

Connecting National and Local Secretariats

CONEXIONES

Volume 30
Number 1
Jan. 2012

Official Publication of the National Lutheran Secretariat, VdC

NLS 2012 Annual Meeting
July 26 – 29, 2012
Hosted by Colorado VdC of the Rockies

On behalf of the National Lutheran Secretariat and the Host Committee from Colorado, you are officially invited to attend the National Lutheran Secretariat Annual Meeting in Denver, CO, July 26 through July 29.

Those of you who attended the Annual Meeting in Charlotte, NC, will soon be receiving a letter from us with the registration enclosed. Additional forms will be available on the NLS web site www.viadechristo.org. Please note that you may take advantage of a special “early bird” discount if you register before May 1. Also note that on the registration form there are options for an extra night’s stay, as well as additional meals in the dining room. Be sure to include the cost for the extra night and meals with your total payment when you make your reservation.

Regis University in Denver will be the site of this year’s annual meeting. Even though Regis is a small campus, you will be walking at a higher altitude. You will need to stay hydrated and use sunscreen lotion. We will be providing detailed information about the prevention of altitude sickness with the confirmation of your registrations.

Transportation between buildings on campus will be limited. Walking provides the most direct route and we are encouraging people to walk as much as possible.

The dorm rooms are suites with the bathroom facilities in the middle and a sleeping room on either side. As in NC no more than four people will be sharing the bathroom facilities. Regis is a no smoking and no alcohol campus.

We encourage members from all Secretariats to send representatives to this year’s annual meeting. If funds are an issue for your Secretariat, please contact NLS VP of Outreach, Steve Gielda (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.

On behalf of the Colorado 4th Day Community, we look forward to being your hosts and greeting you at Denver International Airport and Regis University in July.

God loves you and so do we!
The Colorado 2012 Host Committee



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 Regis University - July 26-29
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National Lutheran Secretariat
Conexiones-on-the-web
E-Mail Notification Request Form

E-Mail Notification — carolyn.nls@carolina.rr.com

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

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Home Phone: (____) _____ Work Phone: (____) _____

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 30
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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.

NLS President's Report

PRAISING GOD!

Our celebration of Christmas 2011 has passed...the New Year was "rung in"...and...if you are anything like me you are probably "rung out" and possibly still recovering! I praise God for His coming to us...not just at Christmas – but – everyday. I also praise God for "grace-filled" editors! Yes, this was written a few days after the publication deadline! However, I have an excuse – I was ill...probably from trying to do too much in too short a time over Christmas and New Years!



Speaking of time - it is difficult for me to believe that six months ago we were gathered in Charlotte, NC and in six months we will be gathered in Denver, CO. I trust that all who read this would consider attending our Annual Meeting in Denver, July 26th through the 29th. The Host Committee is preparing for the events and the Board is preparing a program that will help each Secretariat as we learn from one another. (Proverbs 27:17) As with all our weekends, I trust that you are praying for our preparation and for the peace that comes, as we trust in the Lord.

I have long thought that the thing that binds us together as a Via de Cristo community was God's love for us, our love for God, and our common shared experience. No matter what "flavor" of Cursillo we experienced, the Essentials were followed and we relate to one another because of the experience. There is no question that our primary bond is God's love for us and our love of God and all of God's creation. So, because each of our journeys are different...the common shared experience brought to us via the Cursillo method gives us yet another thing in common. However, with each passing day, God continues to remind me that it is not just His love for us which we experience on a Via de Cristo weekend, it is the certain knowledge that through our taking Christ into our environments (congregations, vocations, callings, ministries, etc.) that we are participating in something much greater than ourselves. WOW! What a blessing! It is not about us...it is all about God...and...what God is doing in each of our lives...in and through our experiences and Via de Cristo communities.

It is my goal – and – the goal of your Board to help you in whatever way we can to allow God to use you and your Via de Cristo community to be the light and life God wants all to know and experience. I was reminded on New Years Day of John 10:10b "I [Jesus] have come that they [all people including you and me] may have life and have it to the full." Make no mistake – I am not referring to the "Prosperity Gospel." I am referring to the certain knowledge that we, as the people of God, may know His peace, love, mercy, and grace – trusting in God's leading.

May God bless you each and every day. In a recent Bible study I was reminded that there is a really good reason we call each day "the present" – because it is! It is a present from God. I ask that you continue prayers for our ministry together and that we will listen to God as we go forward in His name and by His Grace. In Christ –

Ed Broestl, NLS President

V.P. of Outreach Report

Walk the Talk

DeColores brothers and sisters in Christ! I hope you all had a blessed Christmas season. As we step into 2012 many of us will take a step back and conduct self-examinations of our lives. We will review our strengths and weaknesses in our personal relationships and in our relationship with God. Many of us will take time out and examine our Piety, Study and Action. Did we live up to the expectations we set for ourselves? Was God smiling down upon you and saying, "well done good and faithful servant"? We all fail to meet God's full expectations, and we are grateful for His grace in our lives. However, we can't take that *grace* for granted. We are all called to be Disciples of Christ. We are called to live in a life of *Piety, Study and Action*.

When we are asked to serve as a Team member of a Via de Cristo weekend, we need to examine ourselves and ask; am I living my *Fourth Day* in a way that others should emulate? We can't go serve on a Team and tell others that being in a Reunion Group is a critical part of the Fourth Day if we are not active in a Reunion Group ourselves. We can't tell people that Study is a big part of strengthening their relationship with God, if we don't open the bible or read devotions to strengthen our own relationship with God.

