel Levinson, in "The Seasons of a Man's Life" (Ballantine Books, 1978) reminds us that each "season" (Childhood, Adolescence, Early, Middle and Late Adulthood) has its own needs, issues and concerns.

Think of what you would say to men in each category that would catch their attention. List the typical issues they might be facing and the Christian convictions they might be seeking. Recall your own growth in faith, how it happened and when. Remember that motivation is finding meaning for every moment, growth in every struggle, purpose in every opportunity.

CHECK LIST:

- Core group identified and invited to lunch.
- Lunch meeting held and membership lists divided up.
- Pastor input has been sought and included in plans
- Simple presentations for specific men designed and used.

WHY HAVE A MEN'S PROGRAM: FIVE REASONS

1. When men are actively involved the church thrives. It can no longer be assumed that men will be active in your church's life; their recent "exodus" has been pronounced. An organized approach to recruitment and involvement of men is a necessity in today's church (see Module 2).

2. Active Christian men become role models for others. It is not easy to define the role of a man in today's secular society. Men in the church need to offer their own sons and daughters a carefully worked out role model of Christian manhood (see Module 4).

3. Men can lead in the ministry of the church in the world. Relating our faith to our work is not an automatic transfer of knowledge; it requires opportunities for sharing and support (see Module 8).

4. Men have unique concerns of their own to share. Men need "safe" places to share their lives with one another and a chance to explore the emerging gender viewpoints of our day (see Module 5).

5. Men need opportunities to grow and training for leadership. A men's program makes sure that each man and boy has chances for involvement, training, and leadership and a point of access into church life (see Module 11).

A PROGRAM IDEA

NOW is a good time to call your denominational office on men's work and ask for recent research, good new books, or opportunities for training.

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has an excellent 21 minute video entitled "Empowered By the Spirit: Men's Ministry for the 90's" which can help start you off in new directions. Order from Christian Board of Publication, Box 179 St. Louis, MO 63166 (telephone 1-800-366-3383). Ask for the Ecumenical Version.

REACHING MEN 13 STRATEGIES

Review your church program. Does it intentionally reach out to men? Here are thirteen ways to improve your outreach.

Through Relationships

1. Use existing social webs, have members pray for and invite unchurched men in their social networks and families.
2. Teach the congregation to recognize "seasons of opportunity" when a man might be open to church.
3. Enlarge your "ministry of presence" by increasing contacts between your church men and your community.

Through Training

4. Train men in basic communication skills, how to meet new people and make new friends.
5. Train lay men, specially new members, in how to witness to others.

Through Multiplication

6. Create multiple points of entry for men with different groups aimed at different audiences.
7. Multiply points of contact, places where real live Christians rub elbows with unchurched men in non-threatening situations.

Through Service

8. Offer activities that provide a feeling of accomplishment.
9. Offer opportunities involving non-verbal skills.

Through Atmosphere

10. If necessary, have the church "clean up its act." Ask nearby business people and neighbors what bad messages the church unwittingly sends out.
11. Develop a positive, relaxed atmosphere in the worship. Work hard on the music and give people a chance to greet one another.

Through Visibility

12. Give men responsibility and visibility at church. Recognize their work.
13. Use all means possible to make your church visible in the community.

* Adapted from "Men And The Church: What Keeps Them Out and What Brings Them In" by Woody L. Davis, *The Journal Of The Academy for Evangelism*, Vol. 3, pp. 46-61, 1987-88.

LOOK FOR DISCONTENTMENT

Some of the key men in your church are not content with doing more and getting less. They have been loyal but they have not always been fulfilled. Some are younger newcomers who have not been included in real church fellowship. Some are old timers who dream of the spiritual depths they experienced long ago. Many are busy, often too busy, and are looking for a sense of renewal and strength. These are the key men you need to reach to add to your core group.

If you are reading this, consider seriously that God may be calling you to be a key man, a leader in this renewal of men in the church -- at least at its beginning. Commit yourself to spending some time with a few other men who feel the way you do. Invite your pastor to join you for an informal evening discussion. Listen to your pastor's dreams: share your own.

Talk about specific men in your congregation. Pray for them using the membership rolls as your prayer list. Pay special attention to those who are on the margins such as young men, students, men in the military or men travelling a great deal. Try to group them around categories of need or current situations. Are some unemployed, going through divorce, becoming fathers? Where are the cutting edges in the lives of your men, in your own life?

Cutting Edge Prayer

A ministry with men begins when you begin to hear from these men, when your core group of men hear together the longing and the hope of the rest of the men with whom you share life. Your goal is to try and find an opportunity to hear these men out, to dig deeply with them into the meaning and purpose of your lives. A ministry with men begins with listening.

STEP TWO

In 1983 noted church sociologist Lyle E. Schaller wrote a provocative article for the JSAC GRAPEVINE entitled "Where Have All The Men Gone?" It signaled a renewed interest in men's ministry and has been widely reprinted since.

In it, Schaller noted a decline in men's participation and suggested several ways to change the trend. He noted that American Christianity is a volunteer organization and most volunteers are still women. He noted that few organizational "openings" in our churches are aimed at men. He observed that most sermons delivered by white pastors were addressed to left-brained, verbally skilled adults while many men prefer right-brained, visual communications.

He suggested several ways to encourage men. First and foremost was increasing program opportunities for men through a men's ministry emphasis and he observed that second-career and women pastors were especially good at doing this. He noted that men responded well to short-term, high-quality training for specific assignments. And he stated the obvious, that men need to know they belong and are needed.

Your second step in planning a ministry with men is to re-open the topic of men in the church. Collect resources which address this issue, raise it at committee meetings (evangelism and education committees are two good places to begin), and introduce it into all-church program planning. Begin to let your church men know that they are receiving the attention they deserve.

CHECK LIST:

- ___ Core group of men goes "public" and adds men who have felt left out.
- ___ With the pastor's help, men's ministry is reintroduced into church life and planning.
- ___ A review of church efforts to reach men is started and a process for addressing men's concerns is established.
- ___ Library books and resources on men's ministry are made available to all interested parties.

THE PLUS FACTOR

We have used the expression "reaching men." How is this done effectively? Reaching men is a matter of communication with a PLUS.

Sometimes it is said, "We sent out letters, posted notices on the bulletin board, ran announcements in the church bulletin, and sent postcards to invite men to the meeting. But not very many came."

Advertisements, flyers and posters seldom attract men. The information gets through but the PLUS factor is missing! It is YOU, the salesman, who becomes the PLUS factor. The kind of man you want to involve will come if personally invited and if they know they will attend with someone they know.

One effective way to reach men is to send a post card with the pertinent information and follow up a few days later with a phone call and personal invitation. Another way is to give the personal invitation and follow up with a card with a personal note added to the information. In any case, most groups have found that about one third of those invited will be interested enough to come. This means that if you want eight men you will need to extend twenty to thirty invitations.

The Personal Touch

There is no substitute for the personal touch. Often we are moved to act not because it seems important to us but because it seems terribly important to someone else. Never underestimate the impact your enthusiasm and involvement has on other men. When Christ and His mission are so important to you that you choose to share it, it becomes suddenly more important to the person you contact. YOU are the PLUS factor in reaching men!

A PROGRAM IDEA

Many men's groups have met regularly for up to a year just listening to members share their faith journeys. This builds trust and loyalty in members that will hold them together for years.

GROUP BUILDING

Ask yourself, what makes me comfortable in a group? Before you try to lead others in discussion, review these simple guidelines and then practice them.

Tak e

TEN RULES FOR DISCUSSION LEADERS

1. Be clear about instructions and time allowed; each person needs a time to share.
2. No one is required to speak, and simply may pass. However, the group is enriched when all contribute.
3. Ask people to speak in personal, first-person terms. Offer as a model such phrases as "my experience is ..."
4. Be pleasant and positive; avoid put-downs and advice giving. If confidential materials come up, agree to maintain confidentiality.
5. Be a good listener; look at one another as you listen.
6. Allow for silence; sometimes this is creative thinking time.
7. Natural humor is fine, but be careful it does not become a way of avoiding the personal.
8. Avoid domination of the conversation, especially if you know yourself to be a "talker."
9. Believe in the presence of the Holy Spirit to guide the conversation to depths that match your growing edges.
10. There are few greater privileges than sharing personally and deeply in the life of another; honor that now as you see the Christ in your brother or sister.

GIVE MEN A HEARING!

Before any planning, before any first steps, the men of your church need an honest and fruitful hearing. All of them. One way to do this is to divide up the list of men you have been praying for and to invite them to a time of sharing, a gathering of men. Be sure not to leave anyone out and to set the gathering at a time when most can be present. Invite them one by one, face to face or by telephone. Ask for their commitment to attend. Put notices in the church newspaper and bulletin and consider an advertisement in the local paper.

INVITATION

We are inviting men to
gather to talk about
deepening and enriching
our lives, as men.
(Date, Time, Place)
PLEASE COME

There are lots of ways to hold these hearings in your congregation. Your core group of key men can invite the men on their list to their homes. You can invite everyone to a single time and place. You can go off to a nearby campsite or park for a cookout and sharing time. Pick the plan that seems right for your situation.

A critical priority for this time together is to truly get acquainted. Most men have very few friends, even in their home congregation. A few men have too many friends and will try to dominate. Try to build a schedule that allows for one-on-one sharing, small randomly chosen groups, and large group fun time with well-led singing.

Ask these men to assess their situation, as members of a church and as individuals. Where are they feeling stressed, what is not working for them at church and where do they find renewal and strength? How could their lives be improved? Expect diversity; get men together who have common problems or hopes. Try to end with each person attending feeling as though he has been heard and having the names and telephone numbers of at least three new friends.

Assure everyone that you want to keep in touch with them all and hear further from each of them. Discuss a system for sharing news and ideas. Get a sense of where you are and have men state it as clearly as they can; ask them to share it with others.

STEP THREE

Begin your fact finding meeting with prayer or simple worship. It is effective to have each person on the core group including the pastor contribute to this. Keep it brief and positive.

State clearly the purpose for the meeting and thank the men for coming. Ask them to divide up into small groups (six or less) and introduce themselves. Ask each person to give his name and tell one thing he likes about this church and one thing he thinks is missing.

Call the group back together and begin to assess your church situation. Have someone keeping a record on newsprint. List strengths and opportunities for men; list needs and concerns men face. Try to avoid organizational talk at this point. Post the pages as they are created.

Ask the men to return to their small groups for more personal sharing. What would improve their individual lives? How could the church make a difference to them? This is brain storming and men need to be assured that nothing is "out of bounds" or unacceptable.

Promise the group that all the pages will be typed up and shared with them. Pass a pad around for names and addresses. Include this name list with the meeting notes.

If possible have the meal or refreshments in the small groups and at the end of the agenda. Ask each small group member to say what he would tell a friend about the meeting.

Thank the group for coming. Ask for volunteers to meet within a week to do some strategic planning based on the findings of the meeting. Ask them to remain after the meeting to pick a time and place. Close with prayer by the pastor.

CHECK LIST:

- ___ Number of participants set; food preparation informed.
- ___ Opening worship or prayer is assigned and prepared.
- ___ Method for dividing group is set; group leaders asked.
- ___ Newsprint, markers, tape are ready. Person to write set.
- ___ Person to lead each activity ready.
- ___ Possible dates for strategic planning meeting

FRIENDSHIP

In *"The Intimate Connection"* (Westminster/ John Knox 1988) James Nelson introduces the topic of Friendship with these words.

"Women gather

Free to chat of impotent husbands
and not quite forgotten lovers,
Sharing dreams with old or new friends
and confiding desperation,
Baring souls and unburdening
hearts,

Then leave relaxed and laughing,
Promising to lunch again soon,
Freed from the pain of no one knowing.

Men gather

Free to boast of the money they've made
or will make soon—or the women,
Displaying how strong and controlled they
are
and unafraid of competition,
Sharing triumphs and hiding themselves,
Then leave with a handshake and "See you
around,"
Bleeding silently within themselves,
Bearing the pain of no one knowing."

James Kavanaugh, "Maybe If I Loved You More" page 28, New York; E.P.Dutton Co., 1982. Used by permission.

"Has the poet, James Kavanaugh, exaggerated the point? Listen to Washington Post columnist Richard Cohen. 'My friends have no friends,' he writes. 'They are men. They think they have friends, and if you ask them whether they have friends they will say yes, but they don't really. They think, for instance, that I'm their friend, but I'm not. It's OK. Their not my friends, either. The reason for that is that we are all men—and men, I have come to believe, cannot or will not have real friends'."

Quoted in Clifford P. Bendau, "Friends...Or Just Buddies?" Minneapolis-St. Paul, June 1981,p.65. Used by permission.

A PROGRAM IDEA

Back in 1975 Bob Metke from Athens, Alabama helped create a small booklet for the Synod of the South men called, "Faith In Focus." in it he suggested that meetings include a time for Tabletopics, a chance for everyone at a table to briefly address the chosen topic. This would give the otherwise un-involved a chance to speak, warm up the fellowship, and create pro and con view-points. He suggests doing Tabletopics near the beginning of ANY meeting. Try it!

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Step One:

Identify and write a mission or "vision" statement. This is the group's reason for being, for its life and ministry. Men are too busy to get together without a reason.

Step Two:

Set the goal(s). Goals direct the energies of the men into areas where programs and projects are to be developed. They answer the question, "To fulfill our mission or vision, what needs our attention now?" Be sure all your men can state your goals.

Step Three:

Make a plan with clear objectives to meet the goal(s). Objectives answer the question, "Who is to do what by when?" Often it helps to write this down as "action plans." Don't forget to include the costs! Give each man a task and hold each one accountable.

Step Four:

Go into action and fulfill the plan. Be sure your plan is on everyone's calendar including the congregation's master calendar. Get Session approval if needed. Request your pastor's help and do not let your program be pre-empted by other church groups. Be sure and do what you plan and report widely on its completion. Celebrate success!

Step Five:

Periodically evaluate to keep on course. Lack of evaluation almost always leads a group downhill. Put evaluation on your agenda and calendar and do it! If goals have changed, spot it here and revise your plan. Men like to review their work.

*These points are taken from the "Manual For Men's Ministries: Revised" of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Used by permission.

GET A VISION!

Here is where it gets hard. Your enlarged core group of men need to put their hopes into words, into a presentation that can convince others. They need to do this for two reasons. First, they want to reach out to all the men with a plan that will strike fire and get response. Second, they will need to go to the church leadership to share their plans. They need to begin to "sell" at this point.

A useful "vision" statement has to have three things. It needs a clear and winsome picture of its dream. It needs some very specific descriptions of its goals. And it needs a general time line with steps toward success spelled out. Elsewhere in this booklet is the Vision Statement for Presbyterian Men. This can be a model, but yours will have to be your own if it is to be convincing.

There are many ways to organize a ministry with men. Several successful ones are outlined later. You will need to experiment with the best plan for your situation. Two trends are happening in both church and society which may help you with your planning.

