

# January – February 2019 Newsletter

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Issue 202

January – February 2019

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Saturday, February 2nd, 2019

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

Messiah Lutheran  
11th Street  
Port Byron, IL 61275 309-523-2421

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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. **Babysitting will be provided.**

Directions from I-80 Westbound:

1. Take I-80W
  2. Continue on I-80 W to Hampton Township. Take exit 1 from I-80 W
  3. Take the exit to stay on I-80 W toward Davenport
  4. Take exit 1 for IL-84 toward E Moline/Savanna
  5. Follow IL-84 N to 11th St
  6. Turn right onto 11th St  
Church will be on your right.
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***From the Spiritual Director***

Thoughts from the Spiritual Director

As I write this, Christmas is still a week away. And it's on my mind. I know you won't be reading this until after Christmas Day. But please indulge me in some reflections on this special day in our Church calendar.

So, how was your Christmas? Did you have to deal with busy schedules ... plans to make ... house to clean ... gifts to buy ... parties to attend ... cards and letters to write ... baking to do ... meals to prepare? Does any of that sound familiar from your preparations for Christmas?

And how did it leave you feeling?

If you said "stressed" you'd be in good company! Many other things get put off or shortened or truncated in order to make time for all those preparations, and celebrations. And by the time Christmas day comes, many breathe a sigh of relief – at last, it's done! Let's get the tree down, and all the decorations, and get back to "normal" life. Any thought of truly celebrating Jesus' birth in the *twelve days of Christmas* is lost, after all we've already been through weeks, maybe months, of preparations, and hearing Christmas carols for about the same amount of time, and we're tired of it all, or just plain tired.

In the movie "Christmas with the Kranks" (aptly named!) the main characters – a married couple with an older daughter – all the hassle of Christmas becomes the motivation to skip Christmas, to, in fact, leave town and take a cruise instead. No decorations, no big party, no gifts, no Christmas tree from the Boy Scouts, no Snowman on the roof – none of the hassle and trappings of the event. No stress! Of course, it all changes in humorous fashion when the daughter phones home and

surprises her parents with news she's coming home for Christmas – with her fiancé – but the point is that Christmas can be more of a chore than a celebration. And Jesus gets little real attention, let alone being the “reason for the season.”

In the Advent season, we talked about preparation, but not of the kind I just described. Advent preparation is about our preparation for Christ's coming into our world, and into our lives – at Christmas, and at some time in the future that is unknown to us. It's a time to consider and reflect on the gift – already given, and yet to come – so that, when Christmas comes, we are ready to celebrate, not toss in the towel. Ironically, Christmas preparations can easily get in the way of Advent preparations. No wonder the joy gets muted, and stress levels rise, and Jesus gets sidelined until the Christmas Eve service. And even that can get lost among family dinners and gatherings on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Maybe the Kranks weren't so far off. Maybe we need to skip Christmas, at least the one that we spend all that time and effort on only to feel stressed and tired. Maybe we need to refocus the season on Jesus, and on our preparations for his coming among us. Maybe then we would sense his presence in the midst of our celebrations, and our celebrations would be more joy-filled – truly celebrations – celebrations of a special gift of God's love come to be God with us. And maybe we would find that the Christmas spirit could carry on beyond Christmas Day, and even beyond the twelve days of Christmas! Wouldn't that be a great way to start a new year?!

Hoping your Christmas celebrations were truly joyful ... and energizing ... and may your new year be filled with the joy and blessings of the One who came, who comes, and who is to come – Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, the light of the world!

GLYSDI, *Pastor Wayne*

***From the Lay Director***

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Greetings my fellow Pilgrims.

As I write this letter to you all I must tell you that I feel pretty low. The months of November and December are difficult for me... the changes in weather from nice and comfortable to cold, cutting, gray days – too little light, too much dark. But there are bright spots, too.

On December 1st, thirty souls gathered at St. James in Rock Island and we celebrated Ultreya. We laughed, talked, ate, sang, and worshiped. When you are around people like that it is easy to forget for a while what it is like outside.

Two days later, your Secretariat Board met and I was in a room surrounded again by loving, warm Christian women and men, giving up their time and energy to do what they can for Christ's Kingdom and Living Water. For a time the cold and damp were forgotten.

As this year grows to a close and the new year begins, I've been reflecting (I do that a lot, it seems) and I do wish that some things could go back to 'my good old days.' Life changes, the world changes whether we like it or not, or want it or not. God never changes. His love for us is immense and unfathomable. On the other hand, our love for Him should continue to grow.

