

Connecting National and Local Secretariats

CONEXIONES

Volume 29
Number 3
May 2011

Official Publication of the National Lutheran Secretariat, VdC



The Way of Christ
John 14:6
NLS 2011 Annual Meeting
July 28 – 31, 2011
Hosted by Western North Carolina
Via de Cristo



Dear Bothers and Sisters in Christ,

DeColores! Via de Cristo. The Way of Christ. Thus our scripture for the annual meeting in July; "I am the way, the truth, and the life." (*John 14:6*) We are celebrating the 25th anniversary of our adopting the Via de Cristo name after several years using the Cursillo name that originated in the Catholic church. We hope to have as many charter members, forefathers, and former National Board officers as possible at this anniversary meeting.

The excitement is mounting as we prepare to be servants to each of you in Christ's name. We have been regularly meeting and have received well over 125 reservations for the July meeting. Application forms are available on the NLS website www.viadecristo.org. Meals are available on Wednesday as noted on the application. Please check any additional meals that you want as reservations are a must for meal preparation by the University.

Our meeting will be at the lovely Queens University of Charlotte (www.queens.edu). The lovely tree-covered campus is located about 15 minutes from the Charlotte Douglas International Airport and near downtown. A committee member will greet you at the airport and welcome you to the Queen city. (This is the only airport from which we can provide transportation.) The dorm rooms share a bathroom with the adjoining room; making no more than four persons sharing. There is no smoking and no alcohol permitted on the campus. The facilities are entirely air-conditioned (necessary in the hot and humid climate). The short walks between events are along tree-lined walkways and on level terrain. Keep in mind that Charlotte can be very warm and humid in the summer. All meetings however, will be held in air-conditioned rooms and may be cool, so you may want to bring a wrap or sweater along with you.

Charlotte is a city of trees and churches and offers many and varied visitor attractions. For those that want to extend their stay, we are convenient to South Carolina beaches which are about 3 and half hours southeast and the beautiful Blue Ridge and Smoky Mountains can be enjoyed 2 hours west.

We encourage members from all Secretariats to send representatives to this year's celebration annual meeting. If funds are an issue for your Secretariat, please contact NLS VP of Outreach, Steve Gielda at sgielda@cox.net regarding possible scholarships. Each year the meeting proves to be a wonderful forum for exchanging information, sharing ideas, making new friends, and renewing old friendships. You will be led, fed, and encouraged while sharing music, worship, the Eucharist, meals, laughter, and God's love with Brothers

and Sisters from all over the United States that have chosen to walk in the "Way of Christ".

On behalf of the entire Western North Carolina Via de Cristo community, we look forward to being your hosts and offer you a heartfelt, "Ya'll come"! We look forward to you joining us in July for some true "Southern hospitality" as we worship and glorify our Precious Savior.

God loves you and so do we!
Lois and Larry Witham Co-Chairs



CONEXIONES

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National Lutheran Secretariat
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Please notify me by E-Mail when the latest edition of Conexiones has been posted on the NLS Web Page

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Name of Secretariate _____

Position on Secretariate: _____

E-Mail Address: _____ @ _____

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

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Volume 29
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Official Publication of the National Lutheran Secretariat, VdC

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 (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.

V.P. OF OUTREACH REPORT

Go and Grow!



God is Good....All the Time....All the Time....God is Good. We hear that phrase often, but do we really believe it in our hearts. Do you live each day knowing that God's plans for your life are sufficient? It's tough some-

times. Each of us face difficult times in our lives. The flooding taking place in the south right now is a real tragedy. Finding God in the midst of despair isn't easy.

Those of you, who attended the National Lutheran Secretariat Meeting in Minnesota last year, may remember my childhood friend and Pastor, Frank Ruffatto. Frank talked about how God called him into the ministry. He talked about the highs and lows he faced while trying to discern God's plan for his life. He talked about the obstacles that were placed in his path. Today, as a Pastor of a mission church, Point of Grace Lutheran Church in Cornelius, NC, he has been dealt another obstacle in his life. His wife Terri has been diagnosed with stage 3 breast cancer. I visited with Frank, Terri and their girls recently. Their faith in God in the midst of this recent and tragic news inspired me. They both are looking at this as just another piece of the puzzle in God's plan for their lives.

Terri has put up a Caring Bridge website to allow her friends and family to follow her progress. In her post of Friday, May 13th, she wrote: *"I have been acutely aware of the sufferings of others this week and that God meant for us to glorify Him by walking together in both the joys and trails of life. Watching others at the cancer center, thinking of my friends who have chronic illnesses, colon cancer, MS, life with amputations, financial struggles, facing unknown job and housing situations, relationship problems, the many people who have lost their homes, friends, and loved ones in the tornadoes, floods, and earthquakes -- some may ask "where is God in all of this, how can we possibly see Him as loving in the midst of suffering?" The verse that comes to mind is from Romans 8:31-39: "What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am con-*

vinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Brothers and sisters of God, despite the obstacles we may be facing in our life, He is calling you to **"Go and Grow"**. He is calling you continue on your path of discipleship and to bring others to Christ. He is calling you to use those obstacles in your life as palanca, a lever to lift and inspire others to keep going.