Trends

First, the rapid growth of smaller groupings of men who meet quite regularly for prayer, study, and personal support. (See Module 7).

Second, the other clear trend is toward multiple programming for men in a local church. Some churches have as many as twenty different programs and activities involving men!

On the basis of the hearings you have held with the men in your church, which of these ideas offers the most hope for change and growth in your men? Your strategic planning group needs to explore the options outlined, consider unique plans that fit your situation, and try out their ideas on the men to see which get the best response.

Two steps in planning are often overlooked. The first is evaluation, a regular way for each person involved to say whether the plan is working for him. Without planned evaluation your men are forced to signal their discontent with complaints or absence.

The other important step in planning is affiliation, getting the "lift" that comes from working with others. Your community, and denomination have involved men. Adding your efforts to theirs broadens horizons and increases opportunities.

STEP FOUR

Your vision "statement" or plan can be as simple as you choose. But it is important because it signals change, it moves you beyond the status quo and business as usual. Think of it as a slogan, a call to action, a sales pitch.

Your statement says where you are headed, gives a few specifics so it can be evaluated, and suggests a timeline so men can decide whether or not they can commit to it. Men are busy today and this first step tells them that this plan is worth their time.

Another reason for doing a plan or vision statement has to do with our tendency to complain without coming up with alternatives. The statement forces the core men to develop a more positive picture of men in the church.

Finally, developing a vision statement forces growth, or vision. It is the moment when education makes the most sense. If you have men who can do some reading, go to a conference, try some simple research it is most likely to pay off at this point.

Take the time to write your statement as a group and to try it out on all your men. Even if a few do the writing, distribute it widely and build in a way to make revisions and suggestions easily.

One way to proceed is to take all the notes from your hearing and group them into major topics. Then have several men each write a paragraph about one of the topics. Find a person with editorial skills to pull the sections together and issue a first draft.

When your draft has been corrected and polished, try it out on your session or governing body. Print it in the church newsletter and suggest a study session on it for some Sunday after church. Your goal is to build consensus and develop commitment to change.

CHECK LIST:

- Develop a vision; be able to say why you want to exist
- Set goals; picture your dream in specifics.
- Set a time line to measure success.
- Get as many men as possible involved.
- Evaluate. Few plans fly without flaws. Try again.
- Affiliate. Get the "lift" that comes from working together.

THE ABILINE PARADOX

"People in groups tend to agree on courses of action which they know are futile" says Jerry Harvey of George Washington University. He calls this the "Abilene Paradox" and tells this story to explain it:

The story began on a Sunday afternoon in Coleman, Texas, where the temperature was 104 degrees Fahrenheit, and a dust storm was blowing. Harvey and his wife and her mother and father were sitting sheltered from the dust under a fan, sipping iced lemonade, playing dominoes, and looking forward to dining on the various leftovers stored in the refrigerator.

Suddenly the father-in-law suggested they all get dressed, climb into an un air-conditioned car, and drive fifty-three miles to Abilene to eat in a cafeteria. The others swiftly agreed. On their return to Coleman about four hours later, choked with dust, stupefied with heat, and dyspeptic from the cafeteria's plastic meal, they began to accuse one another.

Harvey and the two women, each in turn, declared that just as they had always known it would be, the outing had been disastrous and that they had agreed to go only because the others had wanted to. Then the father-in-law shouted that the trip had been the last thing that he had desired; he had suggested it only because he felt the others might be bored.

The usual refusal of any of the group's members to stand up and dispute the nonsense that they are agreeing to may come from the fact that they have been taught that people who resist the general drift are punished far more often than they are rewarded. As society gets more complexly interwoven, the decision-making process tends to place more emphasis on decreasing conflict. Hence, we consent now and regret it later. (taken from Bible Discovery Youth Leaflet) Year II Fall Quarter (1989).

A PROGRAM IDEA

Here are two sources of data on men in the church. You can use them to develop your own survey sheet for men in our church.

Write to the Presbyterian Panel, 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202-1396 and ask for the November 1988 and August 1992 reports. Each report costs \$3.

The largest church survey on men to date is the Assemblies of God Men's Survey 1992. Write Ken Riemenschneider, Assemblies of God Men's Ministries, 1445 Boonville Avenue, Springfield, MO 65802.

MEN'S CONCERNS

Five aspects of the current Men's Movement that are worth adopting into men's ministries in the church: by Roy Oswald Alban Institute Journal Sept- Oct '93 p. 9 used by permission.

1. The Men's Movement appears to be addressing the deep psychic pain of twentieth-century men. The question: What does it mean to be a real man among the many conflicting images of men?
2. The Men's Movement is not anti-feminist. Patriarchy and patriarchal systems are immature manifestations of the deep masculine.
3. The Men's Movement helps men connect with other men in positive ways, supporting intentional relationships among men. Through men's colleague groups, the church can engage men at deeper levels.
4. The Men's Movement is forging a pathway for men's journey into wholeness. The old ways of behaving lead men toward denying their wounds yet being inextricably controlled by them.
5. The Men's Movement calls forth a more dynamic relationship between fathers and sons . . . Boys need mentors and rites of passage to manhood . . . Some say the only people initiating boys into man-hood are the leaders of street gangs.

“There is a men's movement going on. We want to make it Christ centered. What does the Lord call us to do?”

A PROGRAM !DEA

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has produced an excellent resource for starting men's Sharing group and it has been endorsed by been other denominations and the North American Conference of Church Men's Staff. Entitled, “MANTALK: Resources for Exploring; Male Issues,” it can be ordered from Presbyterian Publishing House, 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, Kentucky. 40202-1396 (telephone orders 1-800-227-2872)” Price is \$1.25 #Item No. 090306

SPEAK UP!

“Silence is manly, and we are trained to keep our feelings inside. Better a heart attack than speaking openly about a broken heart.” Sam Keen in “Fire In The Belly” (Bantam Books, 1991, p.78)

The current “men's movement” in America is an emerging effort to try and find ways for men to help each other with this problem. In the past men tended to depend solely on their spouse for emotional support, but as women have gained independence, more marriages have failed, and both men and women have married later, it has become increasingly necessary for men to do something about their own emotional life.

What a growing number of men are doing is to join a small group of other men with whom they can at last speak up! These groups take many forms as befitting the wide variety of men involved. They tend to meet regularly and attendance is a high priority. No topics are off limits but it takes lots of time before some topics come up.

One of the toughest topics to really discuss is the source of their very being, God. This “Wholly Other” or “Higher Power” is not the God of church or religion, mediated for these men by outside agencies. Rather, it is where they turn when there is no place left to turn, when they are broken or have hit bottom.

Unfortunately, our churches have often not been safe places for such discussions. Except for Alcoholics Anonymous meetings in the basement, most church activity has not been open to this kind of ultimate searching. We are too quick with answers and unwilling to endure the harsh questions.

We have been particularly slow to deal with issues important to men and their spirituality. A line by Patrick Arnold makes it clear why this is so. He writes,

“Masculine spirituality is all about the heroic, the unique, the extraordinary, the odd, the wild, the unusual, and the individuated, qualities of men seldom affirmed, encouraged, or valued in Platonic Christianity.” (page 22) *Wildmen, Warriors, and Kings* Crossroad, 1991

Arnold goes on to show that the Bible is full of stories on these topics, that we have more than adequate tradition to respond to men at their deepest levels, but that we have often refused to do so. The challenge to the church is to re-discover its deep sources of masculine spirituality and to offer them anew to its men.

STEP FIVE

Men's roles, behaviors and self-understandings are changing. The three great forces which have molded current images of masculinity—the Enlightenment highlighting mind over emotion, the Industrial Revolution which removed men from their homes, and Materialism which measured success by product rather than person—are all under attack.

In their place are new values that seek to see humans as whole beings. Men are rediscovering their feelings, returning to primary relationships and reaffirming their spiritual as well as their material nature. Churches that continue to see men as workers, providers, and patriarchal leaders are missing out on this social revolution.

The final step in getting started with men's ministry locally has to do with insuring that these issues have been raised. Each step has asked for greater inclusion of all men, but this may not have reached beyond traditional audiences.

Begin with men only slightly related to your congregation: members of Twelve Step Programs, Scout leaders, homeless shelter/food line participants, sport team members, community advocacy group members, and men in arts organizations. Include such men in your research. Another group often overlooked are those caught in life situations that might lessen their church involvement: divorced and unemployed men, prisoners and other institutionalized neighbors, sick or shut-in men including AIDS victims, and men whose work schedule keeps them out of town or working at night.

Many aspects of the current men's movement have developed from self-help responses of men to their situation and churches seeking a true men's ministry need to include these men in their plans.

CHECK LIST:

The following chapter headings from "ManTalk" give you a check list to see if you are providing program for men on each topic:

- Fathers and Fathering
- Men and Women
- Men and Friendship
- Success, Power, Competition
- Men and Employment
- Men and Leisure
- Men and Money
- Men and Spirituality
- Men and God Language
- Men's Work

THE THRESHOLD EXPERIENCE

"Out of a formless, uninitiated life there comes a call. The hero is somehow directed beyond the private self on a search, an adventure, toward some transcendent goal. This call can come from within or by the example of circumstances of without, but the would-be hero is enticed by Otherness, by Mystery, by the Holy. This is the first stage of re-birth. It is the threshold experience and at this point our yes takes many forms, but there must be a clear recognition and a clear yes. Many are unfortunately hesitant at this stage. There is no one to tell them what this longing means, where it comes from and where it is leading. How much we are missing because there are so few spiritual directors and guides today!"
(pages 56-57)

*The Wild Man's Journey:
Reflections on Male Spirituality,*
Richard Rohr & Joseph Martos,
St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1992

THE BIG IMPOSSIBLE

"There is a constantly recurring notion that real manhood is different from simple anatomical maleness, that it is not a natural condition that comes about spontaneously through biological maturation but rather is a precarious or artificial state that boys must win against powerful odds...This recurrent notion...is found among the simplest hunters and fishermen, amongst peasants and sophisticated urbanized peoples; it is found in all continents and environments."
(page 11) "Based on stringent standards of accomplishment in tribal affairs and economic pursuits, real manhood is said to be 'The Big Impossible,' an exclusive status that only the nimble few can achieve."
(page 15)

*Manhood In The Making:
Cultural Concepts of Masculinity*
David D. Gilmore
Yale University Press, 1990

- Masculinity
- Manhood
- Men's Health
- Growing Up Male
- Men and Mid-Life
- Men and Aging
- Men and Sexuality
- Violence Against Women
- Child Abuse
- Men and Families

GROWTH

Church growth is not primarily focused on numbers, it is primarily focused on results. It develops what Lyle Schaller calls a “market driven congregation” (*The Seven Day A Week Church* p.81). It focuses on the needs of the people to be reached rather than the people doing the reaching.

The same distinction holds true for growing a men’s ministry. It has to focus at least as much on the needs of its potential members as on those of its long time members. That is why these resources suggest taking the time to get all men involved in the design process. And it is why men’s work offices are talking about the importance of developing a “core group” of fresh leadership. Leaders are needed who want to focus on the needs of men and getting results in a men’s ministry rather than on what once worked in the past. Where is our core of growing men?

If growth is to occur, the men who make up your core group need to reflect the following characteristics:

1. Two to five of the most respected, Spirit-filled men in the congregation; men who care about others as much as themselves.
2. Men from differing age groups and sectors of the membership who can still get along with each other.
3. Men willing to make a three to five year commitment to providing the leadership needed until new leaders can be developed (This time commitment is critical for the program to mature).
4. Men with ministry to men on their hearts who are willing to step aside as new leaders emerge and the program develops.

More will be said about leadership later (Module 11) but it arises here in relationship to the development of your Core Group. While current officers in your existing program may be in the Core Group, what needs to characterize their new efforts is a willingness to change and a hunger for new growth and results.

EXPAND YOUR CORE!

Like a tree growing, it is now time to add circles of new life to the few men at the core of your efforts. But what kind of organization will do that? Here are five directions in which your planners can look. Each suggestion will be given a full page later on but is briefly outlined here to show how a Core Group could help each type of organization grow.

1. Support or Covenant Groups. Such groups have a specific and clear focus or purpose. They are often small, meet regularly, and have high commitment to regular attendance. They seldom have officers or budgets and organize only enough to meet their objectives. Members of your Core Group could each start a covenant group around the variety of options in your vision statement and provide a rich variety of program options for your men.

2. Project or Task Groups. Draws on a larger pool of men to help accomplish a specific task or mission, these groups may have short tenure and reform themselves repeatedly as needs arise. It is important for some men to serve as task leaders and often a member of your Core Group accepts this assignment.

3. Fellowship or Response Groups. These are traditional men’s groups with a difference. They form to respond to a variety of purposes and members join for different reasons. They often elect officers and have budgets and committees. A meal or refreshments is often served. Core Group members often start as officers and move on to lead response teams as a variety of activities emerge. The difference today is that they organize to be able to respond to differing needs of the church’s mission, their fellowship is outwardly directed as well as personally satisfying.

4. Cooperative Clusters. Small churches may have too few men to maintain a group; large churches may need to integrate a number of men’s activities under a committee’s oversight. Such situations call for cooperation and several churches or groups may work together in men’s ministry. Core Group members get such cooperation started and train their replacements so they can move on to new tasks.

5. Quality Time. Many men report that they are unable to commit to a regular men’s program. Several plans have evolved to help out in such situations by providing men with quality time programs but each design requires Core Group members to start the process using short term planning teams.

STEP SIX

These materials choose a “systems approach” to organization, looking first at input (what is available), seeing the purpose of the organization as change and growth (transformation), and putting the emphasis on output (results obtained). This seems closest to a biblical model in which life change and growth are goals sought. It sees leadership as everything facilitating this process.

A variety of organizational structures are suggested (see Modules 7-10); you will need to create a variation that fits your needs. Remember to keep a balance between task and process in your design, between getting the job done and having a good time doing it. Remember also that evaluation is an ongoing tool of growth; individuals need regular chances to give input.

Using the strategic planning steps and trends listed in Module 4, your core group is ready now to set some clear steps to get results. They need to review the vision statements created by your men, evaluate your current church and community situation, study the options for organization in this manual, and look at their own interests and energies for the job.

Then they need to make choices, try options, and consider results. Their goal is growth, change, transformation. Young men in “Project E.D.E.N.” asked that the church hear their concerns as it developed new men’s programming. If your growth goals are to include younger men you might review the points they made (see “A Program Idea”):

1. “The Bible must always begin or add to the discussion of life issues, not end that discussion.”
2. “There can be no free men until there are free women...We must work together.”
3. “We need a church where all members are taught that they have a ministry—since we are all ministers in the eyes of God.”
4. “The church’s goals have been distorted so that happiness is sought rather than justice.”

