

Connecting National and Local Secretariats

CONEXIONES

Volume 28
Number 3
Sept. 2010

Official Publication of the National Lutheran Secretariat, VdC

NLS 2010 Annual Meeting: July 22 — 25, 2010
Hosted by Minnesota



“Let your light shine....” Matthew 5:16

This year’s annual meeting was held at Northwestern College in Roseville, on July 22-25, 2010. We focused on how to let our light shine in our VdC communities. We will not forget meeting Ole and Lena during our Minnesota-based theme meal at lunch. This culminated at the Saturday’s evening meal when we were surrounded by the cloud of witnesses during the serenade.

If you were unable to be with us this year, the articles and pictures in the daily newsletter (found on the web) will give you an idea of who came, what we learned and our hopes for the future. I know many of you use this information to share in your renewal groups, at Ultreyas and in your secretariat meetings. A big **Thank You** to all of the Minnesota Cursillistas for your hospitality, graciousness, and giving us this time to be refreshed and renewed through this movement we call Via de Cristo.



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Write in large letters - be very clear, computers rely on EXACT information

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CONEXIONES is the official publication of the National Lutheran Secretariat, a national association of the Via de Cristo (Way of Christ) movement, representing over 97,500 who have participated in 48 movements across the U.S. Via de Cristo is a Lutheran expression of Cursillo®, a renewal movement developed within the Roman Catholic Church in the late 1940s. The Lutheran movement had its beginning in Florida and Iowa in 1972. The purpose of this publication is to inform all members of each NLS affiliated secretariat, Lutheran Bishops and District Presidents about the activities of the National Lutheran Secretariat and its affiliated secretariats. Subscriptions to the above named positions are free. If you know one of the above is not receiving **CONEXIONES**, call a member of the board at the numbers listed on the side.

Subscriptions for the general public are \$6.00 per year, and are available by sending your name, complete mailing address, and phone numbers to **CONEXIONES** Treasurer, **Steve Barnett**, 5091 Oley Turnpike Road Reading, PA 19606 or contact him at; [610-301-9900](tel:610-301-9900) (C)

Material for CONEXIONES: If you have information for **CONEXIONES**, items, requests and/or information, address corrections, changes or additions - even inspirational bits - send them to the **CONEXIONES** Editor at the address on the side. **DEADLINES:** January 15th, April 15th, August 15th, and November 15th.

WELCOME- Newly Elected NLS Board

My name is Carolyn Hawkins. My all-in-color Via de Cristo life began at the table of Esther in the fall of 1990 when I made Western North Carolina (WNC) Women's Via de Cristo #24. Many times, I described my weekend experience as affirming and encouraging, but not anything life changing.



In 1990, I was single and living with my parents (Larry and Lois Witham). One evening, God gave me the opportunity to talk to Mom and Dad about Via de Cristo. They made the spring 1991 weekends and life changed for all of us.

In a 24 hour span while I served on a weekend in 1998, after praying for a 2 by 4, I had three women use the exact same words to tell me I needed to get to know Russell Hawkins. I had met Russell at VdC Ultreyas and weekends, but I did not know him well. I finally called him and in November 1999, Russell and I married each other in a rainbow wedding. Life changed again.

Russell and I have been blessed with two beautiful children: Lydia (almost 9) and Josiah (3 and half). Together, we worship at Morning Star Lutheran Church in Matthews, North Carolina.

In July, the delegation attending the 2010 NLSAM elected me to serve this NLS Fourth Day community as the VP of Administration. I thank you and God for the opportunity to serve in this way.

In case you haven't heard it before: be careful about what you say and what you pray for. God sent me the 2 by 4 I prayed for and through the Via de Cristo community, my life has been undeniably changed as He has showered me with grace over and over again.

God loves you my sisters and brothers, and so do I.

Carolyn Hawkins,
NLS V.P of Administration

My name is Steve Barnett. I worship at Reformation Lutheran Church in Reading, PA with my wife Elisha and daughter Katie. I made Notes of Grace Mixed #1 in Middle Tennessee in the spring of 2006 where I sat at the table of Rebekah. Elisha and I also have a 24 year old son and a wonderful 3 year old grandson.



Since my Via de Cristo Weekend, I have had the opportunity to served on many teams in 4 different secretariats and have been involved in the start-up of the new Journey in Faith Via de Cristo Secretariat, of which I am now serving my 3rd year as the Lay Director. I attended my first annual meeting in Phoenix, AZ in 2008. I am now privileged to serve as your NLS Treasurer.

The Lord has been stretching me these last few years by calling me to serve in areas that are primarily administrative. But finance is my background and I thank the Lord for giving me these talents, so that I can serve in this wonderful movement. I look forward to serving our Lord by serving you and the NLS as Treasurer, and I will work hard to keep our movement looking forward and growing.

I want to thank Bob Northrup and all the other past Board Members for the great work they have done during their terms on the NLS board. Bob has been a great brother in Christ, and I wish and pray that he will be continually blessed by his service to the Lord.

This movement is dedicated to building leaders in their own respective home churches, doing the work that must be done – proclaiming the love of Christ by word and deed.

We all have important work ahead of us as we serve as the hands and feet of Christ. I ask you to please keep this movement and the NLS board in your prayers as we seek to equip God's people to serve in His name.

If there is anything I can do to assist you and/or your secretariat, please don't hesitate to contact me. My email address is sgb121266@aol.com

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, remember God loves you and so do !!!!

Steve Barnett,
NLS Treasurer

**2010 NLS Newly Elected Board Members:
Steve Barnett, Carolyn Hawkins & Doug Givens**



NLS Board Minutes — June 6th Tele-conference Minutes

Present: Tracy Schmidlin, Bob Northrup, Steve Gielda, Doug Givan, Katie Sistar, Diane Purcell, Judy Laabs-Foss. Traci opened the teleconference at 7:05 p.m.

Secretary Report – Katie has sent out 2009 Survey Reports and the NLS Constitution with an Affirmation of Affiliation form for the Lay Director/President and Spiritual Director of each secretariat to sign. She has received survey information from 46 out of 47 secretariats, and 36 signed Affirmation of Affiliation forms have been returned.