As many of you know, the NLS launched a Leadership Survey this past December. As of today, 572 people have responded to the survey. Early indications show that almost 50% of the people who responded are actively serving on Team and are not in a Reunion Group. This is not "Walking the Talk". I understand there are many reasons why people may not be in a Reunion Group, but if you elect to not seek out a Group and you elect to join team...you must not put yourself in a position of a hypocrite.

I looked at the reasons why people are not in a reunion group and what I surmise is that many started in a Reunion Group, then the group fizzled out and they never found another. The number one reason given as to why people are not in a Reunion Group is that they say they can't find a Reunion Group to join! I would love to find out if these same people attend an Ultreya and ask others about joining or starting a group. Since the number one reason why people are not in a Reunion Group is because they can't find one, it's time for us to *Walk the Talk*. We need to put ourselves out there and let people know that we are here for them. We need to step outside of the comfort zone of our own Reunion Group and be willing to start a new Group. Sure it may be awkward to start a group with people you don't know, but wasn't it awkward to meet the people around your Table Group for the first time on your weekend? Let God lead you. Let God help you find those who are looking for a Group to join. Let God help you *Walk the Talk!*

God Loves you and So do I,

Steve Gielda
NLS Vice President of Outreach



NLS Mid-Year Minutes - Oct. 21-22, 2011, Denver, CO

Friday, October 21, 2011

The NLS mid-year meeting began at 1:00PM on Friday, October 21, 2011, with devotions and communion led by Pastor Doug in a conference room at the Doubletree Hotel – Denver North. Present were Ed Broestl, Carolyn Hawkins, Steve Barnett, Steve Gielda, Magdala Ray, Pastor Doug Givan, and Nancy Peterson. Our devotional thoughts began with reflection on what is life-giving to each of us, and the responses often included some aspect of our relationships with our loved ones, our church family, and our 4th Day communities. Pastor Doug pointed out to us that Jesus, the Life-giving One, sought out people and established relationships with them, and this is the model we seek to emulate.

Magdala led the next activity, an exploration of the application of learning styles to strengthening relationships within the NLS and to understanding the importance and effectiveness of the Via de Cristo method.

The board members then reviewed and discussed the objectives and agenda of the mid-year meeting, prioritizing several key concerns: defining the roles of appointed board members; the focus and purpose of all board members; continuity from one year's board to the next; communication among the board members and with the local secretariats; and the best way for NLS to support the local secretariats through policy, guidelines, and practical application.

Ed asked the members of the board to provide a brief summary of their activities since the NLSAM in Charlotte, NC, July 2011:

VP – Outreach: Steve G. reported that the Wellness Checklist worked well in gathering important data and information from the local secretariats. The effort to recruit and train regional coordinators has experienced some delays. The 4th Day Leadership Survey, an assessment of how well the Via de Cristo method develops Christian leaders, was originally created in 2005 and received 62 responses from members of the Catholic Cursillo, Emmaus and Via de Cristo communities. At the last 4th Day conference, Steve G. provided it to those who were interested. He would like to see it launched as a survey in all our local sec-

retariats, possibly online. He suggested that the EB consider meeting face-to-face more often throughout the year. One possibility for an additional meeting this coming year would be to combine a meeting with the 4th Day conference held in Winter Park, Florida, at the end of January or beginning of February.

He also reported that he has received inquiries with interest in starting new local secretariats in places such as New Jersey, Virginia Beach, Central Illinois and Manitoba (Canada), an exciting prospect which really requires that he shift his focus from problem-solver to proactive outreach – a vision maker. He stated that the NLS can help the community grow by strengthening local secretariats and their connections to NLS through relationship-building.

VP – Administration: Carolyn's activities since the NLSAM have included serving on the selection committee for the Executive Director position, coordinating the wrap-up process with the 2011 NLSAM Host Committee, assembling and reporting the 2011 NLSAM evaluations, and working with the 2012 NLSAM Host Committee in Denver. She will be revising the Host Committee document before the next annual meeting in July 2012.

Spiritual Director: Pr. Doug has been keeping the NLS board and the entire Via de Cristo community in prayer and spearheading the SD task force on encouraging pastoral involvement in the movement. One of the goals is to increase communication and one-to-one contact with bishops in each of the local secretariat areas; the participation of ordained Lutheran ministers as candidates and then transitioning to SDs serving on weekends is critical to the Via de Cristo method. He re-emphasized Pr. Ed Simonsen's point that both clergy and laity must purposefully invite pastors into reunion groups, Ultreyas, and other community activities. Pr. Doug expressed gratitude to Pr. Gerry Olsen of Gold Coast Via de Cristo in Florida for his assistance in creating the SD blog on the NLS website.

Pr. Doug is also working with John Bradford to print a small devotional booklet (Pilgrim Guide size) for the

SDs serving in Via de Cristo around the country. He asked for the board's help in reading and using the compiled devotions and will be sending it to the entire board, possibly one devotion per day; the board will then provide comments and suggestions to him.

Pr. Doug discussed with the board the possibility of creating online training for leadership. Steve G. mentioned that John Aclin of Rainbow Via de Cristo has a PowerPoint created for Leadership 101 and 102. Magdala referred back to the learning styles activity which stressed the importance of completing the learning cycle, especially in online learning. In-person or face-to-face activities should be paired with the online components to build relationships, model community formation, and discuss specific questions, topics or prayer concerns.

Treasurer: Steve B. distributed the profit and loss reports comparing budget and actual income and expenses for June 1 through October 20, 2011 and the balance sheet for accounts as of October 19, 2011. His activities have included preparing the reports, communicating with local secretariats concerning financial questions and dues structure, and working with Diane Purcell on financial and legal documents. He is writing a newsletter article explaining the new dues structure. Steve B. and Diane will be working on the Financial Advisor job description for the 2012 NLSAM.

