



The VOICE of Disciples Men

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In this Issue:

- Faith into Action
- More information about X-TREME Faith Bold Action

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This past July, those of us who attended General Assembly in Nashville, TN received a blessing from all the opportunities to fellowship with other Christian men. We are now back in our normal routines. I hope that the spark we received at the GA is still burning somewhere inside us. I also hope a spark is burning inside of those of you who were unable to attend.

That spark is the Holy Spirit leading us men to do the things that show our love and compassion for all of God's children. In showing love and compassion to others we enable them to see God's love and compassion through us.

Since becoming President of the General Conference of Disciples Men, I have had the pleasure of meeting Disciples Men from all over the United States. So many of the men I have met are what I would call Everyday Heroes. Men, who through mission work in their communities, region, or state, let me know that the spark is burning inside many. Let us all commit to fan the spark inside ourselves and let the Holy Spirit lead us to where a helping hand is needed. One way to fan the spark is by making plans to attend The Gathering. A lot of information concerning the Extreme Faith Bold Action Gathering is in this issue of the Voice.

The General Conference would like to know what is happening with your Disciples Men. Let Kelly Harris know through photos and notes what you are doing in your men's groups. We would love to use these photos and stories in future issues of The Voice. You can send these to Kelly by email at kharris@dhm.disciples.org.

I look forward to meeting even more of the wonderful Disciples Men that make up our Church. If you have questions or comments concerning the General Conference of Disciples Men or any other issues please feel free to contact me. You may contact me by email at acjenk@yahoo.com.

See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?

(Isaiah 43:19a)



God is doing a new thing with the Disciples Men this coming July, 2012. Actually, that statement misleading, isn't it? As the Scripture claims, I (God) am doing a new thing. This begs the question, "Has God ever stopped doing things?" Not when one understands that this text is written in the present tense. God is doing all the time. Pick any time in human history and the faithful will claim that God's presence is inevitable. Therefore, it is misleading to write that God is doing a new thing in 2012. God is always doing new things, perhaps humans are having a hard time perceiving what God is doing. Whichever the case, **XTREME FAITH: bold action** is a gathering of Disciples Men near the holy ground of the Campbell mansion. This is a sacred location for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) movement. The gathering will take place at Bethany College, West Virginia.

The design committee for this new gathering has come together with a positive attitude and through prayerful listening, has heard God's guidance for this event. Looking at every aspect with a faithful spirit, this gathering will appeal to young men with its creative hands-on work stations, free flowing worship opportunities, and relevant keynote topics and men who have faithfully attended past events. Echoing the prophet Isaiah, this committee hears God claiming that men's ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is going to be better than ever. Our mysterious, gracious, and redeeming God is not placing on our hearts that past events had no value, but has showered us with enthusiasm that the future will be as good as and more glorious than before.

This said, the question we must ask ourselves, men, is **can you perceive it?** With the attitude and transforming mindset of Isaiah, our hope is that you can. Read the following aloud and hear your own voices with open ears:

- To the new generations of men searching for an event where men will enter into a greater relationship with Jesus Christ and experience God in their lives; **XTREME FAITH** is the event for you.
- To those men who have become disconnected, been in exile with their own spirituality and purpose in the church; **XTREME FAITH** is the event for you.
- To those men who shutter at change, believing that anything new paints a grim picture of events from the past; **XTREME FAITH** is the event for you.
- To men of every age, ethnicity, and cultural background, searching for a place to openly worship the God of diversity; **XTREME FAITH** is the event for you.
- To men who demonstrate their faith with their hands, creative skills, and their "doing," but not sure how this is a spiritual gift needed for the church; **XTREME FAITH** is the event for you.

Men, God is constantly offering and doing new things in our lives. Isn't it interesting that we have the God-given ability to accept new things or pass them up on our earthly journey toward the Heavenly Kingdom. With **bold action**, journey with us to Bethany, West Virginia and see what God is doing.