Board Reports: We discussed when reports from the Board needed to be sent to Diane for the National Meeting. They will be sent to her by June 15.

Treasurer Report – Bob has received dues from 33 secretariats. The NLS dues are due in May. The current checking balance is \$9,680.17 and the Thrivent balance is \$34,323.00.

Vice President Outreach – Steve has been in contact with Oregon, and they are ready to affiliate as Oregon Via de Cristo. They are sending three representatives to NLSAM and are making a banner to bring.

There have been 3 requests from Africa concerning Via de Cristo that he will follow up on. The Board discussed ways of working with Heart of Florida as they try to reorganize. *Bob moved that we offer a \$500 stipend for registration and travel for two people from Heart of Florida to attend the NLSAM this year. Steve seconded. Motion passed.*

Speakers are not compensated but their travel is paid for by the Board, and their registration is paid for by the Host Committee. There will be at least two speakers to discuss how the Via de Cristo Fourth Day has made a difference in their lives. The Board discussed the time frame for speakers.

Website Discussion: There was a problem with the website when it became overloaded. We have changed providers, and Larry has been working diligently to get it working up to capacity. People who have been having trouble updating their information should be able to do so now. Larry is also posting the NLSAM schedule on the web.

Minnesota Information: Diane reported that Minnesota made \$1400 on the Golf Tournament Fundraiser they held yesterday even though it was in the rain. Registrations seem to be slow in coming in. The Board agreed to each take 7 secretariats and call the Lay Directors/Presidents to encourage them to send delegates. We will also let them

know that there are three openings on the board that need to be filled. This is an opportunity to encourage secretariats and to see if there is anything they would like to share or bring up for discussion. The Board discussed having a program by Thrivent representatives while we are in Minnesota.

Board Openings: Vice President of Administration, Treasurer, Spiritual Director and Data Base Coordinator. Job descriptions are available to interested parties. The first three are elected positions and the fourth is appointed. Doug Givan is running for a second term as Spiritual Director.

Spiritual Director Report – Doug has solicited devotions and has collected 30 to go in a booklet to share with secretariats to use in their Fourth Day.

Gathering History - North Carolina is working on getting ready for 2011. We are interested in people talking and writing about their movement's history. We especially want the ones who have been involved since the early days to tell us about our history.

1972 – 2012 The 40th Anniversary of the first Lutheran weekends.

1981 – 2011 The 30th anniversary of the first National Lutheran Secretariat meeting.

1986 - 2011 The 25th anniversary of the year when the body voted to change from Cursillo to Via de Cristo.

Pr. Doug had a short devotion on hope and encouragement. *Bob moved that we adjourn. Steve seconded. Motion passed.* The meeting closed with prayer at 9:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Katie Sistar
Secretary



DeColores:

I think it as a truism that things which, at a glance, appear simple turn out to be either very complicated or very well organized. So when Tracy asked for a volunteer - to take over the data Coordinators position I thought to myself, "...this doesn't seem so difficult, that should be easy...". But I have quickly realized I need to trust in our Lord to equip the called, for certainly the opposite did not occur. Brothers and Sisters in Christ I bring you greetings and ask that you please bear with my fumbling beginnings at this task with patience.



Do you know a member of your local secretariat who isn't getting email notices when our latest newsletter is posted online? If so, *maybe* our list is not up-to-date. In the coming months I will be in touch with each Secretariat's Lay Director seeking to update our existing data. If your Secretariat is holding elections anytime soon, please ask or remind your Lay Director to send in an updated list of Secretariat positions. If you will contact me I would be happy to forward a simple template (excel based) which will simplify this process for you. It can be filled in and emailed back to the database coordinator, Jim Ryan at jhrnlsvdc@aol.com. If you would simply like to inquire about the status of your Secretariat's information, you can do this too by emailing me at the address shown above, or you can snail mail a request to me at **7108 Woodgate Dr, Fishers, IN 46038**.

Are you receiving a hard copy of the newsletter in the mail but you have a valid email address? If so, would you consider please sending us your email address in an effort to help us conserve our resources wherever possible. Every stamp adds up, and through your efforts we have achieved substantial reduction in postage costs on the past few years.

I look forward to working with each of our Secretariats during this coming year. **GLYASDI**

Jim Ryan
New Database Coordinator



NLS Board Minutes — NLS Annual Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 21 & 22, 2010

Present: Tracy Schmidlin, Pr. Doug Givan, Bob Northrup, Steve Gielda, Katie Sistar, Judy Laabs-Foss, Diane Purcell, Pr. Larry Conway

Tracy called the meeting to order at 1:50 p.m. Pr. Doug read Acts 2:37-47 and reminded us that we are all called to serve the Lord.

During the process of going over each day's schedule of events at this meeting, the Board discussed many items.

The delegate seating will be different this year. The delegates will find their table cards at their designated places at the tables and be seated. During the Power Point presentation, they will stand and be recognized.

The Board discussed a variety of challenges related to our movement. 1. What would be needed for a secretariat to withdraw from the National VdC? 2. We discussed Tracy's report and the importance of not getting involved with church politics but staying true to the purpose of Via de Cristo. 3. The weekend Palanca charts are up to date on the web. 4. People will be asked to list questions and comments and possible speakers on 3x5 cards and turn them in. 5. How do we know what secretariats are doing? 6. What does it mean to be Via de Cristo? 7. What does it mean to be Lutheran?

Tracy has talked with Luther Piel and Pr. Ed Simonsen, and it is agreed that we need to keep the main thing the main thing in Via de Cristo and keep it focused. The board discussed the questions to be used in small groups. Steve G. will give directions to the small group breakouts. As a follow up to the two Shining Light speakers, Rev. Frank Ruffatto and Rae Kupferschmidt, the attendees will have time to reflect on the witness. Then the small groups will meet to further reflect and discuss what it meant to them.

There will be 15 minutes of gathering music before the worship service begins each day.

There are nominees who have turned in bios for the offices available. Tracy will explain what the procedure is if someone is nominated from the floor.

There will be three seminars this year. We talked about which seminars we would be able to be a part of.

Pr. Joe Nilsen, author of Lost and Found, will not be able to be here this

year. His books are available at amazon.com. He has a second book published entitled Got a Minute, Pastor?