He concurred with board discussion of a possible additional board meeting during the year between annual meetings but reminded us that we need to stay within the approved budget. Proposals on options for funding an additional meeting may be made in July at the annual meeting. He also raised the idea of preparing succession plans for the various board positions. He is researching whether the board needs any type of insurance and what premiums would be charged as well as clarifying eligibility for Host Committees to receive Thrivent funds.

In January, Steve B. will be contacting the local secretariats regarding dues, so Magdala will send out the information survey January 1, 2012, to ensure that the database is updated. Steve B. also continues to pray daily for the NLS board and the movement.

Secretary: Magdala has contacted

NLS Mid-Year Minutes continued

offered at the 2012 NLSAM. Pr. Doug led us in prayer before the meal.

The meeting resumed with the brainstorming session focused on the fact that 2012 is the 40th anniversary of the first Lutheran weekend held in the United States. This milestone lends itself to reaffirmation of what it means to be a "Lutheran" movement and why such a version of the Cursillo movement was created. Various suggestions were made concerning speakers, presentation formats, and topics. The group agreed that we must once again emphasize The Essentials, model the three day weekend, and provide adequate opportunities for all participants to attend a variety of forums and seminars. Carolyn directed our attention to the major themes emerging from the 2011 NLSAM evaluations: more time for rest and spiritual reflection, more purposefully directed small group sessions with prayer and sharing, more information on law and finance, more ideas on encouraging pastoral support and involvement, and more sessions in which best practices are described and demonstrated. The board included in the discussion the need to provide more complete session descriptions in the pre-conference registration materials.

As we reflected on the 2011 NLSAM and prepared for the Saturday meeting with the 2012 Host Committee, Pr. Doug shared with us a quote by Dag Hammarskjöld:

For whatever has been, "Thanks!" For whatever will be, "Yes!"

This reminded us Thessalonians 5:18: "Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

The meeting adjourned for the night at approximately 9:30pm.

Saturday, October 22, 2011

After a 9AM tour of the Regis University campus, the site of the 2012 NLSAM, the board and the Host Committee met in a conference room on campus. Present were the board members – Ed Broestl, Carolyn Hawkins, Steve Barnett, Steve Gielda, Magdala Ray, Pastor Doug Givan, and Nancy Peterson – and the Host Committee – Carol McGill (Chair), Bud and Shelly Blazier (Hospitality), Diane Broestl (Public Rela-

tions), Paul Bunker (Transportation), Loretta Hartten (Registration), Mark Carnes (Communications), and Roberta Wentworth (Fundraising).

Pr. Doug opened the meeting with devotions and prayer. Carolyn provided the HC members with some specific updates and general pointers about conducting the NLSAM. She verified for the HC that the keynote address and all forums and seminars will be recorded. Each member of the HC provided a brief progress report. Carolyn then conducted a team building exercise outside for the board and the HC, and she encouraged the HC to open all their meetings with prayer, devotions and similar team building activities.

The HC and board members enjoyed a working lunch in the campus cafeteria, where the NLSAM meals will be served. Carolyn assigned all the meeting participants to specific tables for discussion and Q&A regarding the weekend in July. At the conclusion of the lunch meeting, the joint HC and board portion was adjourned.

The board returned to the Regis conference room to continue mid-year business, including reviewing the cost of the NLSAM and determining the registration fee for 2012. The 2011 NLSAM had an unusual number of delegates and visitors who were unable to attend for family and medical reasons; refunds have been mailed to those individuals. The final decision of the board was that registration for the 2012 NLSAM will be \$190/person before May 1st; registrations received after May 1st will be charged \$210/person. The first invitations will be sent mid-January.

Ed next led a discussion on the role and duties of our new Executive Director, Nancy Peterson. All board members, including Nancy, offered their perspectives on how the ED could work with and support the board functions by establishing contacts, building relationships and maintaining communication with all affiliated secretariats of the NLS. This will be the first priority of the ED, who is now the focal point for questions from those secretariats to the NLSEB. Nancy's second priority will be to work with the board

in determining the best strategy for maintaining and updating the NLS database. Her third priority will be to contact the executive directors of other 4th Day movements to learn and share best practices in adhering to The Essentials in their communities.

The next agenda topic was the purpose of the NLS web site, which we agreed was first and foremost to inform and equip people within Via de Cristo and secondly to inform the outside world about this particular 4th Day movement. In keeping with that purpose, it was agreed that the web site should include all board members' contact information, such as email addresses and phone numbers. In regard to the hosting and domain subscription, Steve G. moved that the NLS retain our current provider and transfer the site from the current server to a Linux server with the current provider. seconded by Steve B. After a brief discussion, the board approved the motion unanimously. In response to a request from Rick Hanzlik, web site coordinator, Nancy moved that the board give Rick's church permission to use the NLS logo in the church bulletin in order to promote Via de Cristo, seconded by Carolyn. The motion was approved unanimously.

Pr. Doug discussed with the board the deep concern of several former NLS SDs concerning the need to encourage more pastors to attend weekends, serve as SDs on Via de Cristo weekends, and participate in community activities. He will be forming a task force to develop actions to address this concern.

The board next discussed the 2012 NLSAM business meeting and reviewed the seminar and forum offerings. Three board positions will be open for nominations – VP – Administration, Treasurer, and Spiritual Director. The nominating committee must be formed by January 1, 2012. Information about the nominating process will be included in monthly emails to the LDs, in Conexiones articles, and on the NLS web site. Ed assigned board members to contact prospective speakers and presenters. Possible seminars include learning styles (Magdala), law and finance (Diane), engaging clergy in the movement (?), and using survey data about best practices (?). Possible forums include The Essen-

tials (Greg Engroff or Victor Lugo), What Does It Mean to Be a Lutheran? (Pr. Paul Schmidlin), Strengthening the 4th Day (Pr. Neil Arnold). Pr. Joe Nilsen was suggested as a keynote speaker sharing the history of NLS Via de Cristo.