Greg Ott

Pastor-Counselor of Extreme Faith Bold Action Committee



Come and Share Time with Your Disciples Brothers

Grab some clothes and some tools (if you choose) and join me in Bethany, West Virginia, for the **Extreme Faith Bold Action, A Gathering of Disciples Men on July 13-15, 2012.**

The committee is working very hard to make this event something that you won't forget. We have two great speakers lined up, and I am looking forward to hearing what they have to say and how they will challenge us. We have limited the number of workshops so that you won't miss any that you would like to attend. If workshops are not your cup of tea, we have lined up some great mission projects.



Whatever you choose to do, I know that you will have a rewarding experience. You can find all this information on the web site at: www.gathering2012.org.

I want to encourage you men to come to Bethany and be a part of a great experience that you won't forget.

Roger Poage

Co-chairman of the Extreme Faith Bold Action, A Gathering of Disciples Men

What's Going On with Disciples Men?

Lindenwood
Food for Families
Ministry
Providing Food
for
144 Families
Each Month



Memphis, TN
BBQ



Tennessee
Disciples Men Retreat 2011

What's Going on with Disciples Men?



Southwest retreat
held at Brownwood Lake, TX
Sept 16-18, 2011



What's Going On With Disciples Men?



North Carolina Disciples Men Retreat 2011



10 Ten Life-Charged Words for Disciples Men

Are we there yet? How much longer? Can't we go just a little faster? I thought you said we'd be there by now? Do we have to wait until next July?

Greetings, most excellent Disciples Men, my name is **Derek Maul**. I don't know about you, but I'm excited; I can't wait for next summer and the Extreme Faith-Bold Action Men's Gathering at Bethany College!

- I've seen the videos,
- I've read the promotional material,
- I've talked with the organizers;
- The enthusiasm and the sense of commitment are inspirational.

Not only all that, but you're going to be there too! I'm so much looking forward to meeting each one of you. Then, after we enjoy some great fellowship and swap some stories, I'm going to share something of what God has placed on my heart about what it means to be a Christian Man in the context of 21st Century America.

The implications of **Bethany 2012** are so profound that I wrote a new book based on my topic for Saturday evening's keynote talk. Not a talk based on a pre-existing book; but a brand-new book that's based on the keynote for your Extreme Faith-Bold Action gathering!

I'll be speaking about "**Ten Life-Charged Words for Disciples Men.**" The book (slated to be released just a week or two before the event) is "Ten Life-Charged Words for Men."

The big, huge, important question – and it's been on my heart for a while now – is this, "What are some of the catalysts that are effective when it comes to adding transformational life to my identity as a Disciple of Jesus?"

Let me repeat that: What are some of the catalysts that are effective when it comes to adding transformational life to my identity as a Disciple of Jesus?"



I don't know about you, but I'm not interested in anything that smacks of "The same-old, same-old..." God sent Jesus so that we could live like we mean it. Forget survival mentality, I want us to talk about what it means to thrive!

So, if you are the kind of man who wants to live a cutting edge life and is ready to own a faith that's transformational and challenging; and if you think that Jesus had something other than "protecting the status-quo" in mind when he promised abundant life...

Then why don't we meet up at Bethany and talk about it. It's going to be a stellar weekend! - DEREK

Missions: Faith into Action

His own image. We are made in God's likeness. He gave the very first man work to do in tending to the garden; to till the ground. He even gave Adam the privilege of naming the animals which God had created. God gave Adam work to do that he might be content and fulfilled. God knew that this would actually help Adam, (yes that's correct), our work from God gives us purpose and fulfills our soul with meaning.

Greetings and blessings to you!

My name is Randal Dawson, Missions Coordinator for the upcoming "A Gathering of Disciple Men", at Bethany College in 2012. I am very happy to be writing to you and I look forward to meeting with you in person at Bethany College next year. Since the early beginnings of my life in the church, I have felt the call of missions work and have worked on projects in the Gulf Coast region for several years after hurricane Katrina; along with flooding here at home, in the hills of West Virginia, along with many local work projects. I have experienced firsthand the overwhelming feelings of both sadness and joy of helping others in need when no other help was coming. I have seen the tears of unbearable loss and the priceless smiles coming from those in which we were able to help. I went on each mission prepared to do my best at whatever God would have me do. I came back quite rewarded from the unexpected blessings and closeness in which I had grown towards God. I had seen how He was able to transform my feeble human attempts at working for Him into wonderful inspirations and testimony for those who would come after. It is my prayer that God will allow me to serve Him as long as my days permit and that, in some small way, I can contribute to making known the joys and blessings of serving our Lord.