CHECK LIST:

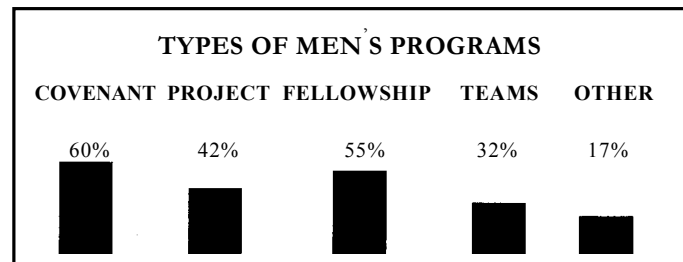
- ___ Previously developed goals and objectives (vision statements) are available and familiar to planners.
- ___ A planning process has been chosen (steps and dates set).
- ___ The various options have been considered fairly and choices have been made and leadership assigned.
- ___ Experimental designs have been tried and evaluated. A “growth” model has emerged.

ARE WE GROWING?

Interest in ministry with men is certainly growing. Numerous inquiries, opportunities for leadership training, and requests for resources suggest growth to denominational leaders.

Yet statistics from two Stated Clerk’s reports (1988 and 1990) show a consistent 30% of churches reporting men’s program. Two samplings from the Presbyterian Panel (1988 and 1992) report almost half of all Presbyterian churches as having a men’s program. Why the discrepancy?

When asked about different kinds of men’s program formats a clue began to emerge. About 55% of reporting groups listed traditional monthly fellowship groups as the format while a full 60% said they now had some form of weekly men’s gathering. Usually small, informal, and often meeting in early morning, these small Bible study, prayer and support fellowships have become the dominant style of new men’s ministry. Often they may fail to organize officially or show up on the Stated Clerk’s report.



In a Presbyterian Panel (August 1992) report almost half of all clergy agreed that “in general, the church is ‘out of touch’ with the men of today,” and even more agreed that “most young men do not consider the church a top priority in their lives.” Support for a ministry with men increased from 60% to 80% and a clear intention to grow in this area is noted. Getting pastors and churches “in touch” with their men, especially younger men, is the challenge before us.

SUPPORT GROUPS

A group in Binghamton, New York meets regularly to discuss a single significant word chosen in advance. A group in La Junta, Colorado formed the 635 Club (Thursdays at 6:35 a.m. to discover the gospel promise in John 6:35). A group of business men in Ann Arbor, Michigan meet weekly for intercessory prayer and lunch together. A group in Texas gather at the church each Saturday morning to work on projects needing doing that week in the church "family." Characteristic of all these groups is high mutual support, regular attendance, and pride in accomplishment. These high pay-off, personally supportive groups are the fastest growing type of men's group in the church today.

The men who join them are committed to the community that exists in their group. This commitment shows up in regular attendance, in honest sharing, and in availability to one another beyond meeting times. Members often share similar personal characteristics: a common problem (self-help groups), a common concern (parenting groups), or a common goal (new friendships). Bill Kauth in *A Circle of Men* (St. Martin's Press, 1992) says an ideal number is nine, that men of similar age and temperament develop best as a group, and that willingness to confront conflict, live in the present moment, and accept responsibility for personal feelings and actions all are marks of helpful members. He points out that these characteristics are often best found in existing organizations such as a church or synagogue.

Important to such groups is creation of a "safe space" where all of life can be explored openly and a sense of ongoing community can emerge. Group norms including confidentiality, participation expectations, and respect for differences must all be clearly understood. Essential is group assent of all members as to length of time commitment (six weeks for developing a single skill, six months for basic bonding, a year or more for real intimacy), frequency and length of meetings, and expectations. Praying out loud and Bible study add great depth to such groups but must be recognized as emerging abilities and not required skills.

Such groups have a clear and articulated focus to which members can give assent. In doing so they "covenant" with one another to move toward this goal. Organizational needs are limited to getting this goal met; leadership is often rotated among members. Meeting places need to be at least semi-private and quiet enough for all to hear easily. Once formed, the group may choose not to advertise its existence. A meal is often included.

CUT A COVENANT

Can We Trust Each Other?

Former Pastor Advisor to Presbyterian Men, Louis Evans, Jr. developed a Communion Breakfast Studies program around the theme of his book, "Covenant To Care." In it he listed the following Principles of Covenant Groups.

1. The covenant of affirmation (there is nothing you have done or will do that will make me stop loving you).
2. The covenant of availability (anything I have, including regular time commitments, is at your disposal if you need it).
3. The covenant of prayer (I covenant to pray for you in some regular fashion).
4. The covenant of openness (I need you and will seek to open myself to your help).
5. The covenant of honesty (I will trust our relationship enough to risk pain for either of us).
6. The covenant of sensitivity (I will try to hear you, see you, feel you and draw you out to the best of my abilities).
7. The covenant of confidentiality (I will maintain an atmosphere of openness by keeping what I hear within the group).
8. The covenant of accountability (I will seek Christ's liberating power through my covenant partners in all my limitations).

Studying these eight principles have served many groups as the basis for their first times together. Many husband and wife teams have found them invaluable. The Biblical notion of "cutting" a covenant (see Jeremiah 34:18f. and 31:3-34) is given con-temporary definition in Evans' fine book.

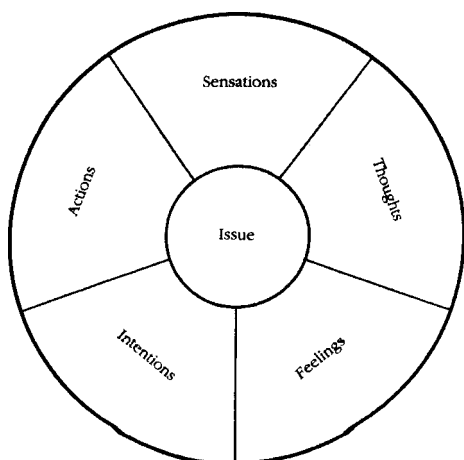
A CARING OPTION

Your church men may not be ready to start off with support groups. You can begin where you are by using ice breakers (see A Program Idea) and setting goals, using good group process (see module 3) and dividing up into pairs and triads for discussions.

Presbyterian Women chose long ago to include both small groups (circles) and large groups (associations) in their designs. As we seek to reach out to a variety of men the logic of this choice becomes clear. Not all men are alike nor in the same circumstances. Starting a support group can be one option of many for your men.

The Communion Breakfast Studies produced by Presbyterian Men include a video to be shown to a large group at a Communion Breakfast event and then include a study booklet with questions for discussion that lends itself to smaller circles of men. Write Presbyterian Men, 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202-1396 for a listing of these study materials. *Putting Our Lives On The Line: A Challenge Book For Men* (DMS #304-91-902 from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), call toll free 800-524-2612) by Edward A. White, has seventeen small group exercises and case studies on finding our ministries in the world of work.

As you develop the small support group option remember to include the whole man in your sharing: emotions, sensations, and intuitions as well as insights and interpretations. In *Toughtalk* (Presbyterian Publishing House #18092003, toll free 800-227-2872) author Joe E. Leonard, Jr. asks men to answer questions from the full range of "The Sharing Circle" by giving sensations, thoughts, feelings, intentions and actions related to a given topic. It is amazing how deeply this process takes a discussion in a short time.



THE SHARING CIRCLE

HELPFUL RESOURCES

Bill Kauth's *A Circle of Men: The Original Manual For Men's Support Groups*, St. Martin's Press, New York 1992, has been widely used for some years in mimeo-graphed versions passed from group to group. It is a fine collection of secular wisdom about small support groups for men.

A recent small booklet from Serendipity House (P.O. Box 1012, Littleton, CO 80160) entitled *Beginning A Men's Group: Six Sessions—on Men's Issues* is a helpful new resource which includes an Ice Breaker, Bible Study and Caring Time for each of its six sessions.

Part II of Roy M. Oswald's look at the men's movement in the Alban Institute's *Congregations* magazine (November—December 1992) makes a very forceful argument for support groups having a designated facilitator who maintains firm leadership. It is important reading for folks setting up small groups.

Tom Owen-Towle is a Unitarian pastor who has been working with small groups on men's spirituality for years. His book, *Brother—Spirit: Men Joining Together in the Quest for Intimacy and Ultimacy* (Bald Eagle Mountain Press, P.O. Box 4314, San Diego, CA 92164) is a gold mine of quotes, suggestions, themes and Bible passages for use in men's support groups.

The Christian Reformed Church, through its Church Development Resources, 2850 Kalamazoo Avenue SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49560, has developed a fine set of biblically based small group resources for men entitled *Men's Life*. Call toll free 800-777-7270, in Canada 416-336-2920.

A PROGRAM IDEA

Serendipity calls them "ice breakers" and Bill Kauth calls them "rounds" but whatever you call them, most groups begin with a quick check-in time by each member. It helps if the designated leader has developed some "wild cards" for suggesting a way to go around the circle such as, "What is the most positive thing that happened to you this week?" or "Share one of the most scary (or sad, or joyous) times you ever had." These can take up all the time so put a five minute limit on responses

PROJECT GROUPS

Parkland Presbyterian Men adopted a highway clean up assignment in Michigan. Men from Jamestown, North Carolina, Florence, South Carolina, and Bluefield, West Virginia raised \$3,500 at an auction and fiesta dinner and sent it and a work party of men to Mexico to build a needed clinic in four days. Numerous groups responded to Hurricane Andrew in Florida with supplies, labor and ongoing support. Some of these work projects become long term commitments through organizations like Habitat for Humanity, others are one time efforts.

Usually a few men keep such projects going while many chip in from time to time to get the actual work done. Many men like to work with their hands and men's groups often do regular church repairs, offer help to elderly homeowners in the congregation or neighborhood, or take responsibility for a cabin at a church camp. Fund raisers collect money to buy materials and cover travel costs. Participants often expand to include family members or youth groups in their work. Men with particular skills train others and take leadership in task groups.

In *Men Respond: When Disaster Strikes* Eric Harrison of Pittsburgh Presbytery told how their men's council used an existent grouping of men (Project Task Force) to respond quickly to a West Virginia flood. He pointed out the three essential ingredients for such quick and effective action: (1) a prior commitment to render assistance when asked, (2) use of churches as in-place collection points for goods and funds, and (3) a communications network in place by which many could be quickly contacted. Any group of men could prepare themselves in these ways and be ready "when disaster strikes." Are you so prepared? Project groups can go beyond physical labor. Scouting committees, sport teams or musical groups, religious days and seasonal celebrations, and fund raising projects all involve large numbers of short term participants and a few dedicated planners and facilitators. Churches depend on the volunteer involvement of all of their members.

PRAY WITH YOUR HANDS!

Millard Fuller, the founder of Habitat for Humanity, reminds us that the Bible says, "Our love should not be just words and talk; it must be true love, which shows itself in action." (I John 3:18, *Love in the Mortar Joints* Association Press, 1980). Project groups not only help others, the participants grow in faith and love as well. A side of men often hidden by work or responsibility comes out when they have a chance to get personally involved and invest themselves for others.

In *The Skills of Helping* (Human Resource Development Press, 1979) Robert Carkhuff and William Anthony make a point often overlooked by project groups. They say that "helping is a developmental process." (p. 11) and then go on to spell out the steps needed for a real helping relationship to bear fruit. These involve preparing oneself to fully attend to the person(s) to be helped so as "to promote greater help involvement and to gather important information about the helpee." (p.31) Projects which relate people in need with helpers become opportunities for growth and sharing in both parties involved. Workers need to learn about the situation they are entering, respect those in that situation, and bring from the experience greater understanding of the lives of those they helped. Planners for a project group must remember to build in this human component as well as seeing that the task gets done. Times for learning about the situation to be entered and celebrating completion with those helped are important to the planning process.

Presbyterian Men have made "water projects" a focus of their work in recent years. Improving the supply and quality of water are key issues for much of the world. As a part of this process a program called "Fasting, Sharing, Praying" has developed in which men fast for one meal a week, send the money saved to a needed project, and use the meal time to meditate and pray. It is in this meditation time that the power of the project has been realized! We are more than helping hands, we are praying hands as well. For more information about water projects see *A Cup of Cold Water* by David Douglas (PPH # 18090304, Publishing House, call 800-227-2872) and for a flyer on "Fasting, Sharing, Praying" contact Presbyterian Men, 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202-1396.

"TO HELP, TO SERVE, TO CARE, TO GUIDE, TO HEAL, THESE WORDS WERE ALL USED TO EXPRESS A REACHING OUT TOWARD OUR NEIGHBOR WHEREBY WE PERCEIVE LIFE AS A GIFT NOT TO POSSESS BUT TO SHARE."

Reaching Out p. 78
Henri J.M. Nouwen
Doubleday & Co. 1975

A HELPFUL OPTION

Getting men involved in helpful projects is not really an option, church men are usually so involved. Building these temporary projects into a ministry with men involves a leadership plan (see 6) and a regular way of recruiting participants. The importance of such projects should not be underestimated; church attendance increases when men organize an attendance drive, financial campaign results improve when men are specifically recruited to assist, and thousands of dollars are saved when men volunteer their labor for maintenance projects.

Planning such projects for men should be done in cooperation with the pastor and session and should complement the overall mission of the congregation. A long range goal should be to involve every man in some kind of project or mission activity each year. To this end many churches develop a talent bank of skills and interests. An old adage goes, "Use a man or lose a man. "An invaluable aid in developing mission projects is the yearly

Mission Yearbook for Prayer and Study or similar resource from your denomination. It describes hundreds of mission projects by presbytery, synod and country. In addition, most denominations have Volunteer in Mission programs as well as Disaster Response offices.

Leaders of service projects need to study the requirements of a task or service and determine the capacity of the men in the church to respond, obtain the necessary authorizations, recruit and train participants, and see that the service is performed, fully completed, and appropriately celebrated. Often a project emerges from presentations by spokespeople for local mission or community groups and a church needs to develop a program schedule that includes such presentations on a regular basis.

Significant background information about project needs has to be current and available. Many congregations or men's programs have a person with this assignment, often a Vice President for Mission. See the address list for ways to tie your men into denominational training and preparations.

". . . for the
equipment of
the saints,
for the work
of ministry,
for building
up the
body of Christ."

VOCATIONAL VOLUNTEERS

The Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission has developed fourteen "ministries in the market-place" by using people's vocational skills. These National Fellowships (of performing Artist, of Veterinarians, of Agriculturalists, etc.) are knit into a powerful network of mission work and support holding their own conferences and training. Other denominations are mirroring this kind of volunteer service based on vocation as an ecumenical effort. To explore your vocational ministries or find out more about the Baptist plan, write The National Fellowship of Baptists in Mission, 1548 Poplar Avenue, Memphis, TN 38104-2493.