He has donated \$1100 to NLS from the proceeds of his first book.

The entire Essentials Manual is on line.

Bob moved that the web master be given the task to always ask Seminar and Forum presenters and Keynote Speakers to give permission to post their presentations on the web. Katie 2nd. Motion passed.

Larry explained the layout for the new website and the way to access the its different components. We had difficulties with web providers throughout 2009 and most of 2010. The weekend's lists needed updating because of this. Attendees are to let Larry know if their weekends aren't posted.

As volunteers, board members wind up with materials that need to be passed on to new board members. At times it is difficult to transfer materials and information. *Steve moved that Tracy be authorized to receive reimbursement for travel expenses and a one night hotel stay to pick up NLS materials from Nu Helgager that Nu has from when she was VP of Administration. Doug 2nd. Motion passed.*

Steve G. stated that he feels we need to do a better job of educating members about the essentials. He plans to hand out a survey that will be returned to him to get an idea of how secretariats are following the essentials.

The meeting recessed at 10:00 p.m.

The Board meeting continued at 9:00 a.m. Thursday morning.

Tracy went over the requirements for nominations for officers that she would be announcing.

The vendors are here and have a location for the meeting. The Board discussed the importance of copyrighted items relating to music vendors. We need to make sure vendors are legitimate and are obeying copyright protections.

Diane brought up international Via de Cristo's. Papua New Guinea is having weekends #54 and #55, and they are doing well. They may still be using old material and may need to be sent electronically updated material for their

weekends. Other groups are in Latvia and Sweden, Finland, Bolivia and Kenya and West Cape, Africa. It would be nice to invite them or somehow include them in our anniversary years. Steve will mention these international groups in his report at the Business Meeting to see what the body would suggest.

Diane explained some changes in the way Thrivent handles financial requests from groups. Local secretariats as well as National Hosts need to look into how to apply for funds from the National Thrivent level to help with their projects. There needs to be a liaison person in place before an organization can receive funds.

As a way of helping people get acquainted, Tracy is to hand out a People Scavenger Hunt. The first 20 to answer the questions and turn them in to Katie will receive a prize pin of praying hands on a card with a scripture verse on it.

Diane told about Babe the Blue Ox contest. There will be a drawing on Saturday night for a winner who guessed who the Blue Ox was in the video that Minnesota had available.

Diane and Katie are to place Delegate table cards on the tables in the business meeting room this morning. Delegates will go directly to their seating today.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Thursday, July 22, 2010

Tracy Schmidlin opened the first Business Meeting of the 2010 NLSAM at Northwestern College in St. Paul, Minnesota at 4:00 p.m. on July 22, 2010. Pr. Doug Givan read a passage from Matthew and led in an opening prayer. Tracy welcomed everyone, gave general information about this year's meeting and made announcements.

The Board introduced themselves. The elected board members are Tracy Schmidlin – President, Steve Gielda – Vice President of Outreach, Bob Northrup – Treasurer, Katie Sistar – Secretary, Doug Givan – Spiritual Director. The appointed board members present are Judy Laabs-Foss - Newsletter Editor, Diane Purcell - Financial Adviser, Ron Millard – Historian/Archivist, Larry Conway – Web Site Coordinator, John Bradford – Distribution Center. Absent: Lucy Hightower – Data Base Coordinator, Paul Sabatier-Smith – Palanca Coor-

NLS Annual Meeting Minutes - Continued

dinator.

Tracy asked past officers present to stand and introduce themselves. Past presidents were Larry Witham, Doug Burrows, and Randy Mullin. Past V.P. Outreach were Ron Millard and Ed Hansen. Past treasurer was Diane Purcell. Past Spiritual Directors were Pr. Nate Lungren, Pr. John Propst and the very first one, Pr. Ed Simonsen.

Steve Gielda introduced Oregon as the 48th secretariat with their delegates, Karen O'Neil and Pr. Shelley Willem.

The Host Committee chairs Tom and Deb Gryzowski made announcements and encouraged everyone to pray and sign the palanca posters. Deb announced Babe the Blue Ox contest. There is a gathering time of 15 minutes with music before worship.

Mary and Don Beutel welcomed everyone to Northwestern College and explained some of the history of the college, including that Billy Graham was the second president of the college. It moved to this location in 1970. It has had a radio ministry since 1949 and is the #1 Christian radio station in the area.

Tracy asked Jill Norell and delegates from Florida to lead the singing of the Holy Spirit prayer.

Tracy explained how important it is for the delegates to be ambassadors and to carry information back home to share.

The Seating of the Delegates was done by the secretary Katie Sistar. As each secretariat was named and shown on the power point presentation, those delegates stood and were recognized.

There were 12 secretariats that were absent out of 48.

Attendees were asked to check their registration information and put corrections on 3x5 cards and turn them in to the box at the back of the room so a corrected list could be made.

Steve Gielda presented his Outreach Report and listed the overseas groups that have been sponsored by secretariats here in the U.S. The groups are from Latvia, Sweden, Finland, Papua New Guinea, Kenya and West Cape, Africa. He asked if there was interest in asking them to participate with us in our anniversary celebrations. *Pr. Diane Wales moved that we invite VdC representatives from other countries to come to our 30th anniversary meeting next year. Terry Sanders 2nd. Motion passed.* There was

discussion regarding the financial aspect of this invitation. *Ed Broestl moved that we see what it costs and what affect it would have on our budget to pay expenses for someone to come from those distances, and bring it back to the group. Pr. Diane Wales 2nd. Motion passed.*

Pr. Doug Givan stated that the Spiritual Director Report is in the Notebook and told them, "You are here because God has called you. Make the most of your time."

Katie Sistar had delegates find the Secretary's Report in their notebooks and make a correction to the number of clergy listed on the survey data page. It should read 3118 pastors have been through a weekend. It is important to take the information back home and as secretariats elect new officers, that information should be sent to the Secretary and the Data Base Coordinator. We need to keep our files up to date so we can contact people when necessary. She read an explanation of the Affirmation of Affiliation and indicated that every secretariat needs to make sure the form has been returned to her.

Tracy asked delegates to consider hosting a NLSAM and invited them to come to the hosting meeting. We invited bids for 2013. She explained that there is a 40 page Hosting Document with guidelines on how to do it.