There are many Pastors and churches in our own backyard that have never heard of Via de Cristo or any other part of the Cursillo method. We've all seen the power God has provided when pilgrims become Christian Leaders in their own churches. We have seen the power of the Holy Spirit move a congregation from a stagnate to a growing fruitful church. God is calling you to share the news of Via de Cristo to those Pastors and neighbors in your area. We are all busy; we all have obstacles in our lives, but He is calling each of us to do our part, to share the gift of Cursillo and this Via de Cristo movement to others.

When you are beginning to feel defeated remember what is stated in Psalm 73:26 "God is the strength of our heart". Max Lucado wrote this short devotion that I think is appropriate. *"God is for you. Turn to the sidelines; that's God cheering your run. Look past the finish line; that's God applauding your steps. Listen for Him in the bleachers, shouting your name. Too tired to continue? He'll carry you. Too discouraged to fight? He's picking you up. God is for you."*

I am looking forward seeing many of you at the National Lutheran Secretariat meeting in Charlotte, NC in July. If you have never attended NOW is your time to go!

God loves you and so do I,

Steve Gielda,
Vice President of Outreach
sgielda@cox.net



Have you filled out your registration form for the NLSAM 2011? We'd love to see you in Charlotte, NC!

2011 NATIONAL LUTHERAN SECRETARIAT ANNUAL MEETING FORUM AND SEMINAR DESCRIPTIONS

Forums

Topics we think everyone will enjoy and should attend. Forums are held in a large space so that everyone can attend at once. Don't miss the 2011 Forums:

Anniversary Forum

Come "listen in" as individuals who were instrumental in starting what has come to be the now 25 years old Via de Cristo recollect those early days.

General Forums

Your heart is bound to be touched, maybe even inspired, as you hear the story of how Via de Cristo has touched the life of a Cursillista.

Seminars

Seminars are held in smaller rooms. Everyone attending the annual meeting is encouraged to sign-up for and attend three of the four seminars offered. For those attending from a single Secretariat, it is wise to split up and go to different seminars. Your Secretariat can then benefit from all four seminars as well as nuances that may arise between different sessions of the same seminar as a result of participant dynamics.

In 2011, the seminar rooms can accommodate approximately 45 attendees per session so it is important for you to include your seminar choices on your reservation and attend the sessions you are assigned to at the assigned time.

Seminar 1: The Way

Learn more about the path bringing us to where we are today. Start in Mallorca, Spain and journey all the **way** to the 2011 National Lutheran Secretariat Annual Meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Seminar 2: The Truth

Love of God, love of neighbor, and love the world are possible because of God's love for us. It is this **truth** that is the core truth and essential center to every Via de Cristo weekend. What did Eduardo Bonnín say is essential, important, and accidental about our weekends? More importantly, find out about tools available to you to help you keep focused on the essentials.

Seminar 3: The Life

There is music in the beating of our hearts that gives us **life**. Music is a part of our lives and a part of our weekends. How can we use music in Via de Cristo to underscore that which is essential and enhance the experience for all?

Seminar 4: The Law

While we might prefer to live focused simply on His grace, the truth is that we need to adhere to U.S. **law** as we journey our way into the lives of those in our local Secretariats through our Via de Cristo activities. How can the law help Via de Cristo? What are the latest changes in the law that you need to know? Come find out.



Air Travel Information Form National Lutheran Secretariat Annual Meeting 2011

Thursday, July 28 through Sunday, July 31, 2011

Queens University of Charlotte

Hosted by Western North Carolina Lutheran Secretariat

• PLEASE PRINT •

| | | |
|------------|----------------|------------|
| First Name | Last Name | |
| Home Phone | Cell Phone | Work Phone |
| Fax | E-mail Address | |

Transportation will be provided to Queens University of Charlotte from
Charlotte Douglas International Airport (CLT) only.

Any changes to your travel arrangements after submitting this form should be made to Rathel Goodman.
E-mail: rgoodman@clc.net

My Flight Itinerary is as follows:

ARRIVAL:

Date: _____ Time: _____ Airline: _____ Flight Number: _____

Departing City: _____ Departing Airport: _____

Connecting City: _____ Connecting Airport: _____

Number of people traveling together on this flight _____

Names: _____

DEPARTURE:

Date: _____ Time: _____ Airline: _____ Flight Number: _____

Number of people traveling together on this flight _____

Names: _____

Please return this form with your completed registration form and payment, or send separately to the following address:

NLS Annual Meeting 2011
Larry & Beth Bowman
1043 Rolling Green Drive
Newton, NC 28658

SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT

INHERIT THE MIRTH

I love to visit Christian bookstores in my area and I love to shop looking for things on sale. I have a cross collection in my office of over 100 different types and styles of crosses. I look for those on sale and the inevitable book I can buy and add to my "to read" list. In that shopping I came across a greeting card company called Inherit the Mirth. They have funny, funny cards with a Christian flavor. One of my favorite is a picture of David at his dining room table and his mother answering the door. All you see out the door are the female legs of a giant. She looks at David and says "David, there's a Mrs. Goliath here to see you."

It is kind of hard to describe this way so visit them yourself at www.inheritthemirth.com and enjoy the wide variety of products with humorous Christian messages of all types. The vision of the company is "Helping God bring laughter; put a smile on your faith."