HELPFUL ADDRESSES

Disaster Response Office,
John Robinson
(telephone 502-569-5797)

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
100 Witherspoon Street
Louisville, KY 40202-1396

National Volunteers
Nancy Cavalcante
788-728-7228 x 5280

Habitat for Humanity
419 W. Church Street
Americus, GA 31709
Telephone 912-924-6935

Literacy Volunteers of America
5795 S. Widewaters Parkway
Syracuse, NY 13214
Telephone 315-445-8000

Constructores Para Cristo
3004 Seventh Avenue
South Birmingham, AL 35233
Telephone 205-251-2233

Presbyterian Border Ministries
Gerald F. Stacey
7201 Broadway
San Antonio, TX 78209
Telephone 512-826-3296

A PROGRAM IDEA

Visits to social service agencies, neighborhood houses, shelters for battered women or homeless people all make interesting and helpful programs for men and open up the possibilities of their involvement in much needed projects of support. A short term series of such visits can enrich a church's program and might be done in cooperation with Presbyterian Women.

FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

In 1968 a study entitled, “The Future Involvement of Men in the Presbyterian Church in the United States” found “fellowship” as the leading purpose given for men’s work and listed two major needs: to be equipped for mission in the world and to be involved in that mission. Little has changed! Fellowship is still the most often stated reason for a men’s ministry and mission is still the declared need.

Fellowship groups remain the most visible part of men’s ministry in many churches. They tend to meet monthly, to have officers and a treasury, and to carry on a diverse program. And they are still being challenged to respond to the needs of the world through mission.

But they are changing in two ways. First, they are often not the ONLY men’s ministry program—being joined by a men’s Bible class, sports team, support group, scout troop, or project team. Second, they are increasingly seen as the “launching pad” for these other kinds of men’s program. For example, The most exciting plan for such spin-offs is the “Lead Team Approach” developed by New Providence men in Maryville, Tennessee. A smaller group of men who enjoyed each others fellowship agreed that they would meet regularly and plan program (fellowship together) as long as the rest of the men in the church would give time and effort when asked. This has led to a dynamic program with many facets including a team that serves dinner to the congregation every Sunday after church and has even produced a cookbook! A few men who like to meet and plan have freed up many men to take their turn on worthwhile projects. They brag that they have never turned down a request for help.

Even this is not “new.” A 1953 issue of “Presbyterian MEN,” the official mens newsletter of the Presbyterian Church U.S., told about the Fountain City men in nearby Knoxville who cheerfully organized what they called “sub-clubs” at the drop of a hat. They had one for Past-presidents, for Fishermen, for Grandfathers, etc. Men are endlessly creative in ways to organize for fellowship together!

RAPID RESPONSE TEAMS

In reading men’s resources from the past as back-ground for writing this manual it was clear that the key to successful men’s program over the years has not been organization *per se* but has been the creative ability of men to RESPOND to opportunities for service. When a spark has been struck, often by the prompting of one or two men and the encouragement of the minister, a blazing fire of activity results.

The reverse is equally true. A men’s fellowship group that is unable to respond to opportunity becomes a liability to the church and even to the men involved! The goal of a men’s fellowship group today has to be “rapid response” in the style of most effective helping organizations. This means having officers who can spot an opportunity, a plan to mobilize men quickly, and a prior commitment of men to get involved when invited. It also involves pride in the group’s ability to get things done, a track record of successes.

A group of retired men in Florida meet for breakfast each Saturday and move on to golf, but over breakfast they plan out their week’s involvement in local mission projects. A group in Jeffersontown, Kentucky meet every other week for dinner with a primary item of business being a review of requests for home maintenance help submitted by members no longer able to keep up their homes. The key to success in these kinds of fellowship groups is the ability to respond quickly and effectively to calls for help. Pastors soon learn to depend on a group that asks what needs doing and gets it done!

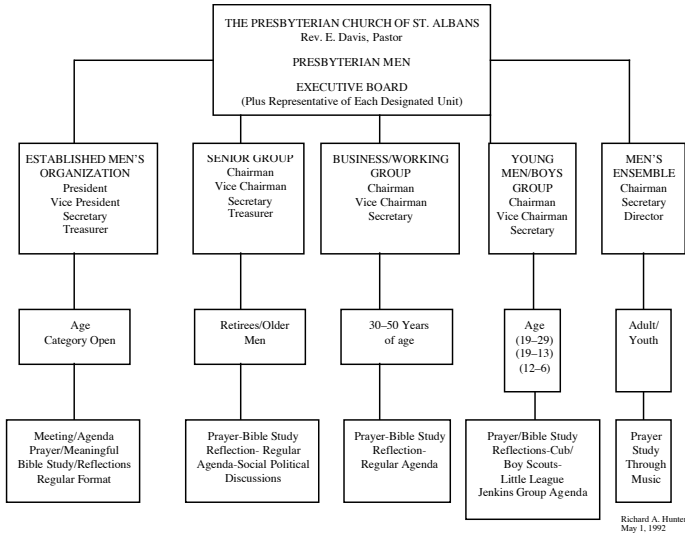
What Is Your Response Ability?

A critical part of this process of rapid response is being “in the loop” at church and in the presbytery. Presbyterian Men have evolved an organization locally and nationally which is made up of representatives tied together in a communications network. Churches which charter their men’s ministry with Presbyterian Men receive the quarterly newsletter, *Presbyterian Men in ACTION*, a quarterly packet of most recent materials, *MANPAC*, and opportunities for participation in presbytery, synod and national leadership training events (see Module 19). These (Congregational, Presbytery, and Synod) Representatives seek membership on official councils or committees in order to know the evolving mission of the church.

THE FRIENDLY OPTION

The great advantage of this friendly choice is that it can include the other options within its plans. Vice Presidents for Mission, for Events or Programs, and for Membership can facilitate this many-pronged program. To illustrate how one church has developed this concept, here is the organization plan for the St. Albans church on Long Island:

You will note that audiences and objectives are spelled out on the St. Albans chart. This is one way a church session can see that its ministry with men is inclusive of all the men in its care.



Former national president John Hamil likes to say that a group only meets for two necessary tasks, to set goals and allocate resources. As your group evolves its optimum plan of operations you will want to create a simple set of by-laws. Keep them simple and flexible and be sure that a plan for leadership rotation and interim succession at the top is included. For a model, request a copy of the current bylaws of the National Council of Presbyterian Men.

CHECK LIST:

- ___ An agreed upon time, place and frequency of meetings plan has been accepted by a majority.
- ___ A nominating committee has been appointed and officer position descriptions designed.
- ___ Job descriptions (see Module 16) have been shared. Elections have been held.
- ___ Officers installed in a church service
- ___ New officers have held a "retreat" with the pastor to plan out their first series of meetings
- ___ An experimental meeting agenda has been evolved and is being tested; sub-groups are being explored.

AN ACTION AGENDA

Question: What is usually more boring and a waste of time than a business session in a men's meeting?

Answer: Nothing!

This painful "joke" hides a real truth; business meetings can drive away participants. The following suggested "ten commandments" from National President Charles Easley may help you put "action" into the business part of your meeting.

1. Begin on time and stay on time. Refer items rather than referee long involved arguments.
2. Leave most items of routine business to the executive committee and task team leaders. Do not waste program time ironing out details and discussing trivia.
3. At the same time, be sure minutes of ALL meetings are kept and publicly shared with members (a Men's Activity board at church is a good place to post minutes along with photographs of recent work). Read the minutes and ASK for questions. Let responsible people answer the questions.
4. Work by consensus on easy issues and vote only when necessary to resolve an issue.
5. Ask each officer or leader ahead of time to bring in a written report of progress for the minutes.
6. Separate out "Action" items and deal with them after adequate preparation and discussion time have been docketed.
7. Never steal from planned program time; singing, worship, bible study and the evening program have priority over business.
8. On issues of importance divide up into smaller discussion groups for preliminary sharing, receive reports from groups, then open up general discussion of key matters.
9. Evaluate programs, celebrate successes, thank participants.
10. Post the agenda in advance so people know when they are "on" and then stick with the schedule.

A PROGRAM IDEA

The United Methodist Men have developed a rich twenty hour program to help a men's fellowship deepen its spiritual foundations over a half year period. It is entitled "A Spiritual Journey for Men" and is produced by The Upper Room, 1908 Grand Avenue, PO. Box 189, Nashville, Tennessee 37202-0189.

TIME MANAGEMENT

Is men's work a waste of time? The answer to that question is the issue of time management. Many men's programs have wasted time in the past and as time becomes an increasingly limited resource for many, men's work joins many other activities in coming under scrutiny.

At work, at school and even in home economics, the question of time management has become a big topic. Numerous workshops ask people to set priorities and eliminate unnecessary activities. Setting goals and meeting real needs are central to an effective program.

One time management course lists 37 Time-wasters in seven areas of organizational life. Here are a few: waiting for all the facts before deciding, failure to really listen, overlooking poor performance, ineffectual delegation or "doing it myself," inadequate training, duplication of effort, unrealistic time estimates.

Successful men's ministry increasingly tries to do the most with the limited time men have to give. This may mean fewer events with better planning. It may mean trusting a few to plan for many others. It may mean providing a choice of activities to meet a variety of individual needs. It most certainly means evaluating the quality and quantity of what is being done with an eye toward improvement.

In many situations a consolidation of effort pays off. Churches or groups can work together to get a project done or a program offered. Such a cluster approach has been used successfully in the Adams-Brown County Presbyterian Men in Ohio and the West Virginia Mountain Project in Coal River Valley. A number of presbyteries have men's events for their churches even when no local men's groups are organized. Colorado men hold a yearly retreat, a Valentine Dinner, and a Communion Breakfast for all their churches; the Synod of Puerto Rico "Hombres Presbiterianos" holds a family rally.

Are We on the Move?

Time management means managing wisely the time available. If no organized men's ministry is in place then this task falls to the session or appointed committee. If a men's program is in place but few are attending or many are complaining then this oversight body has to ask why. Simply saying that men's ministry is a waste of time is not enough!

QUALITY TIME

Recent men's literature is full of the need for more "quality time"—with children, with fathers, with spouses, with other men. It seems as though all of the shallow relationships of the past need to be deepened at once! In the regular surveys Presbyterian Men have been conducting, "family concerns" has replaced "bible study" as the primary topic for a men's program (Presbyterian Panel, November 1988).

Many efforts have been made to meet this growing need for quality time in the lives of men. A Roman Catholic father reported with pride that he took his young daughter to a father-daughter club at their church each Saturday. Ghost Ranch Conference Center has sponsored a father-son wilderness exploration every Columbus Day weekend.

Take The Time!

All of this is men's ministry in the broadest context. It strengthens men's lives and helps them live out their male roles more creatively and comfortably. The men's movement in America (see Module 5) focuses this need for quality time on male relationships with other males. The characteristic common to all of this is a focusing of time and energy on a high commitment relationship in order to improve it. Many men's groups have held traditional father-son or sweetheart dinners which celebrate existing relationships; these newer efforts begin there and move into much deeper and more demanding efforts.

Some men resist this trend and look to their men's organization as a place to affirm their comfortable if shallow "maleness." They dislike efforts at sharing their feelings and exploring their relationships. This is another reason for multiple programming for men; those who are hesitant need not limit the progress of those seeking more openness. One men's group has a large fellowship breakfast on Saturday morning and then divides into numerous sub-groups to meet more specific needs.

OTHER OPTIONS

A review of “Presbyterian Men in ACTION” and other newsletters for the past few years reveals an amazing variety of unconventional men’s programming. It can not be categorized nor contained; men are endlessly creative when it comes to organizing. Here are a few of the more interesting examples:

1. A “Grand Weekend” or “Grand Tour” in which grandparents take their grandchildren for a trip and some special time together.
2. A “circle” in the church’s Presbyterian Women organization, but for men!
3. A men’s Bible class in Virginia that tape recorded its class sessions, including the gossip and jokes, for a shut-in member.
4. A men’s bake sale in Lexington, Kentucky which raised \$1100 to support a Love Fund at the local Day Care Center.
5. Mackinaw Presbytery men joined with their youth groups to host ten high school guests from Russia.
6. Elkin Church men in North Carolina started a “Partners In Recycling” program that recycled over twelve thousand pounds of materials from church families.
7. Valley Presbyterian men in Pennsylvania held a widely advertised yearly “Mission Auction” which raised funds (\$25,000!) for eleven local mission organizations.
8. Pittsburgh men operated Project Garden 5,000 at their presbytery camp and worked with campers to raise 1,000 pounds of potatoes and many bushels of corn for the area food banks.
9. In Waterford, Connecticut the pastor preached on various timely topics and a local layman skilled in that field would be asked to lead a post-sermon discussion and critique.
10. Beaver-Butler Presbytery men operated an employment information network called The Presbyterian Men’s Helpline to support those who are unemployed and their families.
11. In an effort to reach out to younger men the Elmwood men in East Orange, New Jersey held a Jazz Symposium with music and speakers that would attract young music lovers in the area.

A PROGRAM IDEA

Invite a time management expert to guide your men in evaluating their daily schedules. In small groups discuss the need for time for family, for self, for volunteering, for church and men’s work. Readjust your schedules to meet these goals and team up to hold each other accountable for experimenting with the revised plans.

MEN-TORING

“So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our very selves...” *Thessalonians 2:8*

Several African American congregations have taken the lead on developing mentoring programs with younger men and boys as a way of caring deeply for these youths in difficult times. This “mentoring” is often mentioned as a high priority for developing “new” men for a changing society. It picks up an ancient practice of initiating men into manhood by older men and uses it in new and creative ways for today.

The Long Island paper, NEWSDAY, reported on the men of Roosevelt Memorial Church and a program they devised to give six months of “manhood training” to 27 boys in their neighborhood. Grace Hope Church in Louisville developed a “Wings To Soar” program to unite 100 young and adult African-American men in a program of activities, education and inspiration.

Jawanza Kunjufu has written a number of books such as *Developing Positive Self-Images & Discipline in Black Children* (African-American Images, Chicago 1984) which give excellent background for a mentoring program. A key book is *Nurturing Young Black Males* by Ronald B. Mincy, Editor (The Urban Institute Press, Washington, D.C. 1994).

Several churches and presbyteries have developed variations on the Ghost Ranch Father-Son Wilderness Exploration plan as a way to give quality time to father and son teams. Maryville Church in Tennessee held a “Boyz To Men” weekend and matched up men without sons and sons without fathers in addition to family teams. A useful book which puts mentoring into Christian context is *The Fine Art of Mentoring* by Ted W. Engstrom with Norman B. Rohrer (Wolgemuth & Hyatt, Publishers, Inc., Brentwood, Tennessee, 1989).

LEADERSHIP

Whatever organizational model is adopted, it will need leadership. Often your core group of men meet this need at first. But you should start at once looking for and developing future leaders. Look for the kind of men listed in “The ‘I’s Have It: Servant Leaders.” They will not step forward, they are already personally fulfilled and busy. Look especially among younger men for those who pay attention to children, those who are not afraid to be involved in community issues, those who make you feel comfortable when you meet them.

A group needs several kinds of leaders. It needs the designated leader who speaks up, gets things going, and keeps things on track. It needs leaders with special skills, those who can lead a building crew, balance a budget, or those who are strong Bible teachers. Finally, a group needs community leaders, people who can put others at ease, those who can arrange a party or bring out the voices of silent members. Everyone in a group can help with some part of the leadership task and should be asked to do so. **EACH PERSON ON THE MEMBERSHIP LIST SHOULD BE SOMEWHERE ON A LEADERSHIP LADDER (See “A Program Idea”).**

Am I Leader ?