The reprinting of the 4th Day Manual (given to pilgrims by about half of the secretariats) was discussed. Ed and Magdala will review the document for the December NLSEB teleconference. Ed sent the document to the board October 3rd. The revising and reissuing of DVDs was also discussed. Steve G. suggested that we refocus a DVD on "Living Your Fourth Day" by having two major sections: "Jesus and Me" and "Jesus, Community and Me."

Judy has asked us to submit newsletter items by November 1st. This upcoming newsletter will contain the approved October minutes. The next newsletter in January will have the mid-year minutes. In response to a question, Steve G. confirmed that Diane has a document explaining 501c3 procedures that is sent to groups interested in starting a new secretariat. Steve B. informed the board of a Thrivent request by Roberta Wentworth to make a ten minute presentation at the 2012 NLSAM Saturday evening dinner. As a major sponsor of the NLSAM, Thrivent will also have a column on the registration check-in roster for participants to indicate whether they are Thrivent members.

The last topic of the afternoon board meeting was "continuity." In and through the roles of the appointed and elected positions, how does the NLS develop and maintain continuity? The new position of Executive Director (ED) focuses on long term continuity in the board and the community. The role of the elected board members is to fulfill the constitution and bylaws, and the role of the appointed board members is to support the elected board members. The evaluation of the ED will take place at the end of January (90 days), and the next evaluation will be at the end of July.

At 6:00PM, the board enjoyed dinner and hospitality at the home of Pr. Steve and Loretta Hartten. The board returned to the hotel and resumed meeting from 8:30PM to 9:30PM for a visioning session.

Ed began the visioning session by asking how we as the NLSEB can do what

we are doing better. In our constitution and bylaws, we are charged with supporting, strengthening, guiding and assisting the affiliated secretariats; coordinating the flow of information and resources among them; encouraging the use of liturgy and Rollo outlines in keeping with general Lutheran practice; and expanding the Via de Cristo movement.

Since our first charges include support and strengthening, that must be our first objective as a board and the first priority of the ED. This requires an assessment of needs and the building of relationships among the ED, board and community. We want to be sure that every local secretariat sees us and uses us as a valuable resource for following The Essentials, as Steve G stated our goal.

The NLS must be seen as a source of solutions but not the problem solvers. When we distributed the Wellness Checklist, many secretariats realized that weekends were being held for the wrong reasons. The goal of the weekend must always be to create and strengthen strong Christian communities which encourage, support and emphasize the formation of reunion groups and which hold regular Ultreyas. One of the ways this is accomplished is by conducting retreat weekends which follow the Via de Cristo method: The Essentials.

The board then moved into a discussion of envisioning how the NLSAM can support and strengthen the affiliated secretariats, agreeing that one of the best ways of doing that at the annual meeting is by conducting the meeting as a model of the retreat weekend. Therefore, more time for reflection, discussion and application is needed. After every speaker, seminar or forum, participants must be given the opportunity to reflect on the "big idea" they found within the presentation. Participants should be able to answer for themselves why their communities need this information, what the first action step would be in their communities, how their communities can implement this idea, whom in each community needs to be told about it, who needs to start the action step, and what the possibilities could be within their communities. In modeling the

weekend, the presentations (forums and/or seminars) could be kept at approximately 30 minutes, leaving perhaps ten minutes for personal reflection and finalizing notes, and then 15 minutes for small group discussion.

The board adjourned for the evening and reconvened in the morning for worship and communion and breakfast. Having shared special Bible verses in our lives, we officially ended the mid-year meeting with prayer at 9:00AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Magdala Ray,
NLS Secretary



**NLS - 2012 Annual Meeting
Denver, CO
July 26-29**



REGIS UNIVERSITY



NLS Conference Call Minutes

Sunday, November 13, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. . Ed Broestl, Carolyn Hawkins, Steve Gielda, Magdala Ray, Nancy Peterson, Judy Laabs-Foss, and Diane Purcell were able to connect to the teleconference.

Ed invited all to join him in the prayer to the Holy Spirit

Secretary: The October teleconference minutes have been approved; "FINAL" version will be sent out this evening.

Newsletter Editor: Judy recommended some ways we can meet the challenges of coordinating the newsletter with web site information. She needs pictures of the annual meeting site in Denver and an article about the 2012 NLSAM for this fall newsletter. The next newsletter deadline after this will be January 15th, 2012.

Treasurer: Ed will ask Steve B. to send out the third quarter financial reports.

Financial Advisor: Diane explained that the ministry of charities signers must have been on the board as of May 31st, 2011, for that report period, which is why she specified previous board members' signatures as necessary.

VP-Outreach: Steve G. reported that the Leadership Survey will be sent out by the end of November. After Thanksgiving, he will be conducting a phone conference regarding the leadership curriculum from the Walk to Emmaus training. Leadership training is for all Cursillistas and will be coordinated by the Regional Coordinators.

VP-Administration: Carolyn shared some of the ideas and suggestions from the final compilation of the 2011 NLSAM evaluations. Most comments related to increasing the value of the various meeting activities by fine tuning rather than any massive overhaul or reorganization. Two specific suggestions were that

the schedule provide more time for reflection and that the small group meetings would begin and end with prayer. She has spoken with Greg Engroff, ED of Walk to Emmaus, about attending the 2012 NLSAM, and he is arranging to attend the entire weekend. He was very excited and enthusiastic about this opportunity to participate. She will introduce him early in the weekend and will arrange for him to talk with people at different tables each meal.