So how is your faith today? Is it smiling? Probably not so much. We live in a difficult world today with weather related chaos all over the place, two wars, and economic problems. We all face incredible challenges of all shapes and sizes. I write this the week before Mother's Day and I am aware of a couple who lost their 22 year old daughter to cancer recently. It will not be a very happy mother's day for her this week. I am working with a couple with a very fractured relationship and I'm trying to help hold the marriage together for the kids. And it comes to me that it is not Doug that can do that work, but God.

God has done all the work in Jesus Christ. It was Jesus after all who said "I came to bring my joy, not as the world gives, but as I give." (John 15:11). For the mother in grief, for the hurting couple, for the children, the lost and lonely, the poor and hungry God comes in Christ. It is the story of the Bible and it a progressive story of God, sin, and the answer to that sin the suffering, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus. Christ has died, Christ has risen, and Christ will come again, Amen!

It is in Jesus that we will gather in North Carolina this July! I pray you will come....you that have no smile come and get a "faith lift." For all of us, let's gather and I've called all of us to NC. Each year at our national gathering we end up with around 200 folks, so why don't you come as a visitor, you don't have to be a delegate to attend. Contact your Lay Director, or Secretariat, and confirm you will be represented. Come one, come all, and let us inherit the mirth of Christ in the joy of our beloved Via De Cristo. I hope to see you there,

Pastor Doug Givan
National Spiritual Director
pastordoug@comcast.net
317-698-8472



A Tribute to Pastor Bill Sistar

Dear Bill,

I have known you for several years. And just wanted to take this time to thank you for your friendship over these years. When we moved to Florida in 1986 you found us and befriended us, although we had met some years before that, when we became missionaries in 1965. We met at times at presbytery meetings.



And then came the time you told me about Via de Cristo. I had never been aware of such a thing. You sponsored Martha and me for Weekend #14 of Sonbeam Via de Cristo. That was in November 1989, when the Berlin Wall was falling and things were changing everywhere. They changed for us too. From you it was the first time I heard words like "Rollo" and "Ultreya" and "Palanca." What interesting words, I thought to myself. And what fun that weekend was! Not long after that I was invited to serve as spiritual director for a weekend. Then came the times when we served together on weekends as spiritual directors. It sure was a pleasure to serve with you!

I remember the time you asked me if I would like to be spiritual director for Sonbeam. I remember replying that if we could do it together, I would. So we did, and so Sonbeam now had two spiritual directors. You were a joy to work with. If one of us could not be present at a meeting, the other could. There were times when we could complete each other's sentences. We were true partners in ministry. Inevitably we got into the same reunion group of ministers. We met once a month in various places, ending up at a Cracker Barrel! We shared. We talked. We prayed with and for each other. We saw each other in the hospitals. We were like brothers together.

With both of us failing in health, we both "retired" from being spiritual directors of Sonbeam. The day came when we entered into our "bucket bet," by which we had a "bet" by which we would race to see who got to "kick the bucket" first. We laughed about that for many months. And we talked about "time" in heaven. Your comment was that time would have no meaning. That answered a question I had. You won that bet, Bill. You have always been a winner, in faith, life, and love! And the day will come when by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ the rest of us will join you in the "house with many rooms." Make sure you have a good party for us!

Betts Huntley

Palanca!!!

Future weekends

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

2011 WEEKENDS:

- June 2011 - Wisconsin: **Wisconsin Sunrise VdC**, Coed #9: June 16-19, Send palanca to: Joe Eder N7316 Lost Nation Elkhorn, WI 53121
- July 2011 - Florida: **Sonshine VDC of So. FL**, Men #106: July 7-10, Send palanca to: Bonny Freese 1150 Wren Ave. Miami Springs, FL 33166
- July 2011 - Illinois: **Prairie Sonshine VdC of Central Illinois**, Women #12 July 14-17, Send palanca to: Greg & Anna Bergschneider 127 Westminster Jacksonville, IL 62650
- July 2011 - Minnesota: **Lutheran VdC of Minnesota**, Men #564: July 14-17, & Women #565: July 21-24, Send palanca to: Lenore Jesness 899 Sherwood Ave. St. Paul, MN 55106-1825
- July/Aug. 2011 - Ohio: **Ohio Lutheran VDC**, Men #69: July 28-31 & Women #72 Aug. 4-7, Send palanca to: Jeff Albrekton 2793 Galewood St. Kettering, OH 45420
- Aug./Sept. 2011 - Georgia: **Atlanta VDC**, Men #57: Aug. 25-28 & Women #56 Sept. 8-11, Send palanca to: John & Agnes Nelson 2859 Appling Dr. Chamblee, GA 30341
- Sept. 2011 - NC: **Eastern NC VDC**, Mixed #76: Sept. 8-11, Send palanca to: Vicki McCombs 301 Cook St. Kannapolis, NC 28083
- Sept. 2011 - Colorado: **Lutheran VDC of the Rockies**, Coed #4: Sept. 15-18, Send palanca to: Loretta Hartten 5126 Alkire St. Arvada, CO 80002
- Sept. 2011 - Nevada: **Light in the Desert VDC**, Coed #16: Sept. 15-18, Send palanca to: Mary Eichler 290 E. Delamar Dr. Henderson, NV 89015
- Sept./Oct 2011 - New York: **Damascus Rd. VDC of Central NY**, Men #12: Sept. 15-18 & Women #12 Oct. 6-9, Send palanca to: Lu Huckabone PO Box 184 Poland, NY 13431
- Sept./Oct 2011 - FL: **Gold Coast VDC of So. FL**, Men #83: Sept. 15-18 & Women #83 Oct. 13-16, Send palanca to: Ron Pusins 3160 NW 67 Court Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309

