

Meet the Manly Megachurch Behind This Controversial Message on Beer, Marijuana

Editor's note: On Friday, Charisma News reported on Flatirons Community Church's pastor, Jim Burgen, and a controversial stance he took in one sermon over medical marijuana and beer. You can see that video [here](#). Writer Steve Rees attended one of the church's events and witnessed the ministry firsthand.

Even after a Friday night out with guys drinking micro-brews and getting a new tattoo, Bob Anderson expects the wife and kids to be happy with his actions.

After all, Anderson's buddies at Flatirons Community Church limited themselves to two hand-crafted beers before 8:15 pm., and his latest tattoo expresses a commitment to home life.

"This tattoo is basically a contract to my family that I'm going to live the way of Jesus," said Anderson of the freshly inked thin red line on his left arm.

Twenty-five other men paid \$45 dollars for the same art – literally a thin red line – as part of a signed pledge to fix their eyes on Jesus, demonstrate love, honor and faithfulness to their wives, and lead their families at The Man Event, Flatirons' second mega-men's gathering since January 2012.

Kyle Vincent joined Anderson in inking his arm with a thin red line on Friday.

"I was a real bad person and a jerk," said Vincent, who came to Flatirons after his release from jail in 2009.

"This thin red line is to show that I've changed," the 25-year-old Arvada man said.

Change, commitment and building a community of men who, with God's grace, won't surrender personal responsibilities or care for those entrusted to them are goals of the Thin Red Line pledge and The Man Event, say Flatirons pastors.

"We're trying to be a church that targets men," said Mens Community Pastor Dan Foote. "We'll get the heart of the family by getting the hearts of men."

To get their hearts, Flatirons baited 1,000 men with athletics, cars, sporting goods, food and drink, and a challenge from Senior Pastor Jim Burgen.

"If you want to avoid (casualties) in war and conflict, according to Jesus, you need to link arms with some other men," Burgen said. "Be that brother who has his friend's back.

"The greatest need in my life is for someone – besides my wife – to do life with me. Somebody who I can trust with everything," Burgen said.

The pastor then urged the men, "Before you leave here tonight, just walk by, stop, and talk to somebody" about how you can be involved.

Four thousand men showed up for the first edition of The Man Event in January 2012 when wristbands were distributed to anybody willing to sign the six-point, Thin Red Line pledge, Foote said.

Of the 1,000 men who turned out for the second edition of The Man Event on Friday, only 25 successfully jockeyed for the opportunity to trade in their wristbands for permanent ink.

Competition for ink isn't the only one taking place at Flatirons.

Seats on board a helicopter are limited to four men – twice a month, each month – who will pray over Boulder County cities from the air as part of LIFT, a new ministry that begins in

mid-June

LIFT coordinator and lay ministry leader Abe Salazar says it's an invitation to men to pray.

"It's an amazing way to open the door for men to fellowship (and pray)" he said.

Intercessor Jacob Lambrecht agrees. "I think something like this is amazing.

"Just today, while volunteering at the church, I was praying over people who would come to tonight's event," said Lambrecht who, prior to coming to Flatirons from California, had prepared to jump off a pier.

Praying over Boulder County from the sky excites Lambrecht, despite his fear of heights.

Helicopter ministry isn't the only unique one at Flatirons.

Theology on Tap is a Bible study at brew-pubs around the metro-Denver area. Its popularity among Flatirons men lead, of course, to an inspired new tee-shirt logo: "What Would Jesus Brew?"

Theology on Tap is, similarly, Flatirons' way of embracing those whose faith is expressed through body art.

And, for riflemen, another tee-shirt bears divine support for their sport: "What Would Jesus Shoot?"

Salazar, the lay leader who has ministered to inmates and homeless, isn't at all surprised that a magazine dubbed Flatirons "the church for misfit toys."