

# Current Newsletter

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 [livingwaterviadecristo.org/wp/](http://livingwaterviadecristo.org/wp/)

*Via de Cristo*  
Come to the  
Living Water



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Issue 198

May – June 2018

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*Ultreya!*

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Saturday, June 2nd, 2018

Potluck: 5:30 p.m. and Annual Meeting  
4th Day Talk & worship to follow.

Messiah Lutheran  
509 NE 2nd Street  
Aledo, IL 61231  
309-582-5261

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Couples bring one dish to pass; families please bring two. Coffee, water and ice are provided by the host church, but any other drinks will need to be brought by the community.

Directions: You may find it simpler to use GPS, but I took a shot at directions.

From I-80, continue on I 280 W. Take exit 11A to merge onto IL-92, West Centennial Expy toward Andalusia. Continue on IL-92 W. Take Turkey Hollow Rd, 105th St W and IL-94 S to NE 2nd St in Aledo. People in the QCA can take route 92 to IL 192 W. Turn left on 105<sup>th</sup> St W. Follow IL 94 S to S.E. 5<sup>th</sup> Ave in Aledo. Follow S.E. 5<sup>th</sup> Ave to N.E. 2<sup>nd</sup> St.

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*From the Spiritual Director*

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## Notes from the Spiritual Director

How long did winter last? Seems like it was middle of April! And the warm weather we all craved took even longer. At last, it seems, we have entered into spring, and here comes summer, just around the corner. From the cold and the drear of those long winter months we have at last broken out into the light and warmth of the sun. And you can feel the difference, there's just more energy and life when the sun is out!

As Jesus was announcing himself to the people of Israel, he read from scripture in the temple, and this is what he read, from the prophet Isaiah, "the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned" (Matt. 4:16). Or, as John the Baptizer says of Jesus in the Gospel of John, "What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it" (John 1:3b-5).

While we can count on the seasons to roll out in order – if sometimes a bit late! – the seasons of the heart and of the spirit can rise and fall at any given time in life. We experience God's blessings in life, and celebrate and enjoy, and give thanks, and we are lifted up. We experience the pitfalls of life, the crises, the losses, the pains, the suffering, and we cry out for help as our spirits and hearts sink. It happens in the course of life. But the one thing that is constant as we face whatever comes our way, is the light of Christ.

Unlike the weather and seasons with their gloom and clouds, nothing can block out the love of our Savior, nothing can block out the life he gives to us – it is always there for us. Sometimes it is difficult to see, sometimes the clouds of our lives seem to block it out, but it shines nonetheless.

If you are in the midst of a time of gloom, of darkness, seek the love of Christ – in prayer, in reflection, in your connection with others who also follow Christ – the family of faith. That is where healing and new life will be found, that is where joy can again shine forth in our lives. Not happiness, perhaps, but joy. It's something deeper. It lies in our relationship with our Lord and Savior whose light and love never fail. May that light shine in you, and through you, that you may know that joy in your life, and that others may know the love of Christ in their lives too.

GLYASDI,

Pastor Wayne

*From the Lay Director*

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Dear Sisters & Brothers in Christ,

Living Water has now completed Men's & Women's Weekends #57. We welcome the thirteen new pilgrims. These past weekends have had their moments for sure. The emotions ran the boundaries of tragedy to the total embrace of God's love. Grace was ever present, still is, and ever will be.

I was struggling with the word 'completed' for the end of the weekends, because I don't think our weekends ever end. The actual three days end, of course, but our 'fourth day' experience continues. So in all, no matter when you attended your weekend, or whatever movement you attended, your 'fourth day' continues for the rest of your life.

Continuing on is our goal, the 'race' we run. There is a phrase from two of the prayers in our Pilgrim's Guide, the ones for Husband & Wife, and the Individual. "... countless daily irritations may be transformed into a loving gift..." Countless daily irritations, if we let them, will overwhelm us. Your Reunion Group, the people with whom you share your Piety, Study, Action, and your closest moment to Christ, is a big part of relieving and releasing these irritations. Do you share your moment furthest away from Christ?