- Sept./Oct 2011 - FL: **Sunshine No. VDC**, Men #56: Sept. 22-25 & Women #56 Sept. 29-Oct. 2, Send palanca to: John Klein 2346 Stafford Dr. Orange Park, FL 32073
- Sept./Oct 2011 - New York: **Damascus Rd. VDC of Central NY**, Men #12: Sept. 15-18 & Women #12 Oct. 6-9, Send palanca to: Lu Huckabone PO Box 184 Poland, NY 13431
- Sept./Oct. 2011 - Nevada: **Light in the Desert VDC**, Coed #12: Sept. 29-Oct. 2, Send palanca to: Rusty Graves 8719 Edgell Dr. SE Huntsville, AL 35802
- Sept./Oct. 2011 - TN: **Notes of Grace VDC**, Coed #12: Sept. 29-Oct. 2, Send palanca to: Rusty Graves 8719 Edgell Dr. SE Huntsville, AL 35802
- Oct. 2011 - Utah: **Utah VDC**, Men #51: Oct. 6-9 & Women #51 Oct. 13-16, Send palanca to: Kelly Martin 5698 So. 1150 East S. Orgen, UT 84450
- Oct. 2011 - Florida: **Sonshine VDC of So. FL**, Women #105: Oct. 13-16, Send palanca to: Bonny Freese 1150 Wren Ave. Miami Springs, FL 33166
- Oct. 2011 - MI/OH: **Good News VDC**, Men #49: Oct. 13-16, & Women #49: Oct. 20-23, Send palanca to: Karen Warsop 5633 E. Grand River Ave. Howell, MI 48843
- Oct. 2011 - Minnesota: **Lutheran VdC of Minnesota**, Men #566 & #568: Oct. 13-16, & Women #567 & #568: July Oct. 20-23, Send palanca to: Lenore Jesness 899 Sherwood Ave. St. Paul, MN 55106-1825
- Oct. 2011 - MO: **Rivers Edge VDC**, Women #17: Oct. 13-16, Send palanca to: Laurie Hensley 7704 Stonebridge Dr. Maryville, IL 62062
- Oct. 2011 - AR/OK: **A-OK VDC**, Coed #21: Oct. 20-23, Send palanca to: Palanca@aokviadecristo.org Michelle Senn
- Oct. 2011 - TN: **Tennessee VDC**, Mixed #27: Oct. 20-23, Send palanca to: Bill McComb 21 Meadowlark Cir. Fairfield Glade, AL 39558
- Oct. 2011 - WI: **WI Sunrise VDC**, Men #77: Oct. 20-23, & Women #78: Oct. 27-30, Send palanca to: Joe Eder N7316 Lost Nation Elkhorn, WI 53121

Check Web for more 2011 weekends.

PALANCA Praying with Confidence

Lately during my time reading His Word and supporting books and articles the subject of praying with confidence has bubbled up. During our prayer time connecting with God when there are problems or we have feelings of disappointment seems difficult.

“... The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.” James 5:16 (NASV) In Praying with Confidence, David C Egner, Author and Teacher, suggests 5 principles to consider as we pray 1) How we approach God 2) Openly share our feelings 3) Truly listen to God 4) Accept God’s perspective and 5) Offer God praise and thanksgiving.

In relation to the verse above from James, Corey Naquin, Pastor - Covenant Church, in an article entitled “Prayer that Works” discusses the word effective. Effective means to produce the desired result. In the NKJV translation the word fervent also appears which means marked with great intensity.

Both of these readings remind me that my attitude in prayer is key. John 15:7 says “But if you make yourselves at home with me and my words are at home in you, you can be sure that whatever you ask will be listened to and acted upon.” (The Message) The NASV translation uses the word “abide”. Abide is a powerful word that means to endure without yielding. When I consider that kind of endurance, confidence comes to mind. The sort of confidence that provides a peace that prayers are heard and God has promised to act upon them. While the actions God takes may not always be exactly what we would hope, our accepting his perspective and offering praise and thanksgiving for His listening would be appropriate.

As the Palanca Coordinator, active and timely participation of the local Palanca Coordinators is critical in disseminating information. The local coordinators have been excellent in providing the critical link to the local Secretariats. The 2011 updates have been flowing in due to the great job being done by the Palanca Coordinators. Updates are provided in many forms. Presently there is a problem with the update button on the web page so please email or send by US Postal Service any updates you wish to be made. Also, if a Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet would help in managing letters, one is available upon request (DColor9@attglobal.net).

I would like to thank each and every one of you for your support, and I would especially like to thank the Palanca Coordinators of the Secretariats. I thank and praise God for the opportunity to serve our community in this small way.

Only by His grace, He uses us as his tools to perform His work. My prayers are of thanks and praise to our Lord for blessing our Via de Cristo communities and all other three day movements. Blessings,

In His Service,
Paul Sabatier-Smith <)))><



NLS President's Report

NLSAM — 2011

The National meeting in July has an "all star" line up! We have been busy contacting as many people as we could find from the pages of our history in order to make personal invitations. A few of you we have not been able to locate. If you are reading this, and no one has contacted you, please, please, please contact us! We would love to have you in attendance this July at Queens College in Charlotte, N.C. We have made arrangements for some of our founding people and the early leaders within Via de Cristo to share with us during this National meeting.