Several rules for designated leaders are helpful. Each person asked to lead should be asked to pick his successor as soon as possible. This person should be his assistant and “shadow” him to learn the job. Leaders should be rotated often, perhaps as often as every six months. Those who get work done should be asked to do new and more challenging work. Creativity should be encouraged by setting up short term committees or teams with clear assignments and by keeping all-group business time to a minimum.

THE “I”s HAVE IT!

Former pastor advisor Dr. Donald Buteyn’s ten “I” statements remain the most helpful descriptive terms to pass on to men who aspire to be SERVANT LEADERS:

- 1. Intentional.** Following Christ (cf. Philippians 2:3–8), men who would lead need to let all of the aspects of their lives focus on God’s will for us.
- 2. Identify.** Mother Teresa is a model of servant leadership because she so clearly identifies the Christ in each dying beggar she met. (cf. Matthew 25:37–40).
- 3. Incarnational.** Christ made the presence of God real in everyday life, in his own body. Incarnational leaders are not “spiritual” in an otherworldly sense, they bring Spirit into this world (cf. John 1:1–18).
- 4. Inclusive.** It has been said that “The closer we come to Christ, the closer we come to each other.” In Ephesians 2 we are told that Christ has “broken down the dividing wall.”
- 5. Invitational.** Again and again, it is the hospitality of God that is the focus of the Gospel (cf. Matthew 11:28–30). Leadership means saying for Christ, “Come!”
- 6. Involved.** To serve IS to be involved, to pay attention (cf. John 13:1–17). A church leader needs to stay intimately involved with those who follow.
- 7. Intuitive.** A devout Catholic Sister, Dorothy Donnely, says Christ gives true disciples a new “see level.” Christ saw deeply into people (cf. John 1:35–51) and we must take the time to do the same.
- 8. Intimate.** The Good Samaritan not only saw and stopped, he touched with compassion (cf. Luke 10:25–37). To lead in Christ’s name is to reach out and touch with love.
- 9. Integrity.** A leader is someone you can depend upon, a person whose inner and outer lives are together. II Corinthians 6 reads “We are putting no obstacle in anyone’s way.”
- 10. Interpersonal.** True change comes about through deep encounters with others. Jesus accepted each person who came to him (cf. John 4:1–26) and so must we.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Administering a men's ministry is not a one person job. Leadership needs to be shared with a group of other dedicated men and this often takes the form of an executive committee. Elsewhere in this manual you will find job descriptions for designated officers. But these jobs are not isolated assignments; they are part of a whole leadership team that works together for the good of the whole program.

Your PRESIDENT or moderator is key here; his primary tasks are introducing business, delegating responsibilities, monitoring progress, maintaining accountability and rewarding success. All of these are team tasks. He builds his agenda out of what he picks up from others, especially other officers. He chooses the best people to get jobs done while spreading the work as equally as possible. He stays in personal touch with his team and offers encouragement, support and reward lavishly. In group meetings he lets his team members "star" and he looks for opportunities where each of them can grow. If problems arise he gives them personal attention, often in close cooperation with the pastor.

The Executive Committee has the task of choosing what items need the attention of the full membership or of assigned committees. Their goal is to keep the process open without letting business items overwhelm the mission and program goals of the organization. If a business matter leads to confusion, disagreement, or resistance in the membership it is usually wise to return it to committee for review and revision. Then the task of officers is to listen carefully for voices of dissent and to consider seriously their questions.

It is generally good policy for an executive committee to discuss issues until they can stand united on them in larger gatherings. An active moderator will expect their support in public and their honest critique in committee reviews. He will stay in regular contact with the pastor and session of the church so that men's ministry issues become integrated with church policy and mission. He will stay informed about community and denominational topics of concern so that his organization remains responsive to the world.

TWO GOOD RESOURCES

American Baptist Men have a four video Team Builder Series on leadership. Video Two is entitled "Styles of Leadership." It can be ordered from American Baptist Men, P.O. Box 851, Valley Forge, PA 19482-0851.

The Disciples of Christ have a set of overhead transparencies on leadership in wonderful cartoon form. They can be ordered from Disciples Men, P.O. Box 1986, Indianapolis, IN 46206. Always credit them as follows: Artwork by Bruce Tilsley, Disciples of Christ.

A PROGRAM IDEA

Go around the group asking each person to identify his current Leadership Ladder Location (see text). What leadership is he presently providing and what are his next steps for growth? If a person feels he has no current leadership role take the time to find out what he would like to be doing and set up an opportunity for him to start.

GROWING NEW LEADERS

Nothing is more important than leadership development. Look for training opportunities and growth experiences for your members. Challenge men to try new areas of leadership. Recognize work well done and offer to help those who are struggling. When a person becomes skillful suggest his name to nominating committees for other kinds of leadership opportunities in the church and community. Open doors of opportunity for one another. Send men away to training centers and motivational seminars. If you are not personally growing, you are probably not leading others to growth!

THE PASTOR

Realization of the importance of the bond between pastor and men is at the heart of all the organizing suggestions in this manual (see especially Modules 1–4). The present Minister Members of Presbyterian Men have the following suggestions for carrying out their roles:

1. It must be clearly recognized that a men's ministry is dependent on the efforts of lay church men and not of the pastor. The advice, counsel and support of the pastor is needed but the pastor is not responsible for making it work.
2. Much of the pastor's role takes place between meetings: encouraging officers, opening opportunities for men's involvement, helping with personality conflicts, and connecting men's leaders with denominational resources.
3. The pastor should be an ex officio member of any men's organization and encouraged to attend meetings, not only for official duties but also for fellowship and pastoral opportunities. Pastors can lead devotions and give prayers but they also enjoy hearing and seeing men lead in these ways.
4. The successful men's organization will be an extension of the church's ministry and mission. It is responsible to the session and under its direction and oversight. The pastor often embodies this relationship but needs to encourage others to represent it as well.
5. A key role for pastors is "the gift of discernment." How do they see things, assess progress or problems, and open doors? As one minister member wrote: "Inspiring men with a cause and turning them loose, trusting the Holy Spirit, has the potential to turn this old world upside down. What a change that would be!"
6. Another Minister Member wrote, "A major opportunity for the church at every level is to provide the setting in which men may learn who Jesus Christ is, and then grow in awareness of what a positive awareness with him means in daily life."

YOUR MISSION TO PASTORS!

For many years Presbyterian Men have had an emphasis on their own ministry TO pastors. In an earlier study booklet with that title Alan G. Gripe suggested the following ways for men to support and strengthen their pastor's ministry:

1. Use Bible passages (Matthew 4:1–11 on temptation; Matthew 11:2–19 on expectations; Matthew 12:9–14 on criticism; Matthew 20:20–28 on church quarrels; and Acts 19:21–41 on social critics) to see and consider the kinds of pressures put on all religious leaders.
2. As a group, brainstorm about the professional and personal needs of pastors. How are they alike and different from those of laity? Pick several key needs which men could address.
3. Invite a pastor from a neighboring church to sit with your men and to share with them the most helpful things that church members have done to support his/her ministry.
4. Review the expectations your church has for its pastor(s) using job descriptions or congregational information forms used in calling a pastor. How can these areas be true partnerships? What kinds of training for laity are needed that men could help set up?
5. Case studies are useful ways to make personal and real a problem that has been out of reach. Write up several fictional "cases" involving a pastor's personal and professional struggles (avoid any that are actually current in the congregation) and take turns being the pastor and deciding what to do.
6. Review your work to see if you have included the following professional issues: 1) relationships—with staff, officers, members; 2) time management issues; 3) personal spiritual development; 4) career guidance. Then check to see if you have considered the following personal issues: 1) health—physical, emotional, spiritual; 2) family concerns; 3) financial needs; 4) social life.

PASTOR ADVISOR/ MINISTER MEMBER?

Traditionally, clergy have been invited to be pastor advisors to men's organizations. The emphasis has been on bringing pastoral skills into use for men. The recent trend is to see them as minister members. The goal has been to equalize the relationship and to see ministry as a shared activity. Both goals need emphasis.

In 1985 a Core Working Group of men from the two reuniting Presbyterian Churches met to chart a course for men's work in the new church. Their report was entitled "A New Song . . . A Design For Presbyterian Men In Ministry." The first emphasis in that plan was for a "Ministry of God's People."

Under "Organizational Considerations" they wrote: "In envisioning a new design for PRESBYTERIAN MEN, the CWG expresses deep concern for positive and supporting relationships with pastors." They went on to recommend election of pastors (men or women) to full membership on the governing boards of the organization.

Their Recommendation 5 reads: "The new design should provide for a cooperative program between the seminaries and the PRESBYTERIAN MEN's Board. The program would enable the future pastors of the church to exchange ideas with qualified professional leaders regarding Christian discipleship in specific vocations."

Seminary students have worked as Interns in the Men's Ministry area of the national staff in recent years preparing themselves for future ministries which include an emphasis on men's work. Men entering the pastorate as a second career and women pastors both tend to be especially sensitive and supportive of men's ministry. A growing number of graduate students in theology are doing research on ministry with men. All of these steps contribute to the goal of integrating pastoral skills into a ministry of all of God's people.

THREE GOOD RESOURCES

A new requirement of the cooperative ministry of pastor and people is the need to "do theology" together rather than in separate spheres. This requires resources accessible to both and the following books are suggested for exploring such a shared ministry:

U.S. Lifestyles and Mainline Churches: A Key to Reaching People in the 90's by Tex Sample, Westminster/John Knox Press 1990

Putting Our Lives On The Line . . . A Challenge Book for Men by Edward A. White, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The Once And Future Church: Reinventing the Congregation For a New Mission Frontier by Loren B. Mead, The Alban Institute, Inc. 1991.

The first experiment in this kind of relationship was held at Princeton Theological Seminary in October of 1993 with a "Men Of The Church In Ministry Conference" where fifty lay men and seminary professors explored ways to work together in ministry.

A PROGRAM IDEA

A simple but often overlooked program of great power is to invite your pastor to share his or her own faith journey with you. Hearing the pastors reasons for ministry and struggles to be faithful cannot help but lead to further conversations at a deeper level.

Men's Fellowship International (Church of God) of Cleveland, TN 37311 puts out a yearly packet for Pastor Appreciation Sunday. You might design and hold your own such celebration.

PROGRAM

What are the keys to successful programming?

Across the church we see a number of successful men's groups that have been sending us stories of their work for years. Here are stories of successful groups with the key item in their success isolated for your study and consideration.

SUCCESS STORIES!

1. **Repetition:** Once a successful model has been developed it bears repeating. Specific tasks can be put into a plan of operations and people trained into a team. The Communion Breakfast Studies of Presbyterian Men fits this model; it began at a church in Georgia as a way to launch men's work in the Fall of 1981 and has been copied widely for years.



1. The Symposium on Christian Faith and Economic Values has been for fifteen years an annual event of Hilton Head men. Its success depends on a tried and true plan that is evaluated and improved each year. For a look at this model see the 1993 Communion Breakfast video and booklet entitled "In This Case... Case Studies in Business Ethics."

2. **Timeliness:** As needs arise in a community or church the chance opens for a timely and useful response. "Voices of The Future: Project E.D.E.N." was a much needed look at recruiting younger men into church men's ministry in the '80s.



2. Elkin Presbyterian Church in North Carolina started a timely and successful recycling program for church members.

3. **Inspiration:** Every men's program needs fresh new inspiration from those who have been moved by a spiritual experience. Assembly '87 in New Orleans and Assembly '91 in Louisville were opportunities for spiritual renewal for men; regional and annual men's events continue this tradition.



3. The New Providence Church men of Maryville, Tennessee took a busload to Assembly '87 and came home inspired to truly become "Christ's Partners In Mission." They have produced a steady stream of innovative mission projects since including "The Lead Team Approach" written up in Module 9.

4. **Organization:** Several presbyteries and synods have developed their own tailor-made organizational manuals for men's program. An outstanding example has been "Resources! For Men's Groups" produced by the Synod Council of Presbyterian Men, Synod of Southern California and Hawaii.



4. St. Albans Presbyterian Men on Long Island have for years impacted men of all ages inside and beyond their congregation by using the extensive organizational structure pictured on Module 9.

5. **Creativity:** A fresh approach that meets a current interest catches the attention of busy men. Our "New Men In Christ" Identity Resources (*ManTalk*, *FatherTalk*, *ToughTalk*) have reached out to young fathers, men's support groups, and socially involved men with programs that fit their situation.



5. Zionville Presbyterian Men in Indiana have become active in The Great Banquet program (a 72 hour spiritual retreat weekend that fulfills all the items in the Presbyterian Men Vision Statement). They also have used a wonderful Involvement Interview Sheet with each of their men.

THE PROGRAM CHAIR

The person or committee with responsibility for ongoing program in a men's ministry needs a variety of skills.

They need to be able to see the whole picture. Scurrying to find a program meeting by meeting moves a group away from its long term, stated goals. Successful program groups have their plans worked out several months in advance so that publicity can be early and repeatedly shared. They pick programs that go where their planning process tells them men want to move. They keep variety, creativity, tradition and organization in balance.

They need to be able to see the individual participants. Men come in all sizes and types. No one program fits all. Some parts of the program can be tailored for individuals, others for small sharing groups, and still others for large attendances. Some can push out into unexplored territory while others repeat the tried and true.

They need to be able to delegate responsibility so that many men get involved in each program. Involvement brings participation. Leading successful programs is like play production, it is a mixture of many different skills around a clearly stated goal. The refreshments and singing need to be as well planned as the speaker.

They need a high level of curiosity, a willingness to look in new and strange places for a topic or idea. Books, movies, TV series, magazine and newspaper articles, lunchtime conversations all can lead to fresh program ideas. When several such interesting men sit down together the creative program sparks can fly.

GRASS ROOTS PROGRAMS

Many of the most vital men's programs in the church are home grown or grass root efforts. This is important as a principle of organization. A program that grows out of local needs has the best chance of success. If you can translate the highlighted items in the Presbyterian Church Program Calendar into local terms you will have the best of both worlds. Here is a month by month list of Program Calendar concerns for you to adapt to your needs:

- September** Church Education; start a men's study opportunity.
- October** Communion Breakfast Studies; start-up a men's group.
- November** Stewardship campaigns; review men's financial plans.
- December** Christmas; develop a way to share with the needy.
- January** Consider a church attendance or evangelism project.
- February** Explore a justice ministry.
- March** Support One Great Hour of Sharing.
- April** Hold a vocations evening for young people.
- May** Find a family life project.
- June** Celebrate Men's Sunday on Father's Day (see A Program Idea).
- July** Look for a workcamp experience.
- August** Plan for Peacemaking Offering

A PROGRAM IDEA

Hold an all-group Brain-storm Bash. Each person comes up with a way to celebrate Men's Sunday on Father's Day. Then small groups of three pool their ideas. Then the whole *group* tries to consolidate all their ideas into a full weekend program.