How about Ultreyas? We just celebrated one in Ohio on May 5. The chatter and laughter... very moving. Old friends, new friends, friends in Christ gathering together. I believe we all left with lighter, happier hearts.

We need to be together. We need to encourage each other. St. Paul wrote in Romans 1:12, "... or rather so that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine."

We can encourage one another at the Ultreya at Messiah Lutheran in Aledo, June 2. It's Rhubarb Fest weekend in Aledo, feel free to come and enjoy the day. The Church will be unlocked if you want to drop something off before going uptown.

We have also been invited to attend an Ultreya with Way of Christ in Freeport, Illinois, on July 21. We will get more information to you... watch the website.

So, in conclusion, if it seems your countless daily irritations are bringing you down, tell your Reunion Group, come to an Ultreya, and use your Pilgrim's Guide. There are so many uplifting words in it. And if you like to sing to yourself, page 43, "Arise, come to your God, sing him your songs of rejoicing."

God's peace to you all,

Andey Koresko

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*From the  
Rector/Rectora*

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*From the PreWeekend Chair*

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**Roots and Fruits**

*“I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last ... .”* John 15:16

As I write this, the grass of our lawn is turning green almost overnight, the trees are budding out and the huge magnolia down the street from our church is suddenly in full bloom. After remaining in a holding pattern for what seems like forever, Spring has finally landed in our little part of the Midwest.

I don't think it's coincidental that recent readings at worship services I've attended have been focusing on “growing things.” In the Bible, Jesus often used agricultural images to get his message across to his followers. Sowing, cultivating, harvesting—these were things that people of that day knew well. Their lives depended on it.

While most of today's Christians don't till the soil for a living, we can still understand what Jesus was trying to say—and it's even more relevant for us now as we cultivate a living faith in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Roots and fruits – well, they're central to a Christian life!

Your faith and mine began with a seed planted by the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 3:17 says that we have been “rooted and established in love” (God's love). And we are forever grafted to God (the Vinegrower) through His Son, Jesus Christ, the “True Vine.” In John 15:5, Jesus says to His disciples, “I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.” Notice He says **abide**. Not, “stop by and hang out for a while,” or “stay as long as it suits you.” We are to **abide**, which is also translated as “live.” Live in Christ. And let Jesus live through us to others. We can't “grow it” alone. Cut the branch off from the vine of Christ, and not only are we **not** fruitful, but our faith becomes utterly lifeless, utterly worthless. However, if we remain grafted, we will also be gifted for work in the Lord's vineyard. Then God only knows what fantastic fruits of faith we might produce!

As the community of Living Water Via de Cristo, we are all part of God's vineyard. Some of us have been growing together for years, while others are just budding forth for the first time here. But we all need each other. Our pastor today said that grape vines tend to grow over one another, until it is impossible to separate them into individual plants. They become as one.

And that is my prayer for this movement: That, rooted in God's love and abiding in the True Vine, we keep branching out into new places, while continually surrounding and supporting one another as one loving family of God. “And by their fruit (lotsa good fruit, folks) you will recognize them.” (Matt 7:20)

I'll close with a poem that I wrote to accompany some recent palanca:

To bear good fruit that's lasting—  
As a Christian, that's your duty.  
You're rooted in Christ Jesus,  
So get out there and be “FRUITY”!  
Your Pre-Weekend Chairs

Barb and Joe Geerts LW#16

Watch the Birdie! Well, *Birdies*, actually, as we kick off another fundraiser for LW Via de Cristo. As we have the past few years, we are participating in the Birdies for Charity program held in conjunction with the John Deere Classic golf tournament (July 9-15 in the Quad Cities). Donors can pledge a specific amount per birdie made at the Classic, or can simply donate a flat amount. Each participant is eligible to enter for a chance to win great prizes, including the grand prize of a two-year lease on a 2018 Lexus NX. In addition, all participating charities are guaranteed to receive a minimum 5 percent bonus on pledge payments, so your monetary gifts to Birdies will go further.

