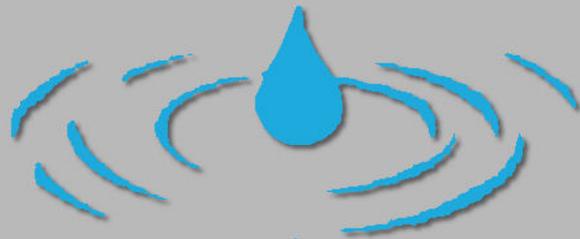


Newsletter page for archives

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Via de Cristo
Come to the
Living Water



Issue 200

September – October 2018



Ultreya!

Saturday, October 6th, 2018

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

St. John's Lutheran Church
2000 Luther Drive
Peru, IL 61354
815-223-1144

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:

1. From I-80 take exit 73 for Plank Rd.
 2. Keep Right at the fork, follow signs for Peru
 3. Turn right at Plank Rd.
 4. Turn left at Peoria St/Peoria Lane
 5. Turn right at Luther Drive
 6. Turn right to stay on Luther Drive – church will be on the right
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From the Spiritual Director

Notes from the Spiritual Director

Early in June Daniel and I went to Chicago for a day of Cubs and Music. We attended the Cubs game in the afternoon (and they won!), then took the subway into Chicago to see one of his favorite Christian bands perform on their final concert tour – a group called Third Day. Maybe some of you have heard of them.

As with most concerts there were a couple of “opening acts” to warm the crowd up for the main event. It turned out that one of those opening acts was a singer I also like, Matt Maher. I especially his newest release. It’s called “What a Friend,” and the opening line to the refrain is “What a friend we have in Jesus ...” – reminiscent of the old favorite hymn of that title.

The traditional hymn encourages us to turn to Jesus in prayer in the hard, painful, sad, and sinful times of our lives, when we face temptation and weakness and loneliness.

The new rendition touches on similar themes – trials, temptations, isolation, fears, sorrows, worries, sins, burdens of life, devastation, betrayal. And it too points us to the “friend we have in Jesus” to find forgiveness, grace, and someone who cares for our needs. It’s one of my favorite songs on the radio right now. A new twist on an old favorite – it works. And it reminds us of the words Jesus shared with his disciples in the Gospel of John, “I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends (John 15:15).

Friends. I wonder if sometimes we have a hard time thinking of Jesus as our friend – and thinking of Jesus as seeing us as His friends. It’s easy to focus more on what it takes to follow Christ, or be a good Christian, or know

everything about the Bible – all of which are good things. But Jesus puts things in a new and different light as a foundation for following Him. Friendship – relationship – love.

It's our connection with Jesus that informs everything else – following Him, living a "good" life, and looking at scripture. It's our relationship with Jesus that makes the difference. In that relationship, we act out of gratitude, love, and response to One who cares for us – not out of obligation or rule or empty expectation – acting as we would for and to someone we care about, who cares about us. That's why we can go to Him in prayer – when we have sin to confess; when we are in pain; when we feel alone; when we face temptation; when we feel weak; when we're scared; when we don't know where else to turn. In His grace we can find forgiveness, comfort, strength and peace.

"What a friend we have in Jesus" ... "In his arms he'll take and shield you, you will find a solace there."¹ "What a friend we have in Jesus ... forever and ever His heart is [our] home."²

What better friend could we hope for?

GLYSDI

Pastor Wayne

¹ Traditional Hymn "What a Friend We Have in Jesus"

² Matt Maher, "What a Friend

From the Lay Director

Hello My Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

I hope you have had a safe and enjoyable summer. Now for a lot of us, summer holidays are over, school is back in session, so many of you have returned to, what I will refer to as, "normal life."

Now if you would allow me some personal thoughts. Thank you.

First of all, I have been deeply affected and saddened by the Mollie Tibbetts ordeal in Brooklyn, Iowa. I'm not exactly sure why, but I think some of it has to do with the small town environment. Carol and I raised our daughter (and sons) in much the same place. Safe, secure from the big, old, dangerous world outside of us. Unfortunately, evil has no boundaries. A few weeks ago Chicago had fifty separate shootings resulting in six deaths.

Yes, there are a few random acts of kindness, but very few and very random. Thank God we have God. John 16:33 says, "...in the world you will have much trouble, but take heart, I have overcome the world."

My own Via de Cristo experience has helped me to understand, although I still fight this, God is in control. He knows, 'not a sparrow falls without His knowledge.'

Your Secretariat Board has been working on several ideas on how to revitalize our own Living Water. We are not alone in the struggles of keeping our

movement alive and well. Maybe we are depending on ourselves too much instead of fully relying on God.