We will take the time to recognize all those in attendance who have served us so faithfully through the years, and honor a few that are not able to attend as they have moved on to their 5th day. If there is someone that you would like to have remembered for their service to this National Movement, please send me a brief email with their name, the Secretariat(s) they served and how they are remembered.

We have invited a guest speaker who actually spent meaningful time with Eduardo Bonin and will share significant details from our Cursillo founding. What was Eduardo trying to teach? Are we still teaching the same message that was given to him by the Holy Spirit? Are we still sharing the gift as it was given to us? Come on! Come see, hear and visit with people from our past.

We will be providing a history book for the first 300 people in attendance!! Every Secretariat was asked to add their individual history (we hope that your Secretariat answered the call; check with your lay director there may still be time). Any left-over books will be made available through the distribution center for a nominal charge.

At this meeting, **we will be taking another look at the coordinator's job.** I think everyone is aware of how needed this position is for the National Lutheran Secretariat -- it has been discussed for several years now. We decided it would be a paid position and the funding for that position is still holding us back.

We were very excited about a special campaign in 2006, but were unable to get it off the ground before the economy took its dive. The Board was then advised to wait until the economy recovered and while we have been waiting, it became evident that we now have more questions than answers.

I would like to bring this issue back to the body for further discussion. Please consider:

- Is someone willing to step up to chair a funding campaign, someone who has the experience we need to make this happen?
- Is the body open to altering the directive and allow for a *volunteer with paid expenses*, until the position can be funded?
- Will you allow the Board to put someone in place before the end of this NLSAM as a temporary appointment?
- Or can we put into place an application/review process to make it possible for someone to be in place by the

end of 2011?

- Does anyone have suggestions of equipped, qualified people that would be willing to fill out an application and submit to an interview at the National meeting?

- Does the job description need to be altered because we are not yet ready to make it a paid position? (Review the job description in this newsletter and/or on-line)

We will be creating a You Tube video at this meeting and have one from some of our international movements during our time together. You can be part of this exciting time in our history!

Finally, please know that **we are looking for people who can serve in positions on the board:** The positions available are: **President** (term expired), **Vice President of Outreach** (renewal), **Secretary** (term expired), **Data Base Coordinator** (replacement requested), **Website Manager** (replacement requested). If you are interested, or know of someone who might be, please have them contact Carolyn Hawkins (Vice President of Administration).

It is no understatement "*Much is happening!*" We are excited about seeing you this year in North Carolina!

God Loves You and So Do I!
Tracy Schmidlin



CONFERENCE CALL — May 22, 2011

Present: Tracy Schmidlin, Steve Barnett, Steve Gielda, Katie Sistar, Pr. Doug Givan, Carolyn Hawkins, Judy Laabs-Foss, Diane Purcell

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. EST. Pastor Doug opened with prayer. The Board updated the calls and efforts being made for the upcoming Nationals.

Tracy reported that Ron Millard had gotten more history pages from secretariats and plans to have the book ready to print by June 1. Prices have been researched, and he is authorized to order 300 books to be printed.

Katie requested help getting some Lay Director's addresses. It is important that every secretariat send the secretary and data base coordinator the list of new officers and their addresses and phone numbers every year when the elections are held.

Speakers for the seminars and forums are being scheduled for the Charlotte meeting.

Pr. Doug is collating the Devotional Book to be used as a Fourth Day tool. *Steve G. moved that Doug have permission*

Continued to page 10

Position: National Coordinator

The National Coordinator will be employed full time by National Lutheran Secretariat (NLS) under the direction of the NLS Board to represent Via de Cristo in public relations and to coordinate the operations of the organization.

Purpose:

The National Coordinator is a responsible servant of Jesus Christ who wishes to Glorify God through the coordination and promotion of Via de Cristo.

Qualifications:

1. Be in an active 4th Day Community including Reunion Group and Ultreya within a Lutheran home congregation.
2. Have a servant spirit, and be committed to prayer.
3. Have good office skills: computer, database. Internet, fax, etc.
4. Have minimal accounting skills.
5. Be willing to work under the direction of the NLS Board.
6. Have good communication skills.
7. Have good organizational skills, including the abilities to prioritize, manage time, and to motivate and utilize volunteers.

Salary: Negotiable

Evaluation:

Initially reviewed after 90 days, 180 days and then annually by the NLS Board.

General Responsibilities:

Serves as a contact, resource and information person. Handles public relations and functions as communications coordinator with the 4th Day community, the NLS Board, other Fourth Day Movements, and the national Lutheran Church bodies. Coordinates preparation and maintenance of all computer records.

Specific Responsibilities:

1. Responds to all inquiries (mail, telephone, e-mail, etc.) received in the national office and sends out information as needed. Coordinates with the NLS Board a response to inquiries regarding new movements. Is available to speak and disseminate VdC information at forums, conferences and other Christian gatherings, and provide necessary follow-up.
2. Works under the direction of the NLS Board, attending Board meetings and participating in all conference calls.
 - a. Provides reports on activities.
 - b. Assists the Board President in planning meeting agendas.
 - c. Brings to the attention of the Board all articles and public issues regarding VdC for consideration and follow-up.
 - d. Serves as an Advisory (non-voting) member of the Board.