Tracy told the delegates that Judy Laabs-Foss is our Newsletter Editor and will lead a committee on how to do a newsletter.

Ron Millard – Archivist/Historian appealed for more history information. He asked attendees to fill out 3x5 cards and let him know when their first weekend was, who their first leaders were, the date they were incorporated and other information that would be interesting. They can send an e-mail too.

Tracy went over election procedures, including how to do nominations from the floor, and named the three positions available. Lois Witham announced that the Nominating Committee is nominating Alice Allison (TX) as VP Administration, Steve Barnett (PA) as Treasurer, and Doug Givan (IN) for a second term as Spiritual Director.

Tracy went over the times and places for the rest of the day: dinner, worship,

coffee house, first timer's photo, computer, and small groups information. When attendees go to the designated small group, stay with it for the weekend. Consider the 3 questions that are given. All were reminded to let Steve Gielda know where their small group decides to meet so everyone can find it.

Tracy called for a recess till tomorrow. Pr. Doug led the group in prayer before dinner.

Thursday, July 22, 2010

The Board met at 7:00 p.m. to discuss the financial aspect of inviting international representatives to attend next year's NLSAM and paying their way to the anniversary celebration in North Carolina.

The Finance Committee will discuss this also. A suggestion that was made is to discern if some type of video conference would be more feasible than the cost of paying for several overseas representatives' expenses.

A concern was raised. How do international Via de Cristo movements fit with NLS?

Doug moved that we recess. Steve 2nd. Motion passed

Meeting recessed at 7:45 p.m.

Friday, July 23, 2010

The second Business Meeting opened at 9:45 a.m. The group sang the Holy Spirit Prayer. Pr. Doug led in prayer.

We finished going over the Board reports that were in the Notebook.

Diane Purcell – Finance Report. She has information on the IRS requirements. Delegates need to take the report back to the secretariats and make sure they are in compliance with the May 17 IRS Directive on Non Profits. She is leading a seminar with more information.

Distribution Center - John Bradford has his report in the Notebook.

Data Base Coordinator – Lucy Hightower is not able to continue. We need to appoint a replacement. Those in attendance were instructed to look at the job description and let us know if interested.

Palanca Chair – Paul Sabatier-Smith is not here. There were challenges with the palanca charts on the website this past year. We now have a new provider and the palanca charts were up to date as of

June 8. There is a form in the Notebook that people can use to send to Paul to add weekends that aren't listed. Continue to be in sacrificial prayer for one another as palanca.

Tracy went over her President's Report and the statement that the Board wrote last October. Via de Cristo is not part of church politics nor any church body, and is not a para church. We are a movement to help build up the body of Christ. It is a method to help us share the gospel of Christ and share the good news always in love. Via de Cristo was started as intentionally Lutheran. The word and sacraments are important as basic Christianity, and we recognize Jesus Christ as the only way. We need to keep the main thing the main thing and not get side tracked from our purpose.

Ed Broestl explained the National Coordinator Campaign. We're trying to fund the position through an endowment, and we first need to set up a foundation to do that. He encouraged interested people to come to that Committee Meeting this afternoon.

Tracy explained that in 2004 we adopted a revised constitution, and affiliated secretariats signed it by 2005. The Board was directed to gather signatures every 2-5 years to make sure secretariats are in touch with their purpose, their mission statement and all of that which goes into the constitution. This is year 5, and we have 31 of the 47 Affiliation Forms returned. The forms need to be returned to help us know that we are all on the same page. Some groups don't have a Spiritual Director. The delegates were asked to help decide what secretariats need to do in this situation. *Pr. Gerald Olsen moved that secretariats that do not have a Spiritual Director find a pastor that is more active on the weekends and that person sign in the Spiritual Director's place. Steve Barnett 2nd.* The delegates had a lengthy discussion regarding this. There was much discussion about the importance of having a Spiritual Director to keep the groups on tract theologically and for spiritual direction. *Katie Sistar called the question. Billie Lewis 2nd. Motion passed to vote on the motion. Motion was defeated.*

Martha Uhlir moved that Lay Directors can sign the Affiliation Form and send it in with a note that there is no local Spiritual Director so the NLS Board is aware

of the need. Rob Shaw-Fuller 2nd. Motion passed.

There are three positions open for election and one appointed position open. The Data Base position is appointed. Tracy opened the nominations from the floor. *Larry Witham nominated Carolyn Hawkins for the position of Vice President of Administration. Krista Neault 2nd. Motion passed.* No other nominations were made from the floor. *Billie Lewis moved that we close nominations. Dick Link 2nd. Motion passed.*

Carolyn introduced herself, and the other nominees introduced themselves again. The nominees are Vice President of Administration – Alice Allison and Carolyn Hawkins, Ballots will be provided for election to this office, Treasurer – Steve Barnett, Spiritual Director - Pr. Doug Givan.

The seminars were explained and locations given before we recessed till Saturday morning.

Pr. Doug closed this part of the meeting with prayer at 11:00 a.m.

Friday, July 23, 2010

Tracy opened the third Business Meeting at 9:45 a.m. The attendees sang the Holy Spirit Prayer and Pr. Doug offered a prayer.

Lois Witham and her Banner Committee came to the front and showed the banners that were prayed over and made, one for Oregon and two to be given at the discretion of the Board.

Tracy announced that Pr. George Kahl who had been instrumental in helping so many secretariats with their weekends and Pr. Norb Kabelitz from Sonbeam have entered their Fifth Day.

INKY is sending 5 people to help Sweden's VdC #3. Latvia sponsored them. Tracy announced that Jim Ryan from Indiana (INKY) stepped up to volunteer for the Data Base Coordinator position and has been appointed. He replaces Lucy Hightower who has served long and well in that position. Deb Gryzwinski reminded people to keep trying to identify Babe the Blue Ox.

Carolyn Karl told about Pr. Joe Nilson's books, Lost and Found and Got a Minute, Pastor? They can be found at amazon.com. He has donated \$1100 proceeds from his first book to NLS.