Pam Gross and Barb Geerts attended the National Secretariat meeting in July and came home with some very interesting ideas of what other Secretariats across the country are doing. Some of these ideas would be a very good fit for Living Water. Stay tuned, I believe some exciting things will be coming.

We still do not have anyone to fill the Post-Weekend position on our Board. As of this writing, the Post-Weekend duties are being handled by the Board as a whole. If you would all prayerfully consider serving, please let a Board member know.

Our October Ultreya will be held on the 6th at St. John's Lutheran in Peru, Illinois. I humbly ask you to make every effort to attend. The weather and travelling conditions should be very good.

The Rector and Rectora for our spring weekends (Men's #58: March 21-24, 2019; Women's #58: March 28-31, 2019) will be announced and it would be very nice if we had a couple hundred folks there to show them support. At our last Ultreya in August we had forty-one attendees. I know we can do better.

Also in October, on Saturday the 20th, we will be having an all-day workshop on different aspects of Via de Cristo. This event will be video viewings of Via de Cristo history – team selection – sponsorship, and a few other things.

Discussions will be intermingled after each video. The Board will be providing lunch, most likely SubWay sandwiches. This event will be held at Messiah Lutheran in **PORT BYRON**, Illinois, 9:00 am to approximately 3:30 pm.

This event is, in part, to help Living Water to return to its roots and help remind everyone of what God has done in our lives. Watch our website for more information. If you are interested in attending this event, please let a Board member know so we can make sure there is enough food and drink for all.

So remember, keep the dates of October 6 and October 20 clear for these two events. Remember the words on the backside of your cross – 'Christ is Counting on You.'

In our Prayers with God's love,

Andey & Carol Koresko

Leaders Chair

Can you answer the “Why?” In education, there is a focus on knowing the “Why?” in each lesson. Learners engage more quickly when they know the “why” behind the lesson. We need to focus on the “Why?” when we examine the purpose of Via de Cristo.

The question can best be answered by the prayer we all know by heart, the Pilgrim’s Prayer. Turn to page 42 for a refresher! The why is to RENEW! We are called to renew ourselves to RENEW the “face of the earth”. Only through the instruction of the Holy Spirit can we renew.

The VdC Secretariat Board has planned a Leadership “Summit” for Saturday, October 20th to address the “Why?” behind VdC. This will be a time for the Fourth Day Community to come together to be inspired, renewed and to reestablish the core foundations of our movement. So, plan to attend and help us “kindle the fire of God’s love”

Janet and Jim Larson
Leaders Co-Chair

From the PreWeekend Chair

My brother-in-law recently took the bus from his home in Texas to visit us and other family members still living in the Quad Cities. It had been a long time since he had been back. His trip up north took 19 hours—draining, to be sure, but “do-able.” The trip home was something he would like to forget. First there was an hour delay right here in Davenport, and then another two hour delay in Oklahoma (after the bus driver reportedly got lost) and then another six hour delay in Kansas City, and on and on. In all, we figure he spent more than 31 hours bumping along on a crowded bus, getting rerouted or waiting in bus stations—just trying to get home to his family.

I think life can be a little like that sometimes. It can feel like we’re on a grueling road trip, perhaps heading down a highway that seems to be in a perennial state of repair. All we want to do is get to where we’re going, and we hit nothing but delays and detours and “road closed” signs that try our patience.

Maybe all those obstacles are there for a purpose (beyond making us annoyed). Maybe it’s the Lord’s way of saying that we should focus less on the goal of “arriving” somewhere down the line, and more on simply being where we are at this God-given moment. As Christians, we already know our “destination” (heaven), but the Lord didn’t put us “here” just to get “there.” There’s a whole lot of kingdom-building in-between, for which we are called to be the driving force. We are sharing this Road of Life with others whom God himself has purposely placed there on the pavement beside us, people who are hopelessly lost, people who need our help just to keep going, people despairing because they’ve hit the end of their road. God is counting on *each* of us to provide roadside assistance, but too often we cannot see another’s need because of our speed. We buzz right on by, because we always have somewhere else to be. But do we? *Really?*

Wherever you are going, you will get there. Along the way, make an effort to slow down and see what joy the journey can bring. Be where you are, instead of on the way to somewhere else. Look at what—and *who*—is around you. Where can you show God’s love? Don’t zip past those opportunities to help someone else move forward in faith.

After all, it’s not a race—it’s grace.

And so, “Ultreya!” “Onward!” Together, we will one day reach our ultimate destination, and “get home” to the family of the saints!