Executive Director: Nancy returned from her trip to Israel yesterday morning.

President: Ed confirmed that Pr. Joe Nilsen has agreed to be the keynote speaker at the 2012 NLSAM; he will reflect on 40 years of Lutheran weekends. Ed will be sending Nancy information for contacting the LD of each secretariat. He also requested information about where the electronic copies of the NLS constitution and bylaws and the job descriptions are kept. Diane responded that she has the original electronic versions of the documents; the Host Committee flash drive may also contain the documents. Ed has sent a copy of the constitution and bylaws to an attorney friend who provided him with notes. The last time the constitution was reviewed was in 2004. Diane suggested that Ed request Fred Schneider's input for this current review; he was very helpful in 2004. Ed will be passing on notes about the web site to Rick. The web site should ideally provide some brief information for each board member – primarily who we are and what we do.

Ed led the group in prayer for the special prayer requests and especially the health and safety of all at this Thanksgiving time. The entire group prayed the Lord's Prayer in unison.

The next teleconference meeting

will be on Sunday, December 11th, at 7:00pm EDT.

The November 13th teleconference meeting was adjourned at 8:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Magdala Ray,
NLS Secretary



REGIS UNIVERSITY
Denver, CO



NLS Conference Call Minutes

Sunday, December 11, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. Sunday, December 11. Ed Broestl, Carolyn Hawkins, Steve Barnett, Steve Gielda, Pr. Doug Givan, Rick Hanzlik, Magdala Ray, Nancy Peterson, Judy Laabs-Foss, and Diane Purcell were able to connect to the teleconference.

Ed invited all to join him in the prayer to the Holy Spirit and then asked Rick to lead the discussion concerning the NLS web site.

Website Administrator: The annual meeting button on the home page now takes visitors to the 2012 NLSAM information; please send Rick registration information, logo, and other pertinent material as soon as ready. Rick is editing all the icons so that there can be just one menu for all the pages. He is also working on dedicated emails for each member of the board which can be accessed and responded to in a simple, clean method; additional research will be done. Along with those modifications, Rick suggested that we consider managing the website with a Joomla-based package, which may take about six months to implement. Initially, it would be hosted on Rick's website and then moved to viadecristo.org.

Diane asked if the 2012 NLSAM information could be made more prominent. Also, on the contact page, she suggested that Nancy's information be placed first, then the elected board members, and then the appointed board members. It was suggested that each board member's information on the contact page should include his or her city and state. The board discussed having city, state, phone and email address for each board member on both the letterhead and in the Conexiones. Nancy requested that the distribution center link be made more visible, also. Carolyn will be adding an

evaluation item regarding the website.

VP-Outreach: Steve G would like to send out the link to the leadership survey this week; Magdala will add the NLS logo and send him the link. Nancy and Steve B will send him their LD email lists. He has also scheduled a kickoff meeting with the Regional Coordinators on Tuesday, December 20th, with the hopes that the leadership training will be in motion by June. Steve verified with Carolyn that Pr. Neil Arnold has agreed to speak at the 2012 NLSAM on strengthening the 4th Day. Nancy, Ed and Steve G. will be attending the Fourth Day Conference in Orlando at the end of January.

Rick and Steve G had to leave the teleconference at this point.

VP-Administration: Carolyn will be coordinating and communicating further with the 2012 HC and will then distribute the new information to Rick for the website. Historically, the timeline for NLSAM communication to the membership is as follows: Preceding December – brief “splash” article in newsletter; January – invitation letter and registration; increased communication in February; March – early bird payments encouraged. As mentioned earlier in this meeting, that status of the speakers is as follows: Pr. Joe Nilsen, Greg Engroff and Pr. Neil Arnold confirmed; Ed to invite Pr. Paul Schmidlin and talk to Steve G regarding Pr. John Bradford; Magdala confirmed for 4MAT wheel seminar. Although Diane had not yet been contacted about presenting a seminar on law and finance, she graciously agreed to do so in this teleconference. Carolyn will send out an email summarizing the speaker plan and verifying all confirmations.

Executive Director: Nancy will be contacting all the LDs of the sec-

retariats who were not able to attend the 2011 NLSAM; she has already had some great conversations with some of them. Nancy's official NLS phone number has been established: 651-249-7897. This will be published in the Conexiones, on the letterhead, and on the website.

President: Ed has emailed past NLS presidents for input on the constitution and bylaws review; the EB was copied on the email. He will be working on any needed revisions between now and the end of January. References to Lutheran synods in the 4th Day Manual will be made as “evangelical Lutheran churches” rather than specific synodical designations. Ed reported that the members of Colorado VdC and Vdc of the Rockies are working diligently in preparation for hosting the 2012 NLSAM.

Pr. Doug led the group in prayer for the special prayer requests, for all members of VdC communities, the movement, and all congregations represented in this movement, and especially that Christians all over the world would be able to focus on Jesus during this busy and often distracting season.

The next teleconference meeting will be on Sunday, January 8th, at 7:00pm EDT.

The December 11th teleconference meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Magdala Ray,
NLS Secretary



????????????????????????????????????????????????????????????
**ARE YOU COMING TO THE NLSAM THIS YEAR?
 LOOK FOR THE REGISTRATION AND TRAVEL
 FORMS IN THIS NEWSLETTER AND ON THE WEB!
 YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS IT!!!**

The Wheel Leading to The Way

By Magdala Ray



The Second of a Three-Part Article for the Conexiones
(Beginning with the November 2011 issue)

In this second of a three-part article on learning styles and their connection to the Via de Cristo method, please reflect with me on the role of The Essentials and the weekend's structure. Together, these aid in creating meaning in participants' hearts and minds – the meaning of Christ's sacrificial love for us and His boundless grace. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, this is done through a learning experience, one which very clearly follows the cycle of learning.