3. Establishes and maintains regular contact with all local Lay Directors:
 - a. To insure current rosters of local Secretariat members.
 - b. To assist Secretariats in need of direction and advice.
 - c. To maintain an up-to-date schedule of weekends for general publication.
 - d. To insure prompt signing of documents, submission of statistical reports, and payment of annual fees from the secretariats.
4. Recruits volunteer help as needed.
5. Provides follow-up through guidelines set by the NLS Board and National Lutheran Secretariat to see that guidelines are followed.
6. Works with the NLS Spiritual Director on matters concerning pastoral issues and functions.
7. Provides web master with current information.
8. Maintains duplicates of manuals, educational, liaison and promotional materials in conjunction with the Coordinator of the Distribution Center.
9. Is authorized to purchase supplies at the best price or up to a maximum limit established by the NLS Board.
10. Supplies the Data Entry person with address changes and updates as received from the local secretariats.
11. Maintains a chronological record of Board motions and action items.
12. Under the direction of the Board Treasurer:
 - a. Forwards all monies received to the Board Treasurer.
 - b. Makes duplicate records for the office and for the Board Treasurer.
 - c. Sends acknowledgments for all gifts, monetary and otherwise.
13. Stores all records.
14. Provides an annual report to the National Lutheran Secretariat's Annual Meeting.



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at
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University
Charlotte
N.C.

Leadership Training Retreat

Greetings fellow brothers and sisters in Christ,

We would like to share with you information about the Leadership Training Retreat held by the Northern Light Via de Cristo. Northern Light, which was started in 2006, serves Northern Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. Our weekend events are held at various camps. The November 5-7, 2010 Training Retreat was no different and was held at Silver Birch Ranch located near White Lake, WI.

The Training Retreat idea began at our October, 2009 Council meeting. Some of the Northern Light community had attended the national meetings and realized the importance of getting the team members trained properly. Normally, we hold two weekend events a year, spring and fall. We voted to cancel our normal fall VDC weekend and hold a special Leadership Training Retreat. We thought it would be a great way for us to promote the importance of Leadership Training and provide an opportunity to help build team unity. The first draft for the outline of the weekend was presented and approved at our January, 2010 Council meeting. A team to help plan the Training Retreat was formed and from there we were off and running.

The Bible verse we chose for the Training Retreat was based on Ephesians 4:3 "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit." The event was planned to begin on Friday evening and end by noon on Sunday morning. As we planned the weekend, we first and foremost wanted to gather to praise our Awesome God. We were very pleased that a local praise band, House of Grace, agreed to attend the entire Training Retreat weekend, to help enhance our Worship Services. Worship Services were held Friday evening, Saturday morning, Saturday evening and Sunday morning.

Since Sunday was All Saints Day, we held a special Candle lighting ceremony for the Saints that morning. We remembered loved ones who are now with the Lord and paid special tribute to Dick Schlinsog and Bill Miller. Northern Light VDC would not exist if it were not for Dick's foresight and commitment. Bill was a vital part in helping Northern Light grow.

We based the training sessions for the Retreat, on the NLS Leadership Training 101 and 201 manuals. We made sure that all of the required Leadership Training listed on the Sample Training schedule (page iv from the 101 manual) was included in the weekend. And we pulled valuable information from the 201 manual and the Essentials Manual. At the Training Retreat, a high emphasis was placed on the importance of Group Reunions and that Via de Cristo is so much more, than just putting on weekends. We broke into small groups and held three Grouping Sessions during the weekend training (with the same people each time). At the last session we

gave each other written Palanca, sharing words of encouragement and our thoughts on the gifts and talents God blessed that person with. We also included a Candlelight meal on Saturday evening, a Talent show filled with good singing and lots of laughs during some funny skits. For those who wanted to stay up late and socialize, there was a camp fire on Saturday evening.

The feedback from the weekend training was very positive, from both the written surveys and verbal feedback. People commented how they enjoyed the fellowship and an opportunity to get to know each other better. They appreciated learning so much more about VDC.

We feel a huge part of the success of the Training Retreat, based on the feedback, was due to three special people who came in to help us with the Training. We were blessed to have our National President Tracy Schmidlin, Pastor Paul Schmidlin (who helped National with the Essentials Manual) and Nancy Peterson (our Region 5 facilitator from MN) present at the Training. Their knowledge and passion for Via de Cristo shined through. Besides the training, Tracy & Nancy participated in a Question and Answer forum and Pr Paul worked with our Pastors during a break out session.

We would certainly encourage other Secretariats to consider having a Leadership Training Retreat. It was a great weekend filled with Praising God, leadership training, fellowship and lots of fun. If you hold such an event, we highly recommend that you invite members from our National Board to participate. It was so beneficial having Tracy, Pastor Paul and Nancy with us.

We are considering having another weekend training session in five years. In the meantime, we are providing leadership training before the spring and fall weekend practice sessions.

God Loves You and So Do We,
Nancy L. Heiman & Greg Stano
Council Members for Northern Light Via de Cristo
Co-Chairs for the Leadership Training Retreat

Continued from page 8

to print 75 - 100 Devotional Booklets to distribute at the NLSAM and to get reimbursed. Katie 2nd. Motion passed.