GLYASDW!

Barb and Joe Geerts

From the Weekend Chair

From the National Lutheran VdC Gathering 2018 Delegates

The National Lutheran Via de Cristo Gathering 2018 was held at Palm Beach Atlantic University in Florida. The theme was "Reflect the Son." We had a great time networking with people from across the country and Canada. Sharing our strengths and weaknesses with others helped us to see how we can better work within our secretariat to move forward and be a tool for furthering God's Kingdom. The Keynote speaker's topic was "Behind the Curtain." He spoke about how God can see who we truly are and still deeply and passionately loves us. We need to continually and faithfully worship him in every day of our lives. He isn't like an insurance policy we put on a shelf and pull out only when we need it.

There were three presentations given by Lay people with discussion time after each one: "Who Do You See in Your Mirror"; "Who Do Others See in My Mirror"; and "You Look Like Jesus." The small group discussions helped each one of us reflect on our faith life, share and make new acquaintances.

We enjoyed wonderful worship services, meal-time conversations, evening fellowship time and of course the business meeting. Next year the Gathering will be in Indianapolis July 25 – 28, so it will be any easy drive for most of us. Visitors are encouraged to attend, so you do not have to be a delegate. These gatherings are like a 3-day Ultreya that uplifts you and helps you in your 4th day.

Delegates,
Pam Gross & Barb Geerts

From the Secretary

Happy Summer! With summer winding down, we on the Secretariat Board are still working hard to get ideas on how to grow our community. We would welcome any and all input, just reach out to one of us listed at the end of this newsletter. We are still planning on holding a get-together to watch some dvd's purchased from the National Secretariat to help us grow. This is planned for October 20th with a location TBA. The next Ultreya is slated for October 6th at St. John's Lutheran Church in Peru, IL.

Thanks!
Ellen Dalton, Secretary

Find a Reunion Group

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. 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](#).

Living Water Via de Cristo Secretariat Board Members 2018-2019					
Position	Name	Address	Phone	E-Mail	Term
Lay Director	Andey Koresko	977 Highway 94, Aledo IL 61231	309-738-4181	andykoresko@gmail.com	1st 2019
	Carol Koresko	977 Highway 94, Aledo IL 61231	309-738-4189	cskoresko53@gmail.com	1st 2019
Assistant Lay Director	Gary Gross	3810 32nd Ave, Moline IL 61265	309-797-5561	gdgross144@gmail.com	1st 2020
	Pam Gross	3810 32nd Ave, Moline IL 61265	309-797-5561		1st 2020
Spiritual Director	Pr. Wayne Melas-Swanson	311 4th Ave, Port Byron IL 61275	309-523-9191	pwayne.messiahpb@gmail.com	2nd 2020
Spiritual Director	OPEN				
Treasurer	Bob Groene	305 Hickory Hills, Geneseo IL 61254	309-441-5544	bgroene47@gmail.com	1st 2020
	Cindy Groene	305 Hickory Hills, Geneseo IL 61254	309-738-1316		1st 2020
Secretary	Ellen Dalton	1310 N Lincoln Ave, Davenport IA 52804	563-343-7979	ellendalton63@yahoo.com	2nd 2019
Pre-Weekend	Joe Geerts	1552 Olde Brady Lane, Davenport IA 52807	563-570-0411	ezwriter@netins.net	2nd 2019
	Barb Geerts	1552 Olde Brady Lane, Davenport IA 52807	563-940-4993	ezwriter@netins.net	2nd 2019
Weekend	Barb Hiesterman	13054 116th Ave, Davenport IA 52804	563-210-3967	donbarb77@gmail.com	2nd 2019
Post-Weekend	OPEN				
Kitchen	Augie Calsyn	475 44th Ave Ct, East Moline IL 61244	563-340-4349	akcalsyn@msn.com	1st 2019
Leaders	Jim Larson	11281 N. 1800th Ave, Geneseo IL 61254	309-945-2557	jlars6931@gmail.com	1st 2020
	Janet Larson	11281 N. 1800th Ave, Geneseo IL 61254	309-507-2997	jlars6931@gmail.com	1st 2020
Palanca	Missy Silfies	401 So. Main, LaMoille IL 61330	815-915-5035	melissasilfies@gmail.com	2nd 2020
	Jennifer Schmidt	2027 Parkway Dr, Port Byron IL 61275	309-737-4055	jenpen126@yahoo.com	2nd 2020
Communications	Carol Ploch	2 Park Road, Oglesby IL 61348	815-202-3338	ploch70@yahoo.com	1st 2019