There are several ways to make your pledge. You may do so online by going to [www.birdiesforcharity.com](http://www.birdiesforcharity.com) and scrolling through the list of participating non-profits until you find Living Water Via de Cristo. Our number is 1849. Another option is to submit an official Birdies for Charity form which I will have available at the next ultreya in Aledo on June 2. If you plan to attend, I hope you will take some forms back to your home churches to distribute them. If you can't make the ultreya, I will be happy to send you forms upon request. My cell number is (563) 940-4933, or you may e-mail me at: [ezwriter@netins.net](mailto:ezwriter@netins.net)

You may make your pledge payment at the time you submit the form, or choose to be "billed" by the organization at the close of the golf tournament.

This is a good fund-raiser for LW, so we're hoping for great participation from our community. Proceeds will go toward scholarships for upcoming LW retreat weekends.

If you have any questions, feel free to give me a call. Thanking you in advance!

Barb Geerts  
Birdies Co-Coordinator

*From the Weekend  
Chair*

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*From the Secretary*

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Greetings from your Secretariat Board Secretary! Welcome to Spring...finally!!

Just an update on what the Living Water Via de Cristo Secretariat Board has been working on:

At our next Ultreya June 2nd at Messiah Lutheran in Aledo IL, we will be holding our annual meeting and voting on new members to the board. Hope to see everyone there. We are exploring the idea of having a 1-day workshop this Fall to view some DVD's from the National VDC Secretariat dealing with sponsoring, the weekend, etc. More information will be coming once the plan is in place. We are also discussing how to grow our movement. Any input from you would be greatly appreciated, you can get ahold of any of the Board members, we are all listed at the end of the newsletter. If anyone is interested in serving on Secretariat, please feel free to check out the Living Water website at [www.livingwaterviadecristo.org](http://www.livingwaterviadecristo.org) to view the job descriptions and get ahold of Charisse Jesiolowski at [hospicesw2010@yahoo.com](mailto:hospicesw2010@yahoo.com).

There was a mix-up on dates for Spring retreat weekends at Menno Haven, so we are now penciled in for Men 3/21-24/2019 and Women 3/28-31/2019.

GLYASDI,

Ellen Dalton, Secretary for Living Water Via de Cristo Secretariat Board

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*Find a Reunion Group*

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This list is a work in progress, but I pray that it can be the start of accurate information that can continue to grow. If you have a group to be added or changed, please email Kate Webster (Post Weekend Chair) at [katewebster56@gmail.com](mailto:katewebster56@gmail.com). You can also call or text 815-992-9036. If you had a reunion group listed on the previous list that is still active, please notify me so that I may add you to the current list. If you are in need of a reunion group, but don't see one in your area or time frame, please contact myself or another member of the secretariat. We can connect you with other Living Water Pilgrims in your area.

GLYASDI,

Kate Webster

Post-weekend Chair

Please remember that the ideal reunion group size is 3 to 5 members. If your reunion group seems large, please consider splitting off to allow new members to join. It can be difficult for new or inexperienced pilgrims to start a reunion group, consider being that mentor.

WEBMASTER NOTE: To maintain security for the contacts in this list, I have added images of the tables to their own pages, to which I referred in my article. You can access the lists at [this link](#).

<b>Living Water Via de Cristo Secretariat Members 2017-2018</b>			
<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
Lay Director	Carol & Andy Koresko	309-738-4181	koresko.1972@yahoo.com
Assistant Lay Director	Charisse Jesiolowski	815-590-5160	hospicesw2010@yahoo.com
Spiritual Director	Pr. Wayne Melass-Swanson	309-523-9191	pbmessiah1@juno.com
Treasurer	Charlotte Gustafson	309-714-5203	charlotte12165@gmail.com
Secretary	Ellen Dalton	563-343-7979	ellendalton63@yahoo.com
Pre Weekend	Barb & Joe Geerts	563-940-4933	ezwriter@netins.net
Weekend	Barb Hiesterman	563-210-3967	donbarb77@gmail.com
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