WHY MISSIONS WORK?

It seems we are always looking for the latest self-help book on Christianity, or the latest word from some person of faith to assist us in how to walk closer to God and to improve our relationship with Him. We say our prayers and try to live godly lives before men. We give our tithes and visit the poor among us. We read our Bibles daily and try to encourage one another in the faith, but, somewhere deep down in our soul there is a longing and a need to do more. A desire to improve our understanding of what God intended for us. It is as though we can sense that God is leading us to do greater things. We are saved indeed, yet the fullness and richness and excitement of serving the Most High God is just not there. Are we missing untold blessings from heaven? What gifts has God stored up for us that we may not have yet found or perhaps never redeem because of either never hearing God's call into missions or our outright refusal to follow His leadings. In this article I hope to explore the idea of missions work and encourage you to listen to God.

Let's begin with the account of creation in the book of Genesis. Genesis 1:1 says "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth". God WORKS and continues His creating work until it is just right. Then, He plants a garden called Eden and places man into it; a man made after

Now let's jump forward in time to the days of Noah. Once again, we see that God has chosen one man, Noah, a child of God to accomplish His purpose in the building of the ark. Noah accepts this life's work and his family is spared the coming flood. Noah's life had meaning and purpose because he chose to accept the mission to which God assigned him. God continues His work to this very day and He longs for us to join with Him. In helping Him we are able to help ourselves; for in working for God through our humility and faith, we become better human beings and better equipped to deal with life's problems, including our own. We

are able to find satisfaction in both the work of our hands and the knowledge that what we do is helping others. As a result, our faith is put into action.

"No single aspect of one's Christian walk better prepares you for manhood and a closer relationship with God than work in missions."

The Bible is filled with stories of those who accepted the missions from God, and we recount and study in great detail each and every one. Whether it is the reading of Moses leading the Israelites from Egypt, or the story of the disciples dropping everything to follow Jesus and participate in His ministry, we are able to see the effect of a faithful response to God's call to make a positive difference in the world. Had these very same chose not obey God, we would probably not know who they were, or that they existed at all. Yet, through their obedience, each of their lives are recorded in the books of the Bible for all eternity. Their lives had purpose, and they were fulfilled through nothing less than their obedience and faithfulness to God.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT?

I think we can begin to see a pattern developing here. You may ask, "But does God really expect me to drop everything and go to Africa"? Well, only you can answer this. But what I do know is that each person's calling is unique to them. Your calling may not lead you a journey in the deepest parts of Africa, but God certainly has work for you to do. He created it in advance just for you. There are many ways in which faith can play a vital role in our Christian life. However, in the call to missions, we may be afraid. God calls us out one by one with no visible means of support. We feel so small and are afraid to fail. How could we possibly succeed? This calling forces us to place our needs before God and challenges us to put our trust in Him completely; which ultimately brings us into a closer relationship with Him.

One of the aspects of missions is that we do not have all the answers. So, we begin our journey on faith alone. We hear the call of God and we answer with our feet and our hands. We may need a support mechanism and the church is the place where we receive this through affirmation and encouragement. Perhaps in the support of our mission calling, the Church can be a great resource. We can do research and try to prepare our self for what is to come thru prayer and time spent alone with God. Nevertheless, ultimately, we simply cannot know everything we will encounter. What

is certain, however, is that God is with us and He does not bring us out to fail. We may be overwhelmed, exhausted and even a bit unprepared. Once we have committed our self to God through faith, we are on our way to be the victors with God providing everything needed to succeed in His call and for His mission. Remember, this mission is His work and that we are just a part of it. Remember also, that part of the mission is to prepare us for things to come and helps in the next step of our Christian journey.