Judy is compiling articles for the newsletter. There is an article with information about possibly starting the coordinator position as a volunteer. We want to let people know that will be brought up to the body in July so interested people can be present. Registration for July 28-31 is making good progress with 136 attendees already registered.

Steve Barnett discussed the possibility of investing some of the Thrivent funds to increase their growth rate.

Steve B. moved that we adjourn. Steve G. 2nd. Motion passed. Pr. Doug led in a closing prayer at 7:50 p.m.

CONFERENCE CALL — April 10, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. Sunday, April 10th. Present were Tracy Schmidlin, Steve Gielda, Steve Barnett, Katie Sistar, Pr. Doug Givan, Carolyn Hawkins, Judy Laabs-Foss, Pr. Larry Conway, Diane Purcell. Pr. Larry opened with prayer.

Vice President of Administration: Carolyn gave an update on the Host Committee's preparations for the Annual Meeting and number registered so far.

We discussed the times the Board needed to arrive in Charlotte and what to do about eating before we meet. We went over the vendors' policy reiterating that we have a non-compete contract with Symbols Inc., and vendors should not be a distraction for the weekend. The NLS logo is just for the Host team to use.

The Host Team has contacted Thrivent and arranged two additional fundraisers. They received a \$3000 gift from a congregation in the region.

Secretary: Katie reported that we still have 6 secretariats that have not sent back a signed affiliation form and 3 that do not have a Spiritual Director on their secretariat. Only 19 secretariats have sent the survey information regarding the number of weekends held and the number of pilgrims and new clergy attending for 2010. The ones who haven't responded will be receiving another request for their secretariat's information.

Treasurer: Steve B. reported that we have received \$2245 in current dues and \$2445 in past year's dues. He has been trying to get the current officers' list updated so he can correspond with the treasurers adequately.

Vice President of Outreach: Steve G. stated that no new groups are ready to affiliate. He had a good response from the Wellness Checklist. Half the secretariats have let him know that the Wellness Chart has been completed, and three have asked for help. The Board is glad to see that people know we are here to help when needed. We discussed who might be asked to lead the truth seminar since Victor Lugo now has a time conflict. We discussed the need for Regional Representatives to be a committee under Steve's supervision. We want the Body to know that their input is welcome in helping to form the committee.

Spiritual Director: Doug asked for prayer requests and health updates from the Board members. He has sent invitations to Bishops and Spiritual Directors to come to the annual meeting in Charlotte. He stated that he had sent out information and requests for meditations for the Devotional Booklet and got only a few additional responses. The Devotional Booklet is nearly completed.

Newsletter Editor: Judy needs labels for the Conexiones. A new Newsletter will go out after May 15, and new updated labels are needed. Jim had volunteered to take the job for one year so we will need a new person in the Database position also.

Financial Advisor: Diane encourages everyone to get their filing for the government done this year. She has been helping a secretariat with their constitution and bylaws to reorganize corporate-wise.

Web Page Coordinator: Larry has done updates for the locator for Information and Videos. He has added a web page for Archives. Under Archives, there is a section to click for Videos. We want people to know that videos are on line and how to find them.

Old Business: We further discussed the need for nominating committee members and what offices need to be filled this summer. The elected officer positions available at the 2011 annual meeting are President, Secretary and Vice President of Outreach. We have two appointed offices that we are looking to fill: Database Coordinator and Web Page Coordinator.

We discussed the lack of progress in funding a National Coordinator position, and brainstormed on possible alternatives to this challenge. *Diane moved that the NLS Board take a motion to the National Body to fill the position of a Volunteer National Coordinator until such time as funding can be procured. Carolyn 2nd. Motion passed.* Discussion centered on the fact that the position *is needed* even though funding is not readily available. The board recommends that expenses for this position be considered and dis-

cussed at the next NLSAM. The job description would be given out and those interested in the position would be interviewed at the National Meeting. If approved by the body, a committee of Board and non-board members would be established at the NLSAM to handle interviews of interested parties and the application process for the Volunteer National Coordinator.

We need to complete the History Book that will be given out at the NLSAM. There are ten secretariats that have not responded with updated history. Board members were given names in secretariats to call to help with the effort of getting the data to Ron Millard in time for it to be included in the History Book. We discussed the size and cost related to this project and agreed on a design for the cover page.

The National Executive Board has adopted a travel policy regarding reimbursement for travel expenses for people doing NLS work serving on the N.L.S. board. It's in the President's Administration Book and the Secretary's records.

Diane moved that Tracy and Steve B. have authority to open a Thrivent account with Thrivent Financial Bank and that they be authorized signers. Katie 2nd. Motion passed.

We reviewed the contact list of past officers we are inviting to attend NLSAM in July.