FINANCES

Presbyterian Men is the official men's organization of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and as such it is an integral part of and supports the entire program and budget of the church. In addition, like any organization, it carries on a variety of activities for which it needs funds and in all such fund raising the following principles apply:

How are faith and finances related?

1. The financial plans of a particular group of Presbyterian Men will be authorized by the governing body to which it is related (see Module 19). Normal budgeting and accounting practices will be used. A part of the income in such a budget may come from the governing body itself.
2. Presbyterian Men will not engage in any program or fund raising which conflicts with the mission goals of the governing body to which it is related. Any fund raising projects of Presbyterian Men need the endorsement of the governing body involved.
3. Presbyterian Men will support the unified stewardship program of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) but may solicit funds from membership and friends so long as these funds contribute to the total mission of the church.
4. Presbyterian Men, as an integral part of the church's program, may receive governing body funds for the following items: a basic program, organizational meetings, representation of men on councils, and the development of material resources for men.
5. Participants in Presbyterian Men may be charged membership dues or chartering fees from which source the organization may provide a variety of services. Normally, participants in events sponsored by Presbyterian Men will pay their own room and board and program expenses.

PAY AS YOU GO!

The following "Plan For Strengthening Presbyterian Men" provides a sound basis for the development of Presbyterian Men as Christ's disciples.

1. Chartering: The principle fund raising program for Presbyterian Men will be the chartering of men's groups in local churches at an annual fee of \$50.

2. Church Man of the Year Award: Each year, a men's group may honor a man with this award by making application and sending \$75 to the national office. Proceeds will go toward the mission projects of Presbyterian Men. A handsome presentation certificate and silver pin will be sent.

3. John Knox Fellow: By making a gift of \$1,000 (lump-sum or paid over a five year period) an individual or an individual designated by the donor will be named a John Knox Fellow. An attractive plaque will be presented at the next annual meeting of Presbyterian Men and the recipient will be listed among the honored supporters of Presbyterian Men. Income from this fellowship will go into the Presbyterian Men Fund.

4. John Calvin Fellow: By making a gift of \$10,000 or more (lump-sum or over a five year period) an individual or an individual designated by the donor will be named a John Calvin Fellow. An attractive plaque will be presented at the next annual meeting of Presbyterian Men and the recipient will be listed among the honored supporters of Presbyterian Men. John Knox Fellows will pay no registration fee at national meetings of Presbyterian Men. Funds given for a John Knox Fellow may be applied toward a John Calvin Fellow. Income from this fellowship will go into the Presbyterian Men Fund.

5. The Presbyterian Men Fund: A major fund raising effort to underwrite the long term strength of Presbyterian Men began in 1992. First phase goal was \$200,000 by 1994. A regionally based team has met regularly and been busy contacting possible donors with tremendous results.

THE TREASURER

The Treasurer is an important part of any organization. While fund raising and budgets belong to the whole group, this person has to take the lead in such matters. Here are some guidelines for the office:

1. Attend all meetings; finances are so intertwined with program and mission that no meeting should be without the treasurer.
2. Take responsible care of the collection, custody and authorized disbursement of the organization's funds. Work with a partner when handling funds to check your accounting and vouch for the totals. Have your records audited at the end of the year so that your stewardship of the funds is affirmed.
3. Give guidance and help to the organization in any fund raising activities it undertakes. This includes timely and regular financial reports and presentations on behalf of the group.
4. Represent the stewardship needs of the whole church to the membership, encouraging them in ways they can support the church budget and its programs. Remind the group about the need to keep their charter renewed and their support of area and national men's work strong.
5. Work closely with the President and Executive Committee in presenting to the membership a well designed and financed program and mission plan. Develop with other leaders a balanced budget for the year and refer to it as the membership discusses actions it might take.
6. Help your group consider using the Treasurer-Elect position to insure continuity in the record keeping and policy making process. Work with this person towards a smooth transition of powers.

A PROGRAM IDEA

The North Alabama Presbytery Men's Council voted to empty their treasury—giving it all to two mission projects! Ask your men if they have any mission goals strong enough to get them to do the same. If they don't, start a search for goals worth giving it all to!

FASTING, SHARING & PRAYING

FASTING, SHARING & PRAYING is a simple program of individual FASTING for one meal per week, SHARING the value of the foregone meal, and PRAYING during the time that meal would have been eaten. Many men have covenanted with partners to continue and encourage one another in this program which was started by the National Council in 1990. Funds raised support the mission of Presbyterian Men (half used locally, half sent to the national office for Water Projects or similar mission activities). For a flyer on the program contact the national office.

FASTING, SHARING & PRAYING has supported a number of Water Projects around the world. Local groups of men have under-written each of these projects. For information on how you can be involved contact the Vice President for Mission through the national office.

**The Water
Is Flowing!
Can You Help?**

PRESBYTERIAN MEN FUND

After reviewing the success of the United Methodist Men Foundation which began in 1981, the officers of Presbyterian Men started their own Presbyterian Men Foundation in 1992. Both you and your group can participate by asking for pledge cards from Presbyterian Men. All funds will be lodged in the Presbyterian Foundation. This is a way for men to leave a permanent legacy in the life of their church and to insure that men's ministry continues.

The "Case Statement" for the Fund states: "The funds generated by the Presbyterian Men Fund will be utilized on priorities annually established by the organization. No more than one third of annual contributions will be used for current expenses with a goal of having the earnings of the whole Fund eventually supporting the total operations of Presbyterian Men."

PROMOTION

Promotion is more than publicity about meetings; it is a “male positive” presentation of men’s ministry in the church and the world. It is telling our story using all the means available.

Are you being heard?

Still the best promotion is person to person, man to man. If men are to grow and mature in Christ, they must be ministered to individually. Among the most memorable experiences men have are those of close relationship with other men. Simply mentioning such moments repeatedly strengthens men’s work. As they say in sports,

“Talk it up!”

Publicity about the church’s program for men should use all available means. Church and secular news publications, community access television notices, advertisements on bulletin boards and in newspapers, and featured stories of special events all keep before a wide audience the story of men’s ministry. The church’s own news outlets both local, regional and national should not be overlooked.

Use the “Church Man Of The Year Award” (see Module 14) as a way to highlight the work of individual men; tell their story in a feature article in the church newsletter and make the presentation to them a part of Sunday worship. Use Minutes For Mission time to tell of “unsung heroes.”

Post research, photographs and stories about men on a bulletin board in a central location; include your current Charter in the display. Keep it fresh and interesting. Give visible support to other church and community organizations in the name of Presbyterian Men.

HIGHLIGHT MEN!

A good news release has the following characteristics:

1. It always includes the traditional “who, what, why, where” questions and answers. Christian news gives glory to God in Christ rather than being self serving. Our story points to God’s story.
2. Always write the news release with the audience in mind. How will this news affect and interest the general reader? Look for a human interest angle that would broaden the story’s appeal. Keep language inclusive and use proper style.
3. Keep your story short and to the point but do not leave out key information that the unfamiliar reader would require to respond further. Omit or put in later paragraphs the background or preparatory work that led up to your featured event.
4. Title the story clearly and attractively, mention specific audiences that might be interested. Double space the final copy and make multiple copies for local, presbytery and synod news offices. Send a copy to “Presbyterian Men in ACTION” and Presbyterian News Service, both at 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, Kentucky 40202-1396. The address for the independent news magazine, “Presbyterian Outlook” is Box 8563-3, Richmond, VA 23285-5623.

VISUALIZE!

People today often prefer to see a story rather than to hear or read about it. This means we need to picture our information.

Action photos which catch the story in process are always sought by news services. Enlarge good photos to poster size using a color copying process. Camcorders allow for a local presentation of moving events but be sure and edit them for impact and easy viewing.

THE PROMOTION CHAIR

Promotion happens when someone makes it happen! A key position in a successful men's ministry is that of promotion chair. This person shows up with pad, pencil and camera at every event. He writes news releases accompanied by action photos for each key activity and distributes them widely to news sources. He develops a strong network of contacts in the news distribution business, both church and secular, and provides them with stories they can use on a regular basis.

In smaller organizations this person may also be the secretary and keep the official records of the group as well as share the story with others. If so, he is best equipped to put both kinds of information into historical archives so the story will not be lost. The Presbyterian Department of History, 425 Lombard Street, Philadelphia, PA 19147, can give advice on how to keep and file such records.

A good promotion chair recruits others to help with presentations so that the "face" does not become so familiar that the "facts" get overlooked. This is particularly important at meetings of presbytery where the same person often reports for Presbyterian Men. Keep these presentations short, interesting, and full of variety. Ask men recognized in a variety of fields to speak for men and thus illustrate the wide ranging impact of men's ministry.

A promotion chair needs to stay informed about the resources of the church for men, keep the church library supplied with useful books, and ask for times at meetings to show worthwhile videos. The Communion Breakfast Studies video each year tells the story of a particular men's ministry in action. The American Baptist Men have an exciting series of first person video stories entitled "One Man's Prayer/Faith." Contact them at American Baptist Men, Box 851, Valley Forge, PA 19482-0851.

PRESBYNET

Electronic networks are increasingly used for swift and useful sharing of information. PresbyNet is a computer network tying the whole denomination together in this way. A Presbyterian Men "meeting" on PresbyNet carries our "Presbyterian Men in ACTION" newsletter to subscribers a full month in advance of printed copies. Minutes of national meetings appear as soon as they are recorded. News of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) appears weekly in its own "meeting." And increasingly the officers of national, synod and presbytery men's organizations are in regular computer networks. "Men of Living Waters" is a trend-setting synod network amongst south central men's groups.

To join PresbyNet you will need a computer with a modem and a software program. For IBM compatible computers, Bizlink is the recommended software. For assistance with signing up or use of PresbyNet call 1-800-872-3283 and ask for PresbyNet.

The 1993 General Assembly established Father's Day in June as a men of the church" Sunday. Denominational resources were prepared for its celebration. It is an ideal time to highlight your men's ministry!

A PROGRAM IDEA

Invite a professional news person to share with your group what it takes to get a story told in the public media. Ask a graphic artist to design a logo for your group. Put your group logo and name on caps or tee shirts as Jeffersontown (Kentucky) men did.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Here are suggested check lists for your officers to use in reviewing their work:

President or Chairman

1. Preside firmly but keep meetings relaxed.
2. Keep to a planned agenda and schedule.
3. Clarify responsibilities of other officers and let them carry them out. Convene and chair Executive Committee (see Module 11).
4. Keep in contact with presbytery, synod and national church, their men's councils and mission programs. Stay informed.
5. Consult often with the pastor (see Module 12); report at least annually to the session.
6. Plan to attend area and national Presbyterian Men meetings; continue to grow in the job.
7. Keep good records and support successor.

Vice President(s)

1. Ask the president how to be helpful and do whatever requested.
2. Stay prepared to serve in president's place, if needed.
3. Accept specific duties assigned by the president or council.

Secretary

1. Attend all meetings and keep current and historical records and documents including minutes, membership lists, bylaws, pictures and program materials.
2. Notify the presbytery and National Council of Presbyterian Men of changes in officers (including addresses).
3. Keep the church office informed about meetings, events, officers, and building and calendar requests.
4. Prepare with other officers the publicity notices of meetings and promote membership and attendance.
5. Transfer all records and documents to your successor; old records may go to Presbyterian Department of History.

Treasurer (see Module 14)

1. Attend all meetings of the organization.
2. Care responsibly for the collection, custody and authorized disbursement of the funds of the organization.
3. Assist the organization in any fund-raising activities.
4. Ask your organization to participate in the mission programs and chartering plan of Presbyterian Men.

YOUR MAN IN HAVANA!

As we landed at Havana in the middle of the night we wondered what we would find. We were a group of Presbyterian Men from the Synod of the Northeast going to Cuba for the first time in many years—to paint a church and renew old ties. We were met by six excited Hombres Presbiterianos, among them Roberto Porto Valdes, who turned out to be "our man in Havana!"

Later he took us to the museum of the Presbyterian Church in Cuba and showed us the original Charter #3 in Presbyterian Men dating from before the revolution when Cuba was related to the old Synod of New Jersey. Through years of Communist rule these "vanguard workers" for Christ had kept the faith!

Similar stories abound. Attorney David Aguila from the Philip-pines coming to General Assembly in 1992 to tell of a 1954 memorandum from then Presiding Bishop Sobrepena to all churches saying, "I should like to have the men's organization [in United Church of Christ in the Philippines] follow the pattern of the 'Presbyterian Men' in the United States." Moderator Price Gwynn in Egypt, staffer Art Kamitsuka in Czechoslovakia, Presidents McDougal in Taiwan and Easley in Korea, Vice Presidents David Douglas in Mexico and Duane McCarty in Israel, all established and re-established ties with church men worldwide.

Job descriptions for representatives and officers of Presbyterian Men are simply ways to help unique men in very differing circumstances to be faithful to the tasks at hand. They are suggestive, not prescriptive. The stories of their strength in men's work worldwide help us understand the usefulness of the Presbyterian penchant for decency and order.

Does your job fit YOU?

DUTIES: CONGREGATIONAL PRESBYTERY & SYNOD REPRESENTATIVES

1. Participate actively in the men's council (congregational, presbytery, or synod) you represent.
2. Represent your men at all levels of the church structure including the budgeting process and governance.
3. Work with your governing body (session, presbytery, synod) to represent men's ministry within that body.
4. Keep your governing body informed of your activities (news releases) and of issues related to men's ministry.
5. Actively promote the development of new men's ministry programs.
6. Assist in the Chartering process.
7. Act as resource person for groups seeking materials, speakers, or projects.
8. Work with pastor(s) in promoting men's work.
9. Promote men's spirituality at all levels and in program development.
10. Participate actively as men's representative in all governing body meetings (congregational, presbytery or synod meetings) With displays and reports as requested.
11. Assist in leadership training events, nominating processes (insure male and laity representation), and policy discussions (insure gender equity and partnership).
12. Assist local officers in planning and conducting men's ministry with emphasis on reporting about national and regional events.
13. Put men's events on all church calendars.
14. Attend Annual Meetings of the National Council of Presbyterian Men whenever possible (request funding from your governing body).

A PROGRAM IDEA

The United Methodist Men's installation service asks of new officers three "obligations:" to acknowledge Christ as Lord, to set a personal example for others, and to accept this position as a priority. Discuss what obligations go with being a servant leader. (SEE MODULE 11)

A SERVICE OF INSTALLATION

Leader: Will the newly elected officers come forward. (call names and offices to be filled)

Leader: Brothers in Christ, God has given you special gifts and you have been chosen to serve the Church of Jesus Christ as leaders in Presbyterian Men. Are you willing to carry out the purposes of Presbyterian Men which are:

. . . to lead men into a vital relationship to Jesus Christ;

. . . to develop their understanding of the mission of the church;

. . . to encourage them, through their commitment to Christ, to fulfill the ministries to which they are called in their homes, their daily work, and in the world?