Election of Officers: *Pastor Shelley moved that we accept the unopposed nominees, Steve Barnett for Treasurer and Pr. Doug Givan for Spiritual Director, by acclamation. Watson Ray 2nd. Motion passed.* Ballots were passed out for delegates to vote for Vice President of Administration. The nominees are Alice Allison and Carolyn Hawkins. Carolyn Hawkins was elected VP Administration. *Ed Broestl moved that we accept and destroy the ballots for VP Administration. Denise Bentley 2nd. Motion passed.*

Other announcements were made while the votes were counted. The installation of officers will be done at the Saturday night worship service. The offering at that service is the only offering for the weekend, and it is designated for Outreach. Nancy Killian invited the group to look over the Minnesota supply trailer that has all the supplies in it for the weekends they hold at churches. Deb told people when and where to turn in their room keys. There is to be a corrected print out of attendees by Sunday morning. Region to Region will meet one more time and will share together rather than at the business meeting this time. They were asked to do an Essentials Survey and turn it in to Steve. No committee reports were ready this morning. They will be done in the afternoon business meeting.

Meeting recessed at 10:15 a.m.



NLS Annual Meeting Minutes - Continued

Saturday, July 24, 2010

Tracy opened the fourth Business Meeting at 3:40 p.m. with prayer.

The following groups turned in written reports:

1. Lay Director Dialogue- Tracy led this. There was a copy for all.

2. Newsletter Editor – Judy Laabs-Foss did the daily Conexiones for the week-end.

3. Banners – Three banners were completed – 1 for Oregon and 2 to be given at the discretion of the Board.

4. Spiritual Director's Report – 11 pastors attended. Pr. Gerry Olsen and Pr. Larry Conway are going to work on a blog for pastors. Hopefully the 30 day Devotional Book that will be made available to pilgrims for their Fourth Day that Pr. Doug is completing will be out in the Fall.

5. Visioning – Randy Mullin. They discussed what VdC cares about and how VdC enhances the value of Christian living.

6. Hosting – Don Armbrust. He talked about next year in NC, and planning using the Hosting Document.

7. Coordinator Campaign – Ed Broestl. We need a minimum of \$25,000 to create a foundation for the campaign to fund a full time position. Between now and September 30 we need the secretariats to identify a point of contact to help with the following: A. Getting information to the secretariats for distribution to members B. Endowment Planning Group established with the goal of having guidelines established by the end of the year and C. Methods to fund an endowment.

Finance and Budget Committee – Bob Northrup. The Board and Finance Committee discussed international VdC representatives attending next year's NLSAM. They suggested a video conference or a video message between each group and us. The cost would be just a few hundred dollars.

Diane Purcell has looked over the books, and the books accurately reflect the financial position of NLS.

Pr. Gerald Olsen moved that we accept the finance report as submitted. Billie Lewis 2nd. Motion passed.

The Finance Committee made a motion to adopt a standard operating procedure authorizing the NLS Board to spend

prior year's accumulated funds and fundraising designated funds for the raising of endowment funds for the National Coordinator position. Julia Shaw-Fuller 2nd. Motion passed.

Tom Gryzwinski announced how to do boarding passes and how to turn in their room keys.

Tracy brought up that coming up is an Anniversary Year. Everyone is challenged to do what they can to find out these things.

Who started your secretariat and who did you start?

Was there a parent organization for you?

Why did you start a VdC?

What does it mean to be Lutheran?

How can we be Lutheran and ecumenical at the same time?

Do you know who your first Spiritual Director and first Lay Director were? What excited them about this movement?

Is there an individual in your movement to ask questions about the past?

Tracy would like people to e-mail her or mail 3x5 cards with the history information to her so we can make a book about our history. Ron Millard, as our Archivist/Historian, needs that information also.

Steve Giolda asked delegates to complete the Wellness Checklist to see how healthy their secretariat is. E-mail him if they need help. He also requested that the Essentials Surveys be turned in to him.

The Board presented retiring Treasurer Bob Northrup with a gift to thank him for his ten years of service to the Board as Web Site Coordinator and then Treasurer. He leaves to concentrate on his work with Habitat for Humanity. A gift will be mailed to Lucy Hightower for her years of service as well.

The North Carolina Host Team in their colorful T-shirts and with country, costumed speakers presented us with a charming southern invitation to come to Charlotte, North Carolina next year for the NLSAM on July 28-31, 2011.

Pr. Gerry Olsen moved that we adjourn. Billie Lewis 2nd. Motion passed.

The Business Meeting of 2010 NLSAM adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Saturday, July 24, - 2011 Host Mtg.

A large number of the North Carolina Host Committee met with members of the Board at 2:40 p.m. Pr. John Propst opened with prayer.

Tracy asked them to be sure they had the 8/09 Hosting document. The Hosting document is a changing document as needed. It has guidelines which are a skeleton for adding the Host's flavor. They have read through it. They were encouraged to keep a flexible attitude and be aware of changes as they come along. Most chairs of Committees were present at this meeting. They introduced themselves and which position they hold.

At Mid-Year the Board needs a place to stay in Charlotte with food and transportation provided. Mid-Year is Oct. 22-24, 2010.

We discussed scheduling things as they go and emphasizing our history as they plan the 30th anniversary of NLS forming as Cursillo. We would like founders to come to NC. We discussed finances and the time frames for getting things done the Mid-Year weekend, including visiting Queens University of Charlotte. The Board will work on the agenda and speakers.

The Host Committee is a sub committee of the National Board. They have been having good planning meetings, and they are comfortable with where they are in planning now. The palanca prayer team is praying with people to help be prepared for next summer. Their theme is "Way of Christ." They have a theme song written by Bryan Vanderhill and have already gotten tie dyed shirts ready.

Meeting closed at 3:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Katie Sistar
NLS Secretary



NLS Board Meeting Minutes

Sunday, July 25, 2010

Present: Tracy Schmidlin, Steve Barnett, Steve Gielda, Carolyn Hawkins, Katie Sistar, Judy Laabs-Foss, Diane Purcell, Pr. Larry Bowman, Pr. Doug Givan, Ron Millard, Jim Ryan, Larry Witham, Lois Witham

The Board Meeting opened at 10:00 a.m. with prayer led by Pr. Doug.

Everyone introduced themselves and the Board welcomed the new officers. The Board updated information for the letterhead.