The Invitation

God provides each of us with opportunities to serve Him. He supplies us with the desire and a spirit that is not always supposed to be contained or walled into a comfort zone. He gives us a yearning for adventure and to feel alive with the excitement of looking upon Him to supply our every need. God loves His children and He has such a desire for us to become complete and whole. It is a father's love for his child...our Heavenly Father's love for His child, which is you and me. The journey to missions can begin today! The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) know and understand the importance and value of missions. Through their efforts, many thousands are comforted and helped in times of disaster or in poverty stricken areas. Through their support, lives are changed and the gospel message of Jesus Christ is brought to ears that have not heard. Pray to God and allow Him to reveal to you what it is you should do. Give up control of your life to Him and let Him decide what is best for you. Your willingness to serve is the first step. God will take care of the

rest.

If you are sensing the call to serve in missions, a wonderful opportunity is coming up in July, 2012, at "A Gathering of Disciple Men/Extreme Faith Bold Action". Several mission projects will be offered, including work on the historic Brush Run Church site. Register NOW for the best accommodations and cost savings. Join Disciples Men from various regions, including, West Virginia, Capitol, Virginia, Ohio and Pennsylvania as we explore the exciting and fulfilling world of missions work. Check us out on the web at www.gathering2012.org. I am looking forward to see you there as, together, we make our efforts count for His Kingdom!

Blessings to All!

Randal Dawson

Elder, First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Princeton, West Virginia
President, West Virginia Disciples Men
Missions Co-coordinator for "Extreme Faith/Bold Action: A Gathering of Disciple Men"



Ben Saunders

GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

One of the newest members of the General Conference of Disciples Men, Ben Saunders, is a recent Bachelor of Fine Arts graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University (School of the Arts) and currently resides in Richmond, VA. Ben has grown up in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and is considering returning to school for a Master of Divinity as the next step in his life of ministry.

He has participated in events with many regions and organizations within the Disciples church – including the 2010 Babel Table experience sponsored by the Council of Christian Unity and Reconciliation Ministries.

Most recently, Ben was one of three peace interns for Disciples Peace Fellowship in the summer of 2011. As a peace intern, he traveled to Disciples of Christ camp and conference centers across the country where he led workshops and facilitated discussions focused on the convergence of faith with peace and justice work.

This strong connection between peace, justice, and a life of faith has been his driving energy for becoming a documentary filmmaker. Ben sees filmmaking as a vessel to communicate, an opportunity to raise awareness for various social justice issues, and a way to motivate people to live out loud and act on their passions and beliefs.

His debut film, Blank Street (co-directed with Joey Schihl), is "a documentary about economic struggles in Virginia, the people experiencing them, and the idea of becoming involved in your community." Since March, it has shown in nine different states and has also aired on the Public Broadcasting Service for Central Virginia (www.blankstreetproject.com). Ben joins the General Conference of Disciples Men as the youngest current member and is excited to connect with people of all ages and to look at men's ministry with a new, youthful perspective.



X-TREME FAITH - Workshops List & Descriptions

ALL workshops to be offered twice on Saturday (morning & afternoon) unless otherwise noted.

1. **“Get Real”**,
presented by Derek Maul (Event, Keynote Speaker)

Our event keynote speaker provides a presentation connected with his first book, “Get Real: A Spiritual Journey for Men”; a practical conversation about faith. Derek outlines four essential elements of an authentic spiritual life for men Faith in 4-D.

NOTE: This workshop will only be offered once in the morning.

2. **What Do Your Actions Say About You? Men’s Role in the Church**,
presented by Archie Jenkins (President, General Conference of Disciples Men)

How to get men to church and keep involved. What’s your Hero role in your church.

NOTE: This workshop will only be offered once in the afternoon.

3. **The Future of Men’s Ministry, Key to Their Father’s**,
presented by Gary Ochs (Past President, General Conference of Disciples Men)

Why are the young men leaving the church and how can we get them to come back.

NOTE: This workshop will only be offered once in the morning.

4. **“Blank Street”**, presented by Ben Saunders (Regional Liaison, General Conference of Disciples Men).

NOTE: This is a 45 minute film that will be followed with discussion.

“Blank Street” is a documentary film focusing on people experiencing economic hardships in Virginia. Meet the working class, the homeless, folks who are both and everyone in between. The film captures their little-heard stories and creates a film that depicts unity among all people. The long-term goal is to raise awareness of the issues that transcend borders, towns, and streets.