As I mentioned in the first part of this article (November 2011), each participant attending a weekend, and each team member serving on a weekend, is likely to have a dominant learning style. While one person learns best by sensing or "feeling" the environment and then processing reflectively, another person may learn best by listening to a talk and then processing that information by energetically leading the table in creating a poster. Every weekend which places the greatest emphasis on The Essentials rather than the non-essential, or adia-phorous, activities or things provides a wisely- and well-planned learning experience.

To quote the NLS Manual (p. 30), "We feel the following items are essential for an authentic Three Day Weekend: palanca, retreat, 72 hours, 14/15 talks, note taking, discussions, posters, decuria sharing, 5 meditations, Celebration of Repentance, Holy Communion daily, closing and crosses." A weekend, or any other learning experience, cannot be structured to cater to any one learning style. While one part of the weekend may be a comforting activity for one type of learner, that same activity may be a time of discomfort, stretching of the mind and heart, for another learner type.

The dynamics of the three days contribute to the learning cycle, also. As the participants are guided to reflect on themselves, and then on their relationship with Christ, and finally on their relationship with Christ, their environments, and the world, true Christian community is formed. The learning process of the participants on a weekend depends greatly on the examples of love and grace demonstrated by the team; a Christian life is not one only of reflection nor is it one of constant action without reflection. It is the total experience, incorporating all The Essentials and dynamics, which characterizes the authentic weekend and leads participants to an understanding of the Via de Cristo method of renewal.

In the next issue, we will explore the "how" of learning styles and their application to team formation and training and the structure of the weekend.

**PALANCA
 "Waffle House" Prayers**

Another year is completed and we look forward to what God has planned for us in the coming year of 2012, the blessings, the revelations the start of new projects and completion of others. Moreover we anticipate the revelation and fulfillment of His purposes for our lives. Prayer is our way of talking with our Lord, Savior, Provider, best friend, confidant. In Via de Cristo and other three day movements, Palanca (a lever) or Agape is what we call the prayers for love, encouragement, inspiration and support that are offered to Him for the different 3 Day movements Worldwide. For a number of years my Bride has used the phrase "I have you covered and smothered in Prayer." It wasn't until recently; I made the connection to a popular restaurant chain which originated in Atlanta, GA – the Waffle House. They serve their Hash Brown Potatoes with several options – two of which are "covered" and "smothered". The Lord, in his wisdom, made us all different and we all pray differently. For our Via de Cristo communities, we seek the prayers of all we can contact in order to cover and bathe our activities in prayers. In Paul's letters, he writes about prayer. Three of those instance are: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known to God."¹ "Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere."² "Let your hope make you glad. Be patient in time of trouble and never stop praying."³ So now when I think of being in constant prayer, I will smile as I think of "Waffle House" prayers – "smothered and covered".

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 2012 updates have been flowing in due to the great job being done by the Palanca Coordinators. Updates are provided in many forms. On the web page there is a button that when clicked will open an eMail addressed to me 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 (DCColor9@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 Palanca Coordinator



References: (1) Philippians 4:6 NASB; (2) Ephesians 6:8 NLT; (3) Romans 12:12 CEV

Palanca!!!

2012 WEEKENDS:

Jan. 2012 - MN: **Lutheran VdC of Minnesota**, Men #572; Jan. 19-22 & Women #537; Jan. 26-29, Send palanca to: Lenore Jesness 899 Sherwood Ave. St. Paul, MN 55106-1825

Jan./Feb. 2012 - TX: **Texas Lutheran VDC**, Men; Jan. 19-22 & Women #537; Feb. 9-12, Send palanca to: Ken Handley 509 Gaslight Blvd. Lufkin, TX 78154

Feb. 2012 - NV: **Light in the Desert VDC**, Coed #17 Feb. 9-12, Send palanca to: Todd Rush 7524 Bush Garden Ave. Las Vegas, NV 89129

Feb. 2012 - MN: **Lutheran VdC of Minnesota**, Men #574; Feb. 9-12 & Women #575; Feb. 26-29, Send palanca to: Nancy Barker 6699 Industrial Rd. Saginaw, MN 55779-9434

Mar. 2012 - IN/KY: **Indiana-Kentucky VDC (South)**, Men #67; Mar. 1-4, & Women #68; Mar. 8-11, Send palanca to: Tammy white 2615 Zhale Smith Rd. LaGrange, KY 40031

Mar. 2012 - NC: **West No. Carolina VDC**, Mixed #34; Mar. 1-4, Send palanca to: Judy Zander 304 Amity Cir. Belmont, NC 28012

Mar. 2012 - WI: **WI Sunrise VDC**, Men #79; Mar. 1-4, & Women #80; Mar. 8-11, Send palanca to: Greg Clark 822 Broad St. Beloit, WI 53511

Mar. 2012 - MN: **Lutheran VdC of Minnesota**, Men #576; Mar. 8-11 & Women #577; Mar. 15-18, Send palanca to: Mary Arfmann 2333 4th Ave. NW Owatonna, MN 55060-1209

Mar. 2012 - NC: **East No. Carolina VDC**, Mixed #78; Mar. 8-11, Send palanca to: Terry Park 110 Smith Landing Lane Hillsville, VA 24323