Carolyn closed with prayer at 10:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Katie Sistar
NLS Secretary

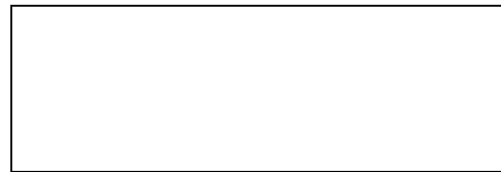


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For the Sake of Our Common Purposes

In January 1981, exactly thirty years ago, individuals representing fourteen Lutheran Cursillo® movements banded together “for the sake of our common purposes” to create what is now the National Lutheran Secretariat (NLS) of Via de Cristo. Today, the NLS remains strong and serves its member Secretariats in many ways. Beyond the NLS Annual Meeting (NLSAM), a long weekend opportunity to grow in His grace for all participants, we:

- *pray for you*
- *are available to you to discuss issues or serve as a sounding board*
- *develop and maintain a supply of materials for you (pilgrim guides in Braille or audio CD, etc.)*
- *are available to visit with you or even participate in special training programs*
- *help keep you up to date on ongoing compliance with 501(c)(3) requirements and tax laws can provide financial assistance to affiliated Secretariats otherwise unable to send delegates to the NLSAM*

If you are looking for encouragement or other support for the sake of our common purposes, please call on any member of the NLS Board. We are here to serve you!

Visited our *New Web Site* Lately?



www.viadecristo.org

Webmaster: Larry Conway

Anniversary Celebration Guests

This year we celebrate 30 years of the NLS and 25 years of being Via de Cristo. The NLS Board is looking for charter NLS members and previous NLS board members so that we can extend a personal invitation to the celebratory anniversary year's NLSAM. If you know how we can contact any charter NLS member or previous NLS board member, please contact Carolyn Hawkins, NLS VP of Administration at carolyn.nls@carolina.rr.com or 704-651-4230.



Meeting and Registration Form National Lutheran Secretariat Annual Meeting 2011

Thursday, July 28 through Sunday, July 31, 2011

Queens University of Charlotte

Hosted by Western North Carolina Lutheran Secretariat

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| ONE FORM PER PERSON ATTENDING • PLEASE PRINT • PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY FORM | | | |
| First Name | Last Name | <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female | Name for Name tag |
| Address City, State, Zip | | | |
| Home Phone | Cell Phone | Work Phone | |
| Fax | | E-mail Address | |
| Home Secretariat | | Position, if on Secretariat | |
| Please check all that apply: | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Previous NLS Board Member Position served and term _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> NLS Board Member <input type="checkbox"/> Lay Delegate <input type="checkbox"/> Clergy Delegate | <input type="checkbox"/> Speaker <input type="checkbox"/> Lay Visitor <input type="checkbox"/> Visiting Clergy | <input type="checkbox"/> Host Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Vendor <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| First Time attending NLS Annual Meeting: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | | | |
| If no, please indicate last year attended _____ Position attended as _____ | | | |
| Will you be attending the Saturday dinner? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | | | |
| I will need on-site transportation assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | | | |
| I require special accommodations for the following: <input type="checkbox"/> Medical <input type="checkbox"/> Dietary <input type="checkbox"/> Physical | | | |
| Please explain: _____ | | | |
| Travel to NLS Annual Meeting will be by <input type="checkbox"/> Auto <input type="checkbox"/> Air I will need to be picked up: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | | | |
| Transportation will be provided to Queens University from Charlotte Douglas International Airport (CLT) only. You must submit the separate Travel Information Form to make reservations for airport pick up. | | | |
| _____ Please send a map with driving directions to Queens University of Charlotte. | | | |
| What day will you be leaving the annual meeting? <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday p.m. <input type="checkbox"/> Sunday by noon | | | |
| \$ <u>200.00</u> Registration fee includes meals, housing, and material for Thursday 11:00 a.m. thru Sunday 11:00 a.m. | | | |
| \$ <u>—</u> Early Bird discount (– \$20.00 if mailed before May 1st) | | | |
| \$ <u>0.00</u> Double Rooms - Roommate requested: _____ | | | |
| \$ _____ Single Room fee, additional \$45.00 | | | |
| \$ _____ Extra Night on Wednesday - Per Person - Double \$30.00, Single \$45.00 (does not include meals) | | | |
| \$ _____ Extra Meals (mark each extra meal) <input type="checkbox"/> Wed. Lunch - \$8.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Wed. Dinner - \$9.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Thurs. Breakfast - \$7.00 | | | |
| \$ _____ Pre-order Anniversary T-shirt (mark one) <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> XL <input type="checkbox"/> 2XL <input type="checkbox"/> 3XL <input type="checkbox"/> 4XL <input type="checkbox"/> 5XL <input type="checkbox"/> 6XL | | | |
| Small - XL - \$15.00 2XL - \$16.00 3XL - \$17.00 4XL - \$19.00 5XL - \$21.00 6XL - \$23.00 | | | |
| \$ _____ Total Payment ** PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: WNCVDC 2011 NLSAM ** | | | |
| Refunds (less \$25.00) will only be considered if postmarked or e-mailed no later than July 1, 2011 | | | |
| <b style="text-align: center;">SEMINARS Please indicate 1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th choice _____ Seminar 1: The Way _____ Seminar 2: The Truth _____ Seminar 3: The Life _____ Seminar 4: The Law | | Complete form and mail with check to: NLS Annual Meeting 2011 Larry & Beth Bowman 1043 Rolling Green Drive Newton, NC 28658 E-mail: labowman08@gmail.com Phone: 828-294-3654 (home) Fax: 828-294-0959 828-244-7813 (cell) | |
| Registration Use ONLY Date Rec'd: _____ | | Check No: _____ Confirm. Sent: _____ | |
| Travel Info Rec'd: _____ | | Registration No. _____ | |



Sample of Anniversary T-shirt