5. **“Xtreme Jesus”**, presented by Rev. Greg Ott (Event Planning Team, Pastoral Advisor)
An exploration of new ways to bring people into an active relationship with Jesus Christ.

6. **“ARK for Christian Parents”**,
presented by Dr. B. Glenn Wilkerson (Founder & President of The ARK Group, Inc.)

The ARK Program is a breakthrough parenting and teaching skills course created and presented by The ARK Group, Inc. “Adults Relating to Kids” teaches an adult to relate to kids in caring, supportive ways that enable youngsters to feel valued and loved and that elevate children’s self-esteem.

7. **“Male Bonding: Finding Presence in Community”**,
presented by Rev. Dr. Bruce Dobyns (Event Planning Team, Secretary)

Connecting with others is an important part of a man’s life both mentally and spiritually. When men don’t bond with others they are left with a painful void in their lives. If the church is about building relationships then we must provide opportunities for men to grow into more meaningful relationships with each other, with women and with Christ.

NOTE: This workshop will only be offered once in the afternoon.

XTREME FAITH-BOLD ACTION, WE'RE READY, ARE YOU!?

That's the question the event planning team and many other men throughout the hosting regions have for men all across the country. This new concept for men's ministry has something for everyone: **great speakers, diverse and interesting workshops, plenty of recreation, historic mission work options, uplifting worship, exciting music, spirit-filled fellowship and lots of other surprises.**

We expect men to depart from this experience with a new sense for the future of men's ministry. This experience is our first step toward engaging with men of all ages, faiths and backgrounds in dialogue and understanding of what it means to be a man in the 21st century. This event will give men the unique and wonderful opportunity to take with them a spiritual renewal that can transfer into their own men's group activities and daily lives.

We're actively praying for you all, as we work to create a fun and exciting experience for everyone. It has taken 'extreme faith' to get to where we are. The weekend of July 13-15, 2012 the 'bold action' we're preparing to share with you will be unveiled.

We confidently expect a successful event like none other that will be remembered and talked about for some time. Men, let's get rid of our spiritual laziness! Let's renew ourselves together and grow into the spiritually active men we're being called to be! With that in mind here's list of things we'd like you, D-I-S-C-P-L-E-S M-E-N to remember:

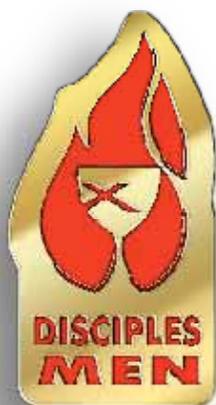
- **DISCERN** the call to attend!
- **INTEND** on being spiritually motivated!
- **STOP** making excuses why you can't attend!
- **CHALLENGE** a friend to attend with you!
- **IMMERSE** your self in the Holy Spirit!
- **PRAY** men will be motivated to attend!
- **LIVE** life like you mean it!*
- **EXPECT** the unexpected!
- **STOP** making more excuses why you can't attend!
- **MAKE** a personal commitment to build on this experience!
- **EARLY** bird registration ends January 9th!
- **NOTE** to self...register today!

Sincerely,

Ray Gryder

Director of Men's Ministry
Christian Church in Virginia Event, Co-chair

(*-ask our keynoter, Derek Maul about this one. Better yet, attend the event to find out!)



Shiny Gold

New Disciples Men Lapel Pins

These new Disciples Men's Lapel Pins are available through the Office of Disciples Men at the Disciples Center in Indianapolis, IN. They come in Gold or Silver and can be purchased for \$2.00 each (a \$2.00 mailing fee will be added to the order). The Lapel Pins can be used in many ways: on your suit coat, shirt collar, as a gift, or maybe purchase several for the men in your church. You can order by contacting Kelly

Harris at: kharris@dhm.disciples.org.

Don't delay and order yours today!



Shiny Silver

XTREME FAITH *bold action*

*"See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?"
Isaiah 43:19a NIV*

A Gathering of Disciples Men

July 13 - 15, 2012

**At Bethany College
in Bethany, West Virginia**

But someone will say, "You have faith;
I have deeds."
Show me your faith without deeds,
and I will show you my faith by what I do.

James 2:18 NIV



**DISCIPLES
MEN**