Over the years I've noticed that our own Living Water has changed. We have become a people in a hurry, even when it comes to our walk with Jesus. I think I have an idea why Jesus was sent to us 2000 years ago instead of today. People had to walk with Jesus – slowly. It was a personal time. Today we 'see' our friends on Facebook, e-mails, texts... hardly ever face to face. I think there would be some who would like to see our 72 hour weekends be done in 36. It takes time, it takes work, it takes energy to work for Jesus. It also takes patience, like the patience that has been shown to us.

As we enter into a new year with our expectations for a happy, prosperous life running high, let us not be in such a hurry we forget to walk with Jesus at His pace.

By now some of you have received a call to work on our Spring weekends. I hope you didn't refuse in a hurry. We all received so much on our weekends. Time, effort, prayer, and love went into them. Can we not give the same for another? Can you find time to 'Ultreya' with each other?

Those few hours I spent in early December lifted me a little higher and I think will keep my head above the water a little longer.

Back in the late 70's there was a song, I think by Sister Sledge, "We Are Family." The 1979 Pittsburgh Pirates adopted that song as their theme song and won the World Series. Well, 'We are Family' – God's family. If you are in the family, please stay; if you've gone, please come back. Family needs each other.

Peace and Joy in the New Year,

Love,  
Andey Koresko

## ***Leaders Chair***

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As we begin team training for weekend #58, I am reminded of the many faithful men and women who have served since 1990 until now. This ministry is dependent on the Fourth Day community to continue to support, encourage and disciple other Christian leaders. Serving on team requires commitment, enthusiasm and perseverance. Accepting a role on team is a sign of faith and assurance that God is indeed the author and supreme director of spiritual renewal.

Participants and team members will recommit to leadership within home congregations and within their homes. Whatever your role is in weekend #58, either on team, sponsoring a candidate or being a supportive Fourth Day community through attending send-off, serenade or Clausura, you are part of God's plan to renew His followers.

Be ready to say "Yes!" when the Spirit moves you to act. You will be blessed.

Janet and Jim Larson  
Leaders Co-Chairs

## ***From the PreWeekend Chair***

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From your Pre-Weekend Chairs:

Well, Christmas 2018 is “in the books,” and now you’re enjoying all your holiday gifts. Maybe your packages included electronics, or jewelry, or games, or tools, or even a new pair of lounge pants in a “Grinch” print. I remember when I was kid, how unenthusiastic I would be to get clothes for Christmas. Toys were usually at the top of my wish list. And I *would* always get at least one toy or game. But my folks knew I needed clothes, and money was tight, so clothes I got. Now at plus-60 (my age, not my clothing size), I’m overjoyed to get some new apparel to update my wardrobe, which is hardly “haute couture.” No, some of my clothing goes waaaay back.

But there is one thing we can “put on” that never goes out of style: Jesus Christ. That’s not something you buy off the racks. It’s simply there for the taking. Of course, we can’t actually *wear* Jesus. But it is He who clothes us with righteousness through a grace that’s undeserved and unending. When we “put on Christ,” we become new people—so much so that others are sure to notice our different “look.”

In Ephesians 4:22-24, we read: *“You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires, to be made new in the attitude of your minds, and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”*

I believe that Via de Cristo is one way that God’s followers can “re-fashion” themselves by putting on Christ. I was raised a Lutheran, but it took a VdC weekend for me to realize that I had never really “suited up” for my faith walk. During those 72 precious hours, I looked into the mirror and was surprised to see a sinner still in her skivvies, spiritually speaking. My revelation from Weekend #16 was that I had left Christ in the gift box and never even tried Him on for size! And you know what? He fits perfectly. Always will. No return needed. And guaranteed for life (this one and the next).

Maybe there is someone out there like me who has been on a faith journey without the “proper attire.” Or perhaps there’s a person in your congregation who’s already “suited up” and could benefit greatly from the tools made available through the Cursillo experience. It’s time to be in prayer about asking a new pilgrim to one of the upcoming Living Water weekends. What better way for them to *“be made new in the attitude of their minds”*? You and I know that VdC can be truly life-changing.

As we begin a new year, our prayer for all our Living Water friends is that your faith be renewed daily, your witness be ever emboldened, and that you always let God’s love show through.

Christ never looked so good on you!

GLYASDW!

Your Pre-Weekend Chairs  
Barb and Joe Geerts LW #16

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***From the Weekend Chair***

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My job title on the Secretariat Board is Weekend Chair. It is the responsibility of the Weekend Committee to make sure that every item that is used on the weekend – notebooks, pens, banners, Kleenex, candles, toilet cleaner, etc., etc., etc. – is at the camp.

The Weekend Chair is also responsible for reserving a church for the closing ceremony for both the men and women's weekend. I am looking for a church in Princeton to host the closing ceremonies on Weekend #58.

If you would like to be my contact person and have the Clausura at your church, please contact me sometime in January, 2019, at 563-210-3967 or email [donbarb77@gmail.com](mailto:donbarb77@gmail.com). Thank you!