Board set up a Teleconference for September 12, 2010 at 7:00. Carolyn is to receive the evaluations from NLSAM to summarize by Mid-Year. Board also set up a teleconference to go over the minutes from 2010 NLSAM on August 22 at 7:00 p.m. Other teleconference dates are tentatively scheduled for February 20, 2011, April 10, 2011 and May 22, 2011.

Board discussed having a Vice President of Outreach committee to support the Regions. There is a regional person designated for each Region now. There needs to be a Leadership Training Workshop for Regions to educate leaders to be able to know how to help other secretariats within their region.

Doug is still working on the Fourth Day Devotional Publication.

In looking ahead two years, Tracy has talked with Bill Guman, and he is excited about Hosting NLSAM in Colorado in 2012. He and his team have been invited to come to North Carolina to participate and observe the proceedings there.

Ron got promises from attendees to work on their history. Magdala Ray has agreed to retype the 25th Anniversary Board discussed the Pastor to Pastor video that was done in Miami. Pr. Doug has it now. The video is to be shown to pastors to encourage them to attend a weekend or to serve on a team. There needs to be copyright permission given for items. Ron will standardize the format.

Board discussed who needs to be at the Mid-Year meeting and that people need to attend the whole meeting from Friday through Sunday.

Board discussed possible ways of registering next year for the NLSAM.

The offering received for Outreach on Saturday night was \$1804.00.

Diane moved that we authorize Steve

Barnett to be a signer on the NLS bank accounts and Bob Northrup is no longer a signer on said accounts. Carolyn 2nd. Motion passed.

Diane moved that the NLS pass a corporate resolution authorizing Steve Barnett and Tracy Schmidlin to execute documents and conduct business with Thrivent Investment Management. Steve G. 2nd. Motion passed.

Diane moved that the treasurer be authorized to purchase Quick Books 2010.

Doug G. 2nd. Motion passed.

Diane had the paperwork for all officers to sign the documents for Thrivent. They were signed.

Diane moved that NLS develop and maintain a corporate book of adopted policies and procedures. Steve B. 2nd. Motion passed.

At Mid-Year all need to bring procedures they have copies of to work on compiling a corporate book.

The secretariats who did not return the Affirmation of Affiliation form need to be contacted by the secretary and encouraged to return the form as soon as possible.

Checks were written by Steve B. to reimburse Board members for expenses for the 2010 NLSAM.

Katie moved we adjourn. Steve G. 2nd. The meeting closed at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Katie Sistar
NLS Secretary



SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT

"God is Love..." 1John 4:8

Long story short. Over the last few days it seems like I've been saying several times to people "long story short". I don't know if I'm in a rush and don't want to go into the detail, or just saving the other person time. "Long story short", I say, and I give them the basics. Just the facts, ma'am!

In July we had our national weekend gathering in Minnesota. "Long story short", it was a great, great weekend. The folks in the grand twin cities did a wonderful job organizing everything and we had great food, fellowship and outstanding worship. Long story short, God was present and God was good and I give thanks to God for all who served and all who attended.

Long story short, I am blessed and refreshed in my spirit again to know that our national movement is alive and well. Secretariats are in touch with each other and weekends are being put on, and Christ is being shared and grace abounds. When we gathered in Minnesota, long story short, we gathered not to look back, but to look forward. I welcome Carolyn, Steve, and Jim to the board and look forward to serving together.

We embraced the theme verse of the weekend "let your lights shine before others" (Matthew 5:16) and Minnesota "glowed" during the weekend. The light now comes back to our respective secretariats and, long story short; we light up our Via De Cristo to share the light of Christ!

Long story short, as John says in his first letter, "God is love". Long story short, that love is given to us in Christ and we share that love through our Via De Cristo. We invite friends, family, co-workers and fellow church members to come and experience the light of Christ!

As you reach out to share the light on your local VDC movement, reach out in grace and love. Reach out and ask someone to attend, reach out and say "yes" to team service, sponsorship.

And, long story short, our weekends will always consist of our essentials. Not to rush, or cut something short, or to leave out a detail. But to make sure the basics, the essentials are in place. And most of all, to take a short 3 day weekend to tell a long, long story. A story we love to tell...of Jesus and His love! Amen!

Pastor Doug Given,
NLS Spiritual Director



V.P. OF OUTREACH REPORT

WE ARE WHAT WE REPEATED DO

How many times have we heard; we are what we eat, we become what we believe, and we are what we repeatedly do? When filled and focused on the Holy Spirit, these are all good things. But as human nature kicks in, we often find that these common phrases have a different context, a context that brings into focus our poor behaviors or habits. This was a common unspoken theme of those I spoke to at this year's National Lutheran Secretariat meeting. It was great to speak to so many of you this year and thank you for investing some time to come to my seminar on "How to Build Your Community from the Inside".

During the seminar, there were two key questions we focused on;

What are you doing to find new pastors, keep them active and hold them accountable?

What is your outreach strategy to grow your community and build new Disciples for Christ?

Many concerns were shared about finding and keeping pastors active in the community and developing a smart outreach strategy to engage new churches and extend your reach to find new pilgrims. We were blessed to listen to an equal amount of best practices to overcome those concerns. All of the best practices that were shared throughout the three different seminars have been captured and were distributed at the final business meeting. If you did not get a copy, please email me at sgielda@cox.net and I will send you a copy.

As the title of this article states; "we become what we repeatedly do". Many secretariats have slowly slipped away from the Essentials of VdC without knowing it. They have merely become what they repeatedly do and find themselves with some of the common challenges of few active pastors, cancelling weekends because of too few pilgrims, poor attendance at Ultreyas and not enough people to serve on team. The reason that most of these concerns existed is because we have all gotten away from our essentials. We have become lax in our accountability to sponsors; we are allowing people to join team that are not in an active reunion group or small group of accountability partners. In addition, we have not used the gifts God has given us in our community to develop a smart outreach strategy that will continue to bring in new pastors and pilgrims.