Officers: WE ARE.

Leader: Will all the members of Presbyterian Men please stand. Do you, members of Presbyterian Men, accept these newly elected members as your leaders, chosen of God to serve and guide you in the way of Jesus Christ?

Men: WE DO.

Leader: Will you support them and the work they do with your prayers, participation, financial resources, and skills?

Men: WE WILL.

Leader: Let us pray together:

All: O GOD, we thank you for calling us to be your people. We thank you for coming to serve us in Jesus. May we faithfully serve you and your world. Help us to see our work, our homes, our communities, and our church as the place in which you have put us to serve you and others. Fill us anew with you Spirit so that we may have the power to serve when we are tired, the joy to serve when we are discouraged, the desire to serve when we want to give up. Bless the ministry and mission of all your servants. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

Leader: Newly-elected leaders of Presbyterian Men, you are now installed to serve Jesus Christ through Presbyterian Men. Whatever you do in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus.

HISTORY OF MEN'S WORK

- 1906 Presbyterian Brotherhood (PCUSA)Men's Missionary League (UPNA)
- 1907 Laymen's Missionary Movement (PCUS)
- 1923 Northern church men's work starts in congregations and presbyteries
- 1932 PCUS men's work made a part of adult education
- 1933 1942 PCUS General Assembly declared men's work as "men working in the church."
- 1948 PCUSA set up National Council of Presbyterian Men and UPNA reorganized men's work; both thrived for two decade before merging in 1972 into United Presbyterian Men (UPM).
- 1949 PCUS set up Division of Men's Work which thrived for 20 years (Atlanta, New Orleans, Miami and Dallas conventions). Reorganization in 1972 abolished it from General Assembly level.
- 1982 Several PCUS synods worked together to hold Atlanta convention and establish Men of the Church Council (MOCC).
- 1984 MOCC and UPM merged into new National Council of Presbyterian Men at Ann Arbor with each synod sending a representative.
- 1987 Assembly '87 held in New Orleans with theme of "Presbyterian Men: Christ's Partners in Mission."
- 1991 Assembly '91 held in Louisville with theme "Christ The Cornerstone."

HONOR OLD TIMERS

Men's work has a long and important history in the church. Nearly every church or presbytery has a "Mr. Presbyterian" who has devoted his life to ministry with men. When these men witness to Christ's impact on their lives, it can moves others to commitment. When these same men tell about the "good old days" and insist on old ways, it can dampen enthusiasm. Honor history and tradition wisely!

Target Mission

All men like to hear about what works. And we have a long history of things that have worked. Our story began in 1907 with the Laymen's Missionary Movement and the Men's Missionary League. Both men and women's work began with mission and this remains a key to our work today. Keep your mission clear!

Local Base

Successful men's work begins in congregations. Over the years the national support for men's work has grown and diminished several times but men in congregations have continued to be the key in supporting church life through work and fellowship groups, Bible classes, and leadership training. Work from strength!

Concerns and Needs

In surveys, men repeatedly lift up fellowship, Bible study, and family life as areas of highest concern. The 1976 renewal of men's work in the United Presbyterian Church had a four-fold mission focus on Men, Families, Pastors and the World. Strong program grows out of felt needs!

These four areas: tradition, mission, congregation, men's concerns, are the backbone of a strong men's ministry. From them you can move out in strength to take your part in the total mission for Christ in the world.

COUNCIL HELPS YOU “C” BETTER

The recently restructured National Council of Presbyterian Men has led to new growth in men's work by focusing on the following mission statement developed in 1988 by the newly elected officers:

THE MISSION OF PRESBYTERIAN MEN: “TO SERVE, RESOURCE, AND ENCOURAGE LOCAL PRESBYTERIAN MEN ORGANIZATIONS AND MEN IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) IN THEIR RESPONSE TO THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST.”

The national, synod and presbytery councils exist to carry out this mission. They have developed the following four “C”s to show clearly why they exist:

1. **Connect!**

In a connectional church Presbyterian Men provide the connections for local men to all levels of the church: locally, nationally, globally. It is a net-work of information and outreach.

2. **Channel!**

Presbyterian Men provides a channel through which local men's strengths and skills can be transmitted to the whole world. It is a training ground for servant leaders.

3. **Certify!**

Work in Presbyterian Men can qualify men for decision making service throughout the church. Nominating men of strength and commitment is a critical task.

4. **Create!**

Working together, men in a national organization can create comprehensive programs, mission projects, and national events beyond the reach of local men's groups alone.

A PROGRAM IDEA

Ask a man born in each decade of this century to report on their experiences as men in the church. Collect your historical records of men's ministry and mount a display for your membership. Begin to focus again on a ministry with men as vital to church life.

WHO ARE WE?

Who are the 1,138,076 men of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)? We have been the subject of two Presbyterian Panel surveys in recent years (November 1988 and August 1992). In 1988 or 1989 information about men's groups was gathered in the Stated Clerk's Report. What have we learned?

We are in 11,456 congregations, 65,273 of us are elders. About a third of our churches reported a men's group of some kind. Both panels gave support to the notion that the church is “out of touch” with men today and, in fact, few clergy could accurately state whether their male membership was growing or declining (57% in the 1992 sample were declining while only 33% of pastors felt this to be true). Fewer men than women can recall a positive childhood or youth experience in the church and the SEARCH Institute report found a low level of “mature faith” in Presbyterian men.

On the positive side, there is a renewed interest in men's ministry and our list of chartered groups continues to grow. We are working to involve pastors, to reach out to young men, and to deepen our own spiritual lives. Who we are is perhaps best illustrated by personal stories of commitment. Here are the goals of six of us who have served in recent years as national presidents of Presbyterian Men:

“We have the opportunity to start anew in all areas of program development in the church.” *Emile Dieth, Jr.*

“No religion will ever represent the mind of Christ that does not throb with social ardor and go crusading for a better world.” *Dick LeTourneau*

“We all love the Lord and seek to serve him in new and creative ways.” *Dick McDougal*

“As I have traveled thousands of miles for Presbyterian Men . . . I hear one call over and over, ‘Help us in our local church get men involved again’.” *John Hamil*

“I am very anxious to begin . . . an effort to develop and implement action plans that will forge a new direction for this organization in the future.” *Charles Easley*

“A widespread need for better formation of the laity in the faith becomes increasingly clear.”

Youngil Cho

RESOURCES

Three kinds of men's resources are available. For information contact Presbyterian Men (502-569-5435), for ordering call Presbyterian Publishing House (800-227-2872).

First, Presbyterian Men organizational resources.

1. This manual, *Lift High The Cross: Organizing Church Men* in its several forms (English, Spanish, Korean texts and computer disk).
2. Presbyterian Men pins and hats and related promotional materials.
3. *Presbyterian Men in ACTION*, our free quarterly newsletter, and *MANPAC*, our quarterly packet of resources for chartered groups.

Second, a series of study booklets in vest pocket format with meditations and discussion questions.

1. *A Cup of Cold Water: Christian Responses To The Global Water Crisis* by David Douglas. This plus the accompanying video are the primary items in our mission efforts for clean water worldwide.
2. *Frontiers: Space, Science, and Spirituality* and accompanying video are our cooperative efforts with the Work Group on Christian Faith, Science and Technology.
3. *God's Global Economy* and accompanying video is our efforts to work with the Presbyterian United Nations Office on key issues of the world economy.
4. *In This Case...Case Studies in Business Ethics* and accompanying video is our work with the Committee on Higher Education to offer students a way of studying matters of business ethics.
5. *Putting Our Lives On The Line: A Challenge Book For Men* by Edward A. White is our cooperative study with the Presbyterian Evangelism staff on matters of Christian witness in the workplace.

Third, a series of trend-setting explorations into issues of importance to men.

1. *Fathertalk: Father/Child Communication and The Father Joseph Stories* by John H. Stuhl. A part of the Presbyterian and Reformed Educational Ministry curriculum, this is a set of stories about men's feelings, to be read to children.
2. *Man Talk: Resources For Exploring Male Issues* by Cecil Murphey provides insights, bibliographies, and discussion questions on twenty key issues for men. Produced with the North American Conference of Church Men's Staffs.
3. *ToughTalk: Men Confronting Men Who Abuse* by Joe H. Leonard, Jr. is our contribution to the work of the Ecumenical Decade of The Churches in Solidarity With Women. Fifteen sessions on how men can confront abuse of women by men.

TRY THE NEW!

At Assembly '87 Mayor William Hudnut challenged Presbyterian Men to "set out into deeper water." Men like to venture into challenges. In this age of rapid change does our ministry with men live in the risk of the new and the challenging?

New Worship

New and inclusive hymns have been written for us by Avery and Marsh ("Sing to the Lord a new song..."), Marsha Lee Cutting (My brothers, I see you moving, I see you growing into a new day..."), and Jane Parker Huber ("Christ who gives us living water..."). New poetry and story have filled our newsletter. Men need to develop and support rituals and celebrations which affirm our stewardship of the earth, our partnership with women, and our commitment to a Christ of peace.

New Structure

Presbyterian Men have been actively involved in the restructuring of our church during and since reunion. Our officers have been active in the Congregational Ministries Division and its predecessors. Moderators Bill Wilson and Price Gwynn have actively served as lay men's voices in the General Assembly. Local men's ministry groups have tried a variety of new formats. We have held successful men's breakfasts at all recent General Assemblies including the gala return celebration of hostage Tom Sutherland.

New Vision

The Visioning Conference on Men in the Church held in March 1992 led eventually to a new Vision Statement For Men with nine areas of needed growth. The General Assembly voted to make Father's Day a time of emphasizing "men of the church." In these and other ways men are again affirming their place in shared ministry in a renewing church.

New Resources

The resources listed throughout this manual move men into partnership in all parts of the church's work and into strong ecumenical leadership. Men today want to "set out into deeper waters" and it is the task of men's ministry at all levels to set them on their way.

MASCULINE SPIRITUALITY

Masculine spirituality and church participation are not necessarily the same thing. Interest in spiritual life has risen even as church participation has dropped, especially among men. United Methodist Men recognized this in producing their excellent resource, "A Spiritual Journey For Men" (see Module 9).

Resources to help men deal with their spirituality include the following:

MEN'S OWN SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE. Much of the renewal of spiritual life has involved personal story telling. Edward Robinson's *The Original Vision: A Study of Religious Experience of Childhood* (The Seabury Press, New York 1983) reveals how often religious experiences in childhood form our entire lives.

THE ARTS. Frederick Buechner, in *The Sacred Journey* says that he started to write poetry because he had had enough of the surface of life. Denigration of the arts and ritual as "unmanly" has shut down many of our most profound church men.

EXTENSIVE RECENT MEN'S LITERATURE. Here are six excellent books to start you on your spiritual search as men:

Wildmen, Warriors, and Kings: Masculine Spirituality and the Bible by Patrick M. Arnold (Crossroad Publishing Company, New York 1991)

Toward A Male Spirituality by John Carmody (Twenty-Third Publications, Mystic, Connecticut)

The Wild Man's Journey: Reflections on Male Spirituality by Richard Rohr & Joseph Martos (St. Anthony Messenger Press, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1992)

The Intimate Connection: Male Sexuality, Masculine Spirituality by James B. Nelson (Westminster/ John Knox Press, Louisville, Kentucky 1988)

New Adam: The Future of Masculine Spirituality by Philip L. Culbertson (Augsburg Fortress Publishers, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1991)

Healing The Male Soul by Dwight H. Judy (Crossroad Publishing Company, New York 1992)

A PROGRAM IDEA

Review the new Vision Statement for Men and pick one of the nine areas for growth which your men can use as a focus in the coming year. Share your plans with you congregation on Men's Day (Father's Day) in June.

SIXTEEN MEN

This is the title of an important book by Loren E. Pedersen, subtitled "Understanding Masculine Personality Types" (Shambhala, Boston & London, 1993). It is one effort to spell out the great variety of types of men in the world and this is a basic premise of the manual you are reading. There are many ways to outline this variety yet it is often overlooked when the topic is "men."

To generalize about men is to assume some over arching commonness about our gender which a review of men in the smallest congregation would disprove. It is very difficult to draw up a list of masculine characteristics which would fit all men. Instead, these resources celebrate the diversity and uniqueness of each one of us. Some are clearly extroverted, forceful personalities. Others are quiet, with a curiosity that is insatiable. *Sixteen Men* uses the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) to group men into four larger personality types, each with four subtypes.

When you read the descriptions of the Thinkers, the Idea Men, the Doers, and the Dreamers they sound like men you know. One of them sounds remarkably like you! When you set about organizing churchmen you need to pay special attention to the needs of men who are very unlike yourself. They could be easily overlooked and under involved in your church life.

Another set of men who might be overlooked are those who speak a language other than the predominant one in our society. Language contains much of our cultural conditioning and these resources are translated into Korean and Spanish by people who can catch the nuances and differences in those cultures. As need arises, further translations will be made for yet other groups of church men. The original manual of Presbyterian Men was widely used in the Cameroon, in the Philippines, and in Cuba.

A newer group of men are those with computer literacy and an expanded version of these resources is planned on computer diskette using the Folio Views information search program. At another point are men who don't like or want to read. Photographs, charts and other graphics, often accompanied by simple discussion questions, are provided for them. As you program and develop local resources for men remember the great variety and their special needs.

The inside first page of this manual has a brief article entitled "How To Use This Manual." Just reading those few paragraphs out loud with your men will provoke a great deal of discussion. You will also find a permission statement for certain kinds of copying of the materials for educational uses.

RELATIONSHIPS

“Let everyone speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.”
Ephesians 4:25

Presbyterian Men are not lone individuals, nor a separate organization. We are alive in relationships. The love and truth of which Paul speaks in Ephesians are at the heart of our work; they are the organizing principles of our organization. Some of these relationships are:

You and Jesus Christ

To know Jesus Christ is to stand in right relation to everything else. As with any deep friendship, this relationship is lifelong and always growing, even in times of doubt and separation. Through study, worship, and action do we relate Christ to all of their lives? Do we witness to Christ in our choices of lifestyle, our stewardship or resources, and our interactions with other people?

You and Other Men

We are vitally interested in the experiences of men in our society and around the world. We live in a time of changing social norms and roles and offer each other opportunities to talk openly about these changes. We seek a Biblical understanding of maleness and of love across all dividing lines.

You and Your Congregation

The Session has responsibility for everything that goes on in your church. Seek its approval and guidance as you organize and work. Take time to cultivate this relationship and offer to enter the whole life of the congregation as needed. Keep your relationship with your pastor(s) warm, creative and supportive. Charter your congregation's ministry with men.

You and Your Presbytery/Synod

The Presbyterian Church is a “connectional” church; we are interrelated and interdependent. This is yet another way of affirming that relationships are important. Your presbytery is a collection of churches with whom you can connect; and form a presbytery men's council. Send a Presbytery Representative (PR) to the National Council of Presbyterian Men.