May the Peace of the Lord be with you always.

Barb Hiesterman  
Secretariat Board – Weekend Chair  
LWVDC Weekend #2  
Table of Tabitha

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***From the Post Weekend***

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ—

Happy, blessed 2019 to each and every one!

Did you make new year's resolutions this year? Did any of them involve helping and ministering to others in a more effective and meaningful way?

If so, why not pick up and use the "built-in" VdC tools of Ultreya and Reunion group? If EACH one of us were actually doing this...well, quite frankly, our Ultreyas would be bursting at the seams in attendance. And many more of our past Weekend pilgrims would be further along in their daily walks with Jesus, and in their own ministries to unsaved people living in their environments. (You wouldn't consider serving on one of our upcoming spring Weekends without attending a weekly Reunion group, WOULD you?)

Our next Ultreya is being held at Messiah Lutheran in Port Byron on February 2. The Fourth Day speaker at our last Ultreya in December taught us a LOT of Via de Cristo history...who knows what we may learn from our next Fourth Day speaker?

May the new year bring us all many new and unique opportunities to share Christ in our world!

Always in Him,  
Gary and Jan Morse, Post-Weekend Chairs

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***From the Rector/a***

The theme for weekend #58 is *Choose Joy* and is based on the passage from Nehemiah 8:10:

*The joy of the Lord is your strength.*

From study we learn that the joy of the Lord is the gladness of heart that comes from knowing God, abiding in Christ, and being filled with the Holy Spirit. Joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit and produced by God's work in us, and it is part of God's will for us. Joy is both a gift of God as well as a response to the gifts God gives us. One way we can experience true joy is to set our focus on God!!

As many of you know, Donna VonHolten is serving as the Head Cha for weekend 58 Women's team. Donna will be a true blessing to this team and I look forward to serving with her. As of this writing, God's women's team 58 is still gathering team members. Please prayerfully considering serving if you are called, or call us!! As we begin team meetings later this month, please pray that we all serve joyfully and that our focus is always on God, serving Him faithfully and forming cohesive bonds with our fellow team mates.

And finally, please pray about sponsoring a candidate for the upcoming weekend. The Living Water VdC brochure has been updated and is available on the web site which is a great tool when talking about the weekend to family and friends.

***No matter what capacity, step out in faith wherever God calls you to be and serve joyfully!!***

Choose Joy!

Blessings in Christ,  
Cindy Groene  
Weekend 22

### **The Journey**

Name: Don Anderson

Hometown Church: St. John's Lutheran, Peru, IL

Table Name: Luke

Questions:

- What has this Via De Cristo weekend meant to you?
- What are you going to do about it?

I may not have answered the first question (I'm that kind of guy). Or I may have said something about a two by four of Grace across the forehead. Wow! It didn't hurt but it sure had me thinking. At first the weekend was something to endure – I was not going to try to escape. However, the weekend quickly became a something to embrace. Thanks Paul Baker. Half way through on Saturday I wanted to know when I could come back and serve on team. Wow to the third power!

Oh, there is the second question. I said I was on a spiritual journey. I described how my relationship with the Church had oscillated (that's engineering speak for ebbed and flowed). Having children brought me back. Via de Cristo gave me some valuable tools and an energetic, involved and supportive community. So, what I am going to do about it? I am going to serve on team and be a whiteness to God's Grace for the pilgrims. And, I am going to serve off team as a Christian does.

Each time I have been called to serve on team it has been an honor. And now I have been honored to serve as Rector. This I will do ... with God's help as always. I look forward to serving with each of you and continuing to learn from you. This is my journey. Thank you God, for Via De Cristo.

What are you going to do about it?

What are we going to do about it?

What a Beautiful Name it is – The Name of Jesus

### ***From the Treasurer***

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From the treasurers December 2018

Advent, Christmas and end-of-calendar-year greetings from your treasurers. This is actually our second stint keeping track of Living Water finances—the other about a dozen years ago. Things have certainly changed—back then we had a couple of CDs as a financial cushion and a Memorial Fund was established to fund scholarships for folks needing a boost to cover weekend cost. Both of those are gone.

Its a fairly well known fact that the costs to conduct a weekend outweigh what is received from team members and candidates. This is not new—always has been and probably always will be. We also have significant other expenses beyond weekends. We stay afloat due to offerings received at Ultreyas and donations/contributions.

If you are in a financial position and are so inclined to make a donation, please mail a check to: Living Water VdC c/o Groenes, 305 Hickory Hills, Geneseo, IL 61254. LW VdC is a 501 (c) 3 tax deductible organization; and you will receive a written acknowledgment of your donation.