I recently found in the VP of Outreach archives a document titled, "The Secretariat Wellness Checklist". After looking over the checklist, I decided to make a few modifications and give a copy to each Secretariat. At your next Ultreya or Secretariat meeting, I encourage you to invest 30-40 minutes honestly answering the questions that are provided. Do not allow one person to merely answer these questions. It defeats the purpose of the activity. Do this as a group or multiple small groups. I believe this checklist will force each community to look at their health and direction of their community. The Wellness Checklist has been posted on the National Lutheran Secretariat website under the Secre-

tariats tab, or you can simply click <http://www.viadechristo.org/resources/index.htm>

After you have completed an honest group assessment, you will naturally find the gaps or challenges your community is facing. I then encourage you to prioritize those concerns and put together a task force to address them. Of course, if you are looking for outside help, please do not hesitate to give me a call. I may not have all of the answers, but I do know that we have people in our VdC Family that have faced and overcome any challenge that your secretariat may be facing. I can be reached at 703-266-7667.

I pray you all continue to establish plans to strengthen your communities in order to get back to the Essentials of Via de Cristo. Remember; only helicopters hover, your community is either going up and strengthening or doing down and struggling.

God loves you and so do I,
Steve Gielda
Vice President of Outreach



NLS ARCHIVIST / HISTORIAN REPORT



At the NLSAM 2009 meeting in Miami, I had an opportunity to address the assembly asking for any items suitable for archiving. I had very little response to that appeal, so I'm putting out the call again, just as I did at NLSAM 2010 in St. Paul. I'll be repeating myself here, so please bear with me. Again, I don't need copies

of Conexiones, NLS video or audio recordings, or binders from past NLS meetings. What I do need is anything else that should be preserved, whether it be an original or a copy. Maybe some important papers or notes that never appeared in any of the NLS publications, or perhaps some irreplaceable documents. If you have anything that might possibly be a good candidate for archiving, please contact me.

Putting on my historian hat, I need information on the beginnings of each movement. Information needed is: when the movement formed, when the first weekend was held, which movement(s) was instrumental in "birthing" your movement, and who the first secretariat lay director and spiritual directors were. I have received information from a few movements so far and have contacted others and am awaiting replies. I will also combine information from the NLS web site which will make our information more complete. I will be making a list (and checking it twice!) of those movements I still need information from and contacting them. Together, we'll come up with a very nice book of our secretariat beginnings and NLS history, and those will be distributed at the 2011 NLSAM in North Carolina.

I would like to thank everyone for their support so far and what is to come.

God's blessings,
Ron Millard, NLS Archivist / Historian

Palanca!!!

Future weekends

Weekends for the next five months will be printed in this section. Check the Web for more updated information.

2010 WEEKENDS:

- Sept./Oct. 2010 - California: **Lutheran Cursillo of Southern CA**, Men #130: Sept. 30-Oct.3, & Women's #131: Oct. 7-10, Send palanca to: Carol LaVeche 10371 Lassen St. Los Alamitos, CA 90720
- Sept./Oct. 2010 - Florida: **Sonshine No. VdC**, Women #55: Sept. 30-Oct.3, Send palanca to: John Klein 2346 Stafford Dr. Orange Park, FL 32073
- Sept./Oct. 2010 - Tennessee: **Notes of Grace VdC**, Coed: Sept. 30-Oct.3, Send palanca to: Stephen Manasco 8492 Timber Creek Dr. Cordova, TN 38018
- Sept./Oct. 2010 - Montana: **Yellowstone VdC**, Mixed: Sept. 30-Oct.3, Send palanca to: Krista Neault P.O. Box 22042 Billings, MN 59102
- Sept./Oct. 2010 - Tennessee: **Notes of Grace VdC**, Mixed 3: Sept. 30-Oct.3, Send palanca to: Mary Mastel 3366 SW Bella Vista Ave. Gresham, OR 97080
- Oct. 2010 - Arizona: **Lutheran Cursillo of Arizona**, Men #127: Oct. 7-10, & Women #551: Oct. 21-24 Send palanca to: Del Ellis 7833 W. Ludlow Dr. Peoria, AZ 85381
- Oct. 2010 - Illinois: **Heart of Illinois VdC**, Men #26 Oct. 7-10, & Women #27 Oct. 14-17, Send palanca to: Evelyn Biegler 2717 N. Elmcroft Dr. Peoria, IL 61604
- Oct. 2010 - IL KY: **Indiana-Kentucky VdC No.**, Coed 13: Oct. 7-10, Send palanca to: Tami White 2615 Zhale Smith Rd. LaGrange, KY 40031
- Oct. 2010 - Maryland: **Vineyard VdC**, Coed 10: Oct. 7-10, Send palanca to: Jim Stottlemeyer 13043 Mt. Zion Rd. Sabilasville, MD 21780
- Oct. 2010 - Minnesota: **Lutheran VdC of Minnesota**, Men #550: Oct. 7-10, & Men #552: Oct. 21-24, & Women #551: Oct. 14-17, & Women #553: Oct. 28-31 Send palanca to: Lenore Jesness 899 Sherwood Ave. St. Paul, MN 55106-1825
- Oct. 2010 - NC: **Eastern NC VdC**, Mixed #73: Oct. 7-10, Send palanca to: Martha Yount 745 Acorn Oaks Dr. Salisbury, NC 28146
- Oct. 2010 - VA/MD/DC: **Rainbow VdC**, Men #56 Oct. 7-10, & Women #60: Oct.