Mar. 2012 - FL: **Sonshine VDC of So. FL**, Women #106; Mar. 15-18, Send palanca to: Bonnie Freese 1150 Wren Ave. Miami Springs, FL 33166

Mar. 2012 - TN: **Tennessee VDC**, Coed #28 Mar. 15-18, Send palanca to: Bill McComb 21 Meadowlark Cir. Fairfield Glade, TN 39558

Mar. 2012 - TX: **Lutheran VDC of Northern Texas**, Coed #85; Mar. 15-18, Send palanca to: Barb Guinn 2832 Mimosa Park Dr. Richland, TX 76118

Mar. 2012 - WI/MI: **Northern Light VDC of WI and Upper MI**, Men #21; Mar. 15-

18, & Women #22; Mar. 15-18, Send palanca to: Richard Neitzel 18189 Hwy 41 W Champion, MI 49814

Mar. 2012 - AR/OK: **A-OK VDC**, Coed #28; Mar 22-25, Send palanca to: Patti Johnson email address; Palanca@aokviadecristo.org

Mar. 2012 - FL: **Gold Coast VDC of So. FL**, Men #84; Mar 22-25, Send palanca to: Ron Pusins 3160 NW 67 Court Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309

Mar. 2012 - IN/KY: **Indiana-Kentucky VDC (North)**, Coed #17; Mar 22-25, Send palanca to: Tami White 2615 Zhale Smith Rd. LaGrange, KY 40031

April 2012 - FL: **Light House VDC**, Men #40; April 12-15, & Women #40; April 19-22, Send palanca to: Freddie & Maritza Gonzalez P.O. Box 628 New Smyrna Beach, FL 32170

April 2012 - MI/OH: **Good News VDC**, Men #50; April 12-15, & Women #50; April 19-22, Send palanca to: Karen Warsop 5633 E. Grand River Ave. Howell, MI 48843

April 2012 - UT: **Utah VDC**, Men #53; April 12-15, & Women #54; April 19-22, Send palanca to: Kelly Martin 5698 So. 1150 East in So. Ogden, UT 84405

April 2012 - VA: **Rainbow VdC**, Men #59; April 12-15, & Women #63; April 19-22, Send palanca to: Debbie Howe 14768 Truitt Farm Dr. Centreville, VA 20120

April 2012 - IL: **Heart of Illinois**, Coed #2; April 19-22, Send palanca to: Evelyn Biegler 2713 N. Elmcroft Dr. Peoria, IL 61604

April 2012 - MO: **River's Edge VdC**, Men #17; April 19-22, Send palanca to: Laurie Hensley 7704 Stonebridge Dr. Maryville, IL 62062

April/May 2012 - NY: **Damascus Rd VdC of Central NY**, Men #13; April 19-22 & Women #13; May 10-13, Send palanca to: Lu Huckabone PO Box 184 Poland, NY 13431

April/May 2012 - NC: **West No. Carolina VDC**, Men #67; April 26-29 & Women #68; May 3-6, Send palanca to: Judy Zander 304 Amity Cir. Belmont, NC 28012

May 2012 - FL: **Sonbeam VDC**, Men #59; May 10-13 & Women #59; May 17-20, Send palanca to: Linda Barnard 4700 46th Ave. No. #11 St. Petersburg, FL 33714

May 2012 - FL: **Sonshine North VDC**, Coed #4; May 17-20, Send palanca to: John Klein 2346 Stafford Dr. Orange Park, FL 32073

May 2012 - MN: **Lutheran VdC of Minnesota**, Men #578; May 17-20 &

Women #579; May 24-27, Send palanca to: Lenore Jesness 899 Sherwood Ave. St. Paul, MN 55106-1825

June 2012 - TX: **Texas Lutheran VDC**, Coed June 7-10, Send palanca to: Ken Handley 509 Gaslight Blvd. Lufkin, TX 78154

June 2012 - FL: **Gold Coast VDC of So. FL**, Women #84; June 21-24, Send palanca to: Ron Pusins 3160 NW 67 Court Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309

July 2012 - FL: **Sonshine VDC of So. FL**, Men #108; July 12-15, Send palanca to: Bonnie Freese 1150 Wren Ave. Miami Springs, FL 33166

July 2012 - MN: **Lutheran VdC of Minnesota**, Men #580; July 19-22 & Women #581; July 26-29, Send palanca to: Nancy Barker 6699 Industrial Rd. Saginaw, MN 55779-9434

July 2012 - WI: **WI Sunrise VDC**, Coed #9; July 26-29, Send palanca to: Greg Clark 822 Broad St. Beloit, WI 53511

Check Web for additional 2012 weekends

REGIS UNIVERSITY



For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16 NIV

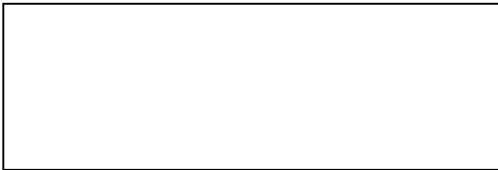


Judy Laabs-Foss
4495 Margaret Street
St. Paul, MN 55110-3773

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De Colores!
I trust your Christmas season was blessed and you are now getting into the new year. As Via de Cristo and your national board move into the new year, we are working on plans for the National Lutheran Secretariat Annual Meeting in Denver in July.

I have been calling secretariat lay directors to introduce myself and make connections; those conversations have been wonderful, thank you! I am working my way through

the secretariat lists and will be connecting with every lay director in the next couple of months.

The middle of January I sent out, via email, a letter requesting lay directors to complete the annual survey of pilgrims/weekenders going through your 2011 year. Thanks to the secretariats who have already returned those surveys – I appreciate it! It would be helpful for those who haven't had the time to fill out the survey yet, to please try to take a few minutes soon to do so. If you have questions about the survey, please feel free to contact me at execdirector.nls@gmail.com or call **651-249-7897**.