MAKE THE CONNECTION!

How do you get the help you need in men's ministry? You use both official and impromptu networks. The relationship chart on the next page is one map; another is the list of names of national staff in the back of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Program Calendar. There you will find various topics and related staff names and telephones listed. You will find names and addresses for each presbytery, synod, church related educational institution, and ecumenical organization.

Listed there under “Men's Resources & Program” you will find the staff serving this area in the Congregational Ministries Division, the Christian Education work area. Our telephone number is 502-569-5435. Call us as often as you need to.

Each pastor has a copy of the Directory of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It lists each church and pastor in the denomination with address and telephone number. Your presbytery office has a similar listing of all staff serving the church in presbyteries and synods. The Mission Yearbook for Prayer and Study describes and gives names of all mission personnel of the church, both nationally and overseas.

Equally useful are the lists of fellow participants in annual meetings and conferences which your men attend, the skills banks and volunteer lists of your own and neighboring churches, and the social agency directories for your locality. Many groups have an officer or committee just assigned the task of keeping the group connected with all these folks. You will find amazing strength in keeping these networks alive.

The Synod of The Covenant men's newsletter has been called “NETWORK” as a way of saying how important contact is between men's groups. The Synod of the Northeast annual men's events have had titles such as “Nerve Centers for Spiritual Growth” and “Muscle Into Mission” as a way of pointing out the organic connection that gives life to the Church and to its men's work. How can you help educate your men about their need for connectedness and the advantages which it brings?

FORMING A MEN'S COUNCIL

When Presbyterian Men gather to get work done they often form a council in which officers and other leaders help organize the work of men in their area of responsibility.

Our ability to grow and reproduce ourselves depends on knowing how to set up such a men's council beyond our local setting. Here are some suggestions:

1. Set up an organizing team rather than sending an individual. It helps to hear the suggestions for organization given in this manual from a variety of voices.
2. Be sure that those exploring a men's council have the support of their governing body. If you are going to a neighboring church be sure that church's pastor has asked you to be there.
3. Listen carefully to the situation as it is presented to you by those you visit. Seldom does your pattern transfer without changes into another situation. Help the people you visit to go through the steps (Modules 1—5) you went through in the planning process. Be sure and tie them into the whole design for Presbyterian Men.
4. Stick with the new group as they attempt their first programs. Work with them and join them in insuring good attendance at their first meetings. Remind them of the importance of evaluation and regular feedback from participants. Celebrate successes with them.
5. When possible offer those you visit a chance to visit your group in return, to see you in action and to be able to ask questions as you go along.
6. Invite new council members to every available leadership training event in the church as a whole and in Presbyterian Men. Help them to network successfully in all church systems.

A PROGRAM IDEA

As a group, develop an "allies list, people who might be 'with you.' in some part of what you are trying to do. Be specific with full names, addresses and telephone numbers. Be creative and include community folks. Be sure to include Presbyterian Women. Invite all these folks to a festive meeting where you can socialize with them, thank them for their help and strategize with them on new ways to cooperate. It will be an energizing experience!

RELATIONSHIP CHART

Governing Body

Presbyterian Men

THE SESSION

Approves Men's Council
Elects Congregational Representative (CR)
Budgets Men's Work

CONGREGATIONAL
MEN'S COUNCIL
Sends CR to
Presbytery Council

(Presbytery Districts may be needed)

THE PRESBYTERY

Approves Men's Council
Elects Presbytery Representative (PR)
Budgets Men's Work

PRESBYTERY MEN'S
COUNCIL
Relates to Presbytery and
its mission
Sends PR to Synod
Council

(Synod Areas may be needed)

THE SYNOD

Approves Men's Council
Elects Synod Representative (SR)
Budgets Men's Work

SYNOD MEN'S
COUNCIL
Relates to Synod and
its mission
Sends SR to National
Board & Council

(National Regions may be needed)

NATIONAL BOARD OF
PRESBYTERIAN MEN
Relates to National Council
Meets at least annually
Elects at-large-members
Develops National Men's Program

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Approves National Council
Elects Pastor Advisors
Budgets Men's Work



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
PRESBYTERIAN MEN
Relates to General Assembly & Worldwide
Church
Sets policy; has by-laws & men's
mission directions
Elects Officers
Budgets its mission

PARTNERSHIPS

The members of the North American Conference of Church Men's Staffs have committed themselves and their denominations to working cooperatively in men's ministry whenever possible. They do not duplicate each other's efforts in resource production. When Presbyterian Men produced *ManTalk* seven other denominations added their names as sponsors and it has sold well in all of them. You will find evidence of our partnership with other denominations in Modules 1, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11, 15, and 16.

We are also in partnership with Presbyterian and reformed men's work worldwide. When the Layman's Association of the Presbyterian Church of Korea formed in 1907, it took the ICTHUS logo of the American church men and added a ring around it to suggest universality. After Reunion Presbyterian Men adopted the Korean ring and added their name to it, using a design developed by Paul Warburton's daughter in law. In 1986 Presbyterian Men entered into a five year development plan with men in the Evangelical Church in Egypt and in 1989 their logo reflected ours, but in Arabic!

A special partnership over the years has been our working relationship with Presbyterian Women. We have exchanged official representatives at meetings, shared in program and resource development, and at Assembly '91 cemented our ties with creation of 200 shared chalices. In 1994 our Annual Meeting was held in the context of the Montreat Conference for Women and Men. Our *Tough Talk* resource was one of our responses to the Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity With Women.

In Module 18 you can see the way in which we have used resource development as an opportunity to work in partnership with several other Presbyterian program offices. And our National Council reflects our commitment toward working with middle governing bodies and racial and ethnic caucuses. In all of this it is the goal of men to take a proactive and energetic lead in relating church men to the full range of church life in this country and abroad.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS!

One of the earliest confessions of the church proclaims that there is no longer Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female, but all are now one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28). As a gender organization in the church we need to ponder this promise seriously and ask "How do we justify our place in the church's agenda?"

The answer which has been emerging in recent years began with a World Council of Churches conference in the summer of 1981 at Sheffield, England. There the participants set a study process called the Community of Women and Men in the Church. Many local groups around the world shared in the study sessions on this theme. Central to the effort was an insistence that women be full participants in the life of the church and church men today need to actively support this affirmation.

A corollary to this claim has been emerging since that time, namely that true community involves a shared partnership of women and men as equals. The "partnership" theme and language was central to our planning for Assembly '87 in New Orleans (Presbyterian Men: Christ's Partners in Mission). In 1988 the World Council of Churches inaugurated the next step with the establishment of an Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women. In this effort men were asked to join others in the church in insuring that injustices to women be confronted and overcome.

Several very useful resources have appeared in recent years to help men and women study together these issues of partnership and community. Here are three church and one secular study books which we men need to introduce and use with women wherever possible:

Sisters and Brothers: Reclaiming a Biblical Idea of Community by Verna J. Dozier and James R. Adams (Cowley Publications, Cambridge, MA 1993).

We Belong Together: Churches in Solidarity with Women by Sarah Cunningham (Friendship Press, New York 1992).

Sexual Paradox: Creative Tensions in Our Lives And In Our Congregations by Celia Allison Hahn (The Pilgrim Press, New York 1991).

The Partnership Way: A Practical Companion for "The Chalice and The Blade" by Riane Eisler and David Loye (Harper San Francisco, New York 1990).

THINK TANKS FOR MEN

Over the years the North American Conference on Church Mens Staffs has served professional men's workers and key leaders as a kind of "think tank" for creative men's ministry. They have looked at ways men respond cooperatively in times of disaster, ways men grow spiritually, men's witness in the marketplace, men's learning styles, and men's involvement in world mission. They conducted a World Forum for Church Men for the year 1999.

Where else might one look for long range thinking about men and men's ministry? Two scholarly journals explore the full range of men's issues. The Men's Studies Association and its journal, "masculinities" has explored such topics as "Men In Prison," "Men and Mental Health" and "Masculinities in the Workplace."

In 1991 the Chicago Theological Seminary held an important conference entitled, "The Men's Movement and The Churches: Implications for Ministry." The Presbyterian Presence, a series of studies of the Presbyterian Church, includes an essay entitled "Men and Mission: The Shifting Fortunes of Presbyterian Men's Organizations in the Twentieth Century" by Dale E. Soden (in *The Organizational Revolution: Presbyterians and American Denominationalism* edited by Coalter, Mulder and Weeks, Westminster/John Knox, Louisville 1992).

An important history of men in America is *"American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era"* by E. Anthony Rotundo (Basic Books, New York 1993). A global look at men is found in *"Manhood In The Making: Cross Cultural Concepts of Masculinity"* by David D. Gilmore (Yale University Press, New Haven 1990).

THE STORY OF THE CHALICES

An interesting story lies behind the 200 hand-made chalices used in the closing communion service at Assembly '91. The Planning Committee knew that it wanted to have a segment of the conference which would focus on relationships between men and women in the church. They were searching for a way to renew and strengthen ties without imposing their own perspective. The suggestion was made that some kind of a gift be sent from Assembly '91 to the Gathering of Presbyterian Women which was scheduled for the following month. Co-Program Chair Tom Gillespie told about a potter in residence at Princeton Seminary and the idea of a chalice emerged.

The chalice is a central symbol of community in the Christian tradition and recent books on gender studies (for example, *"The Chalice And The Blade"* by Riane Eisler) have seen in the chalice an ancient image of community building which suggests a time when men and women were in a more balanced and equal partnership.

By the next morning the idea had grown. Why not send 200 chalices, one for every presbytery and synod in the church, and suggest that after the large national gatherings of men and women in the summer of 1991 a year of smaller gatherings be encouraged. The budget was adjusted to include this major purchase and the potter, Sasha Makovkin of Mendocino, California, was contacted and agreed to undertake the task.

Art Kamitsuka, then Executive Secretary of Presbyterian Men, had received a small piece of the recently demolished Berlin Wall from the wife of a German pastor. The potter was asked to grind up this fragment and include dust from it in the glaze for each chalice. It emerged as a small "teardrop" running down the side of the cup as a visual reminder that dividing walls can be overcome.

A PROGRAM IDEA

Invite a men's group from a neighboring denomination to meet with you and use the time to share your denominational resources and program plans.

A VISION STATEMENT FOR MEN



Men need to experience the reality of the promise that to be in Christ is to know that now there is no condemnation (Romans 8:1). To be set free to live is the opportunity made possible through faith. When this grace is accepted, life begins—the abundant life promised to all in Christ.

We enter the world connected, but in order to survive, we adopt cultural norms which often limit our sense of self, our understanding of manliness and our connections with others. These disconnections can become norms, habits or even addictions and block our deepest, truest desires for love, goodness and community. The church must assist men in understanding their need to be loved and loving. As men begin to experience this new freedom, they will respond to opportunities to develop and grow.

We, the men of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seek a church which affirms men and their part in the mission of Jesus Christ, a church which teaches men appropriate leadership skills, models effective organization based upon equality and inclusiveness, and challenges men to growth in stewardship of time, talent, and treasure. We seek a church which builds on the expertise of men gained in their ministries of work. We seek a church which upholds the ethics of Christian love for us in our business, family and leisure pursuits. We seek a church which takes seriously our spiritual journeys as men and guides us in prayer and worship. We seek a church which calls us to a vital life of witness and evangelism, which is the faithful daily manifestation of the church's authentic life.

We delight in each opportunity to be in fellowship with other men denominationally, ecumenically and globally. As church men, we have historically been active in mission, central in the development of the church's lay leadership, and dedicated to the task of building bridges to overcome differences. We choose to creatively continue these areas of service, to work in partnership with women for the whole work of Christ, and to act responsibly in the ministry which is before us.

Therefore, OUR VISION FOR MEN IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) includes the following:

1. GROUPS WHICH SET THE STAGE FOR MEN TO EXPERIENCE ACCEPTANCE, THE FIRST STEP TOWARD GENUINE LOVE.

Men need "safe" settings to allow participants to be honest and to express feelings. When men realize that their emotions and problems are shared by others they can begin to face them with integrity.

2. COMMUNICATIONS EXPERIENCES WHICH ALLOW THE SPIRIT TO LEAD MEN INTO STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS WITH THOSE CLOSEST TO THEM.

Personal relationships are enriched as the individual is able to see in others the potential for mutual growing and sharing rather than competition or alienation.

3. STUDY MATERIALS WHICH ILLUSTRATE THE NEW FREEDOM IN CHRIST TO WHICH MEN CAN RESPOND AND IN WHICH THEY CAN FIND OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWING AND SERVING. Men prefer open, nonjudgmental ways of learning rather than those which force conformity.

4. OPPORTUNITIES TO BRING THE LOVE OF GOD TO ALL MALES REGARDLESS OF THEIR AGE, ETHNIC BACKGROUND, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, RACE, SOCIAL STATUS OR RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION. By God's grace we must be open to others in everything that we say and do.

5. AFFIRMATION OF GOD'S GIFT OF INTIMACY. The Church can help men understand their need for appropriate sexual activity. It can challenge men to respond to sexually related crises in our society. The church can nurture loving partnerships as of paramount importance in creating community with God at its center.

6. GUIDANCE IN SEEING IN A NEW WAY OUR PARTICULAR WORK IN THE WORLD AS A CALL FROM GOD AND AN EXCITING, PRIMARY OPPORTUNITY FOR CHRISTIAN WITNESS. The church can support men who are unemployed or unhappily employed. It can assist them in helping others experience their daily work as ministry.

7. EXPLORATIONS OF OUR DEEP RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CREATED ORDER AND OUR CARING STEWARDSHIP OF ALL THE EARTH. We are called to be caretakers of God's creation and to have particular regard for other men as brothers and for women as partners in creating vital communities. We need to affirm ourselves as responsible nurturers of the world's children and as dependable participants in healthy family life.

8. INSISTENCE THAT VIOLENCE DESTROYS RATHER THAN DEVELOPS THE RELATIONSHIPS ON WHICH THE SOCIAL FABRIC OF A JUST AND GOOD SOCIETY DEPENDS. Beyond the damage to relations, violence of any kind (physical, emotional, sexual, or spiritual) stunts the growth of persons who resort to such non-solutions. We commit ourselves to opposing any violence which tries to force one position, idea or personal choice upon another. We clearly distinguish between energetic, forceful convictions which are gifts from God and violence which destroys God's good creation.

9. OPPORTUNITIES TO WITNESS TO OUR FAITH WITH YOUNG MALES, TO MENTOR THEM IN THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THEMSELVES AND GOD, TO ILLUSTRATE FOR THEM A LOVE OF FAMILY, CAREER, AND ONE ANOTHER. The church must facilitate partnerships between young, middle-aged and older men, and build a community of trust. It must support divorced men and men facing the various crises of modern life. Fathers, especially single male parents, need guidance in their efforts at parenting and support in their participation in the life of the church.