- 14-17, Send palanca to: David Russell PO Box 450, Bladensburg, MD 20710
- Oct. 2010 - Florida: **Indian River VdC**, Women #54: Oct. 14-17, Send palanca to: Joan Borsari 1308 Amity Circle. Cocoa, FL 32922
- Oct. 2010 - Florida: **Lighthouse VdC**, Men #37: Oct. 14-17, & Women #37: Oct. 21-24, Send palanca to: Freddie & Maritza Gonzalez, PO Box 628, New Smyrna Beach FL 32170
- Oct. 2010 - Florida: **Sonshine VdC of So. FL**, Women #103: Oct. 14-17, Send palanca to: Bonny Freese 1150 Wren Ave. Miami Springs, FL 33166
- Oct. 2010 - MI/OH: **Good News VdC**, Men #47: Oct. 14-17, & Women #47: Oct. 21-24, Send palanca to: Karen Warsop 5633 E. Grand River Ave. Howell, MI 48843
- Oct. 2010 - AR/OK: **A-OK VdC**, Men #26: Oct. 21-24, Send palanca to: Becky Del Rio 18115 Fawn Tree Dr. Little Rock, AR 72210
- Oct. 2010 - Tennessee: **Tennessee**, Mixed #25: Oct. 21-24, Send palanca to: Bill McComb 21 Meadowlark Circle Fairfield Glade, TN 39558
- Oct. 2010 - Texas: **Texas Lutheran VdC**, Coed #80: Oct. 21-24, Send palanca to: Ken Handley 509 Gaslight Blvd. Lufkin, TX 78154
- Oct./Nov 2010 - Wisconsin: **Wisconsin Sunrise VdC**, Men #73: Oct. 28-31, & Women's #74: Nov. 4-7, Send palanca to: Joe Eder N7316 Lost Nation Elkhorn, WI 53121
- Oct./Nov 2010 - Arizona: **So. Arizona VdC**, Men #28: Oct. 21-24 & Women #29: Nov. 11-14 Send palanca to: Cindy Stein 7449 Clemons Way Tucson, AZ 85749
- Oct./Nov 2010 - Ohio: **Ohio Lutheran VdC**, Men #68: Oct. 21-24 & Women #70: Nov. 11-14 Send palanca to: Cathy Doering 761 Messina Dr. Wadsworth, OH 44281
- Nov. 2010 - California: **VdC of So. CA & Central Valley**, Coed: Nov. 4-7, Send palanca to: Barbara Marthens 10815 Academy Ave., Bakersfield, CA 93312
- Nov. 2010 Florida: **Gold Coast VdC of So. FL**, Women #81: Nov. 4-7, Send palanca to: Janet Pusins 3160 NW 67 Ct. Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309
- Nov. 2010 - IL KY: **Indiana-Kentucky VdC So.**, Coed 14: Nov. 4-7, Send palanca to: Tami White 2615 Zhale Smith Rd. LaGrange, KY 40031
- Nov. 2010—MO: **Rivers Edge VdC**, Women #15: Nov. 4-7, Send palanca to: Laurie Dunnette 2720 Stone Valley Dr. Maryville, IL 62062
- Nov. 2010 - NC: **Western NC VdC**, Mixed #31: Nov. 4-7, Send palanca

- to: Judy Zander 3047 Amity Circle Belmont, NC 28012
- Nov. 2010 - Texas: **Lutheran VdC of Northern Texas**, Coed #82: Nov. 4-7, Send palanca to: Barb Guinn 2832 Mimosa Park Dr. Richland Hills, TX 76118
- Nov. 2010 - Florida: **Sonbeam VdC**, Men #56: Nov. 11-14 & Women #56: Nov. 18-21, Send palanca to: Linda Barnard 4700 46th Ave. No. #11 St. Petersburg, FL 33714
- Nov. 2010 - Illinois: **Prairie Sonshine VdC of Central Illinois**, Women #11 Nov. 11-14, Send palanca to: Greg & Anna Bergschneider 127 Westminster Jacksonsville, IL 62650
- Nov. 2010 - Illinois: **Taste of Grace VdC**, Coed #15 Nov. 11-14, Send palanca to: Sandy Verdooren 3251 W. 184th St. #2A Homewood, IL 60430
- Nov. 2010 - Pennsylvania: **Journey in Faith VdC**, Coed #3: Nov. 11-14, Send palanca to: Patti Kline 43-2 Azalea Way Reading, PA 19606

See NLS Palanca Web page for current information of 2010 weekends.

The Host Committee of Western North Carolina cordially invites you to attend the 2011 National Lutheran Secretariat Annual Meeting at Queens University in Charlotte, NC July 28 - 31, 2011

We look forward to celebrating our 25th anniversary of our name change from Lutheran Cursillo to Via de Cristo, which means "The Way of Christ". To honor this milestone year, we have selected John 14:6 as the theme of the 2011 meeting. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me."

We will also be celebrating our 30th anniversary of the National Lutheran Secretariat.

We have already met with our dedicated core committee and have joyfully allowed the Holy Spirit to lead us as we prepare for your visit to the "Queen City". We are preparing our hearts and minds to serve you "southern style". The Way of Christ will continue to be our focus as we excitedly prepare for y'all.

Larry and Lois Witham
Host Committee Co-Chairs

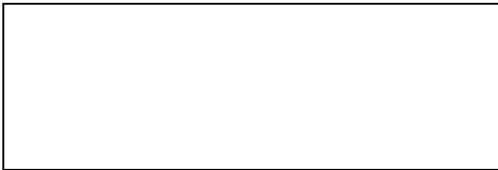


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Annual Meeting Items Available
 All the material that was available at the 2010 Annual Meeting along with video tapes can be obtained from the Distribution Center. Order forms for all NLS materials can be found on the web page.

IRS UPDATE

As was discussed at the financial seminar at the 2010 Annual Meeting, hundreds of thousands of 501(c)(3) non-profits had their tax-exempt status revoked on May 17, 2010. This includes several Via de Cristo communities. The IRS has issued procedures to be completed and filed no later than October 15, 2010 in order to reinstate the organization's 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. The requirements are available on the IRS website at www.irs.gov under the Charities & Non-Profits tab.

The list of revoked organizations is listed at the IRS website. If you are involved in another non-profit organization, you may want to check the list for that organization as well and alert them of the situation.

In reviewing the IRS website, it was discovered that 14 Via de Cristo Secretariats do **not** have their 501(c)(3) tax exempt status. Please review the article in the December 2008 Conexiones Newsletter for the importance of obtaining the tax exempt status. If you need assistance with any of these issues, Please contact Diane Purcell, NLS Financial Advisor, dspurcell@msn.com

Visited our *New Web Site* Lately?



www.viadecristo.org
Webmaster: Larry Conway

CONEXIONES-ON-THE-WEB

Are you interested in saving the NLS money? Please sign up to receive the E-Mail Notification by filling out the E-Mail Notification Request Form, page 2. How this works is that you will receive an email notification when the latest edition of the Conexiones has been posted on the NLS Web Page. You then can view the newsletter at your leisure and chose to copy it.