I am working on keeping the database updated to ensure our ability to communicate and stay connected with each of our secretariats, thus the need for contact information for your current secretariat members. Please email me a copy of your secretariat members. You can even just attach a copy of your current secre-

tariat to the email when you return your survey – and thanks!!
Have a blessed day.
Nancy Peterson, Executive Director


Visited our Web Site Lately?
www.viadecristo.org
Webmaster: Rick Hanzlik



**NLS DISTRIBUTION CENTER CLOSED;
January 21st through February 6th, 2012**



Meeting and Registration Form
National Lutheran Secretariat Annual Meeting
 Thursday, July 26 through Sunday, July 29, 2012
 Regis University of Denver
 Hosted by Via de Cristo of the Rockies & Colorado Via de Cristo

ONE FORM PER PERSON ATTENDING - PLEASE PRINT - PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY FORM			
Personal Info: First Name _____		Last Name _____	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Male Name for Name Tag <input type="checkbox"/> Female	
Address _____ City, State, Zip _____			
Home Phone _____		Cell Phone _____	
		Work Phone _____	
Fax _____		E-mail Address _____	
Home Secretariat? _____		Board position, if on Secretariat _____	
Attending the Meeting: Check all that apply: <input type="checkbox"/> Current NLS Board Member <input type="checkbox"/> Speaker <input type="checkbox"/> Host Committee/ Team <input type="checkbox"/> Lay Delegate <input type="checkbox"/> Lay Visitor <input type="checkbox"/> Vendor <input type="checkbox"/> Clergy Delegate <input type="checkbox"/> Clergy Visitor <input type="checkbox"/> Other			
First Time attending NLS Annual Meeting? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If no, indicate last year attended: _____ Position Attended as: _____		Seminars: Please indicate 1 st , 2 nd & 3 rd choices: _____ Seminar 1: Why Weekend Dynamics Work _____ Seminar 2: Engaging Pastors _____ Seminar 3: Strengthening the 4 th Day	
Accommodations: I require special accommodations for the following: <input type="checkbox"/> Medical <input type="checkbox"/> Dietary <input type="checkbox"/> Physical <input type="checkbox"/> Onsite Transportation Assistance Please explain: _____			
Do you need your personal Wi-Fi access while on the campus? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (You will need to fill out a campus access form at arrival.)			
Travel & Check-In: 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 Regis University from Denver International Airport (DEN) only. **** You must submit the separate Travel Form to make reservations for airport pick up. <input type="checkbox"/> Please send me a map and driving directions to Regis University			
When can we expect your arrival for check-in? (both by car or plane): Day in: _____ Estimated Time in: _____ What day are leaving the annual meeting? <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday PM <input type="checkbox"/> Sunday by noon			
\$ <u>210.00</u> Registration Fee includes meals, housing and material for Thursday 11:00am through Sunday 11:00 am \$ - _____ Early Bird discount- (subtract 20.00 if mailed before May 1st) \$ <u>0.00</u> Double rooms- Request a roommate: _____ \$ _____ Single Room Fee: additional \$30.00 \$ _____ Extra night on Wednesday - Per person- Double \$40.00 Single: \$50.00 Does not include meals- see next line \$ _____ Extra Meals: Mark each meal needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Wed Lunch- \$8.50 <input type="checkbox"/> Wed Dinner- \$9.75 <input type="checkbox"/> Thurs Breakfast- \$5.75 \$ _____ Pre-order Annual Meeting bandanna: _____ Quantity at \$9.00 each \$ _____ Total Payment ***PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: VDCR***			
Refunds (less \$25.00) will be considered if postmarked or e-mailed no later than July 1, 2012			
Bandanna Sample: Green "traditional" bandana Annual Meeting logo in 2 corners			
		Complete form and mail with check to: NLS Annual Meeting 2012 Loretta Hartten 5126 Alkire St Arvada, CO 80002 Phone: 720-231-9200 E-mail: lhartten25@email.com	
Registration Use Only: _____ Date Rec'd: _____		Check No: _____ Confirm Sent: _____	
Travel Info Rec'd: _____		Registration No: _____	



Air Travel Information Form
National Lutheran Secretariat Annual Meeting

Thursday, July 26 through Sunday, July 29, 2012
Regis University of Denver

Hosted by Via de Cristo of the Rockies & Colorado Via de Cristo

- PLEASE PRINT -

Personal Info: First Name(s) _____ Last Name _____		
Home Phone _____	Cell Phone _____	Work Phone _____
Fax _____	E-mail Address _____	
**Transportation will be provided to Regis University from Denver International Airport (DEN) **		
Do you need ADA accessible transportation? If yes, please explain _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Any changes to your travel itinerary after submitting this form should be sent directly to Paul Bunker. Email: pnsbunker@comcast.net Phone: 303-904-1276		
Flight Itinerary is as follows:		
ARRIVAL:		
Date: _____	Arrival Time: _____	Airline: _____ Flight Number: _____
Departing City: _____	Departing Airport: _____	
Connecting City: _____	Connecting Airport: _____	
Number of people traveling on this flight: _____		
Names: _____		
DEPARTURE:		
Date: _____	Departure Time: _____	Airline: _____ Flight Number: _____
Number of people traveling on this flight: _____		
Names: _____		
Complete form and mail with your registration form & payment, or send separately to:		
NLS Annual Meeting 2012		
Loretta Hartten	Phone: 720-231-9200	
5126 Alkire St	E-mail: lhartten25@gmail.com	
Arvada, CO 80002		