Merry Christmas and God Bless,  
Cindy & Bob Groene

### ***From the Secretary***

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Hard to believe Winter is here (although it has felt like Winter came way early this year)! Your Living Water Via de Cristo Secretariat Board is working on ways to re-energize our LWVDC community and would love your input. We all need to be thinking of ways to accomplish this. We need everyone to talk to those you know who have already gone through a weekend, but haven't been active for whatever reason about upcoming events? Encourage them to get in touch with one of the Secretariat Board members about why they haven't been active. If you haven't been active for some reason (and yes, life happens and we get busy) we would love to hear from you as well. Sometimes all it takes is reaching out either by email, text, or a phone call. We are still in the planning stages for the 2019 Fall Renewal Weekend, so keep looking for updates for that.

My devotion today was on 'Team Spirit' and it talked about God's mercy and how it extends far beyond our imagination, sweeping up peoples of every kind. It also goes on to say 'We would do well to participate in God's inclusive work by opening our hearts and lives to people we might name as strangers.' That got me to thinking about our VDC teams. Every team I have been on, there are people I don't know right away. But over the course of the team trainings and the weekend itself, we become closer and form friendships. We should want that for everyone we know!! The devotion ended with "When Jesus stretched out his arms on the cross, it was to embrace all people; our work is to do the same." When was the last time you reached out to someone to speak about LWVDC? Pray about it....then do it.

GLYASDI

Ellen Dalton, Secretary for LWVDC 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 Jan Morse (Post Weekend Chair) at [soiled111@yahoo.com](mailto:soiled111@yahoo.com). You can also call at 815-223-0765. 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,  
Gary and Jan Morse  
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	<a href="mailto:andykoresko@gmail.com">andykoresko@gmail.com</a>	1st 2019
	Carol Koresko	977 Highway 94, Aledo IL 61231	309-738-4189	<a href="mailto:cskoresko53@gmail.com">cskoresko53@gmail.com</a>	1st 2019
Assistant Lay Director	Gary Gross	3810 32nd Ave, Moline IL 61265	309-797-5561	<a href="mailto:gdgross144@gmail.com">gdgross144@gmail.com</a>	1st 2020
	Pam Gross	3810 32nd Ave, Moline IL 61265	309-797-5561		1st 2020
Spiritual Director	Pr. Wayne Melaas-Swanson	311 4th Ave, Port Byron IL 61275	309-523-9191	<a href="mailto:pwayne.messiahpb@gmail.com">pwayne.messiahpb@gmail.com</a>	2nd 2020
Spiritual Director	OPEN				
Treasurer	Bob Groene	305 Hickory Hills, Geneseo IL 61254	309-441-5544	<a href="mailto:bgroene47@gmail.com">bgroene47@gmail.com</a>	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	<a href="mailto:ellendalton63@yahoo.com">ellendalton63@yahoo.com</a>	2nd 2019
Pre-Weekend	Joe Geerts	1552 Olde Brady Lane, Davenport IA 52807	563-570-0411	<a href="mailto:ezwriter@netins.net">ezwriter@netins.net</a>	2nd 2019
	Barb Geerts	1552 Olde Brady Lane, Davenport IA 52807	563-940-4993	<a href="mailto:ezwriter@netins.net">ezwriter@netins.net</a>	2nd 2019
Weekend	Barb Hiesterman	13054 116th Ave, Davenport IA 52804	563-210-3967	<a href="mailto:donbarb77@gmail.com">donbarb77@gmail.com</a>	2nd 2019
Post-Weekend	OPEN				
Kitchen	Augie Calsyn	475 44th Ave Ct, East Moline IL 61244	563-340-4349	<a href="mailto:akcalsyn@msn.com">akcalsyn@msn.com</a>	1st 2019
Leaders	Jim Larson	11281 N. 1800th Ave, Geneseo IL 61254	309-945-2557	<a href="mailto:jlars6931@gmail.com">jlars6931@gmail.com</a>	1st 2020
	Janet Larson	11281 N. 1800th Ave, Geneseo IL 61254	309-507-2997	<a href="mailto:jlars6931@gmail.com">jlars6931@gmail.com</a>	1st 2020
Palanca	Missy Silfies	401 So. Main, LaMoille IL 61330	815-915-5035	<a href="mailto:melissasilfies@gmail.com">melissasilfies@gmail.com</a>	2nd 2020
	Jennifer Schmidt	2027 Parkway Dr, Port Byron IL 61275	309-737-4055	<a href="mailto:jenpen126@yahoo.com">jenpen126@yahoo.com</a>	2nd 2020
Communications	Carol Ploch	2 Park Road, Oglesby IL 61348	815-202-3338	<a href="mailto:ploch70@yahoo.com">ploch70@yahoo.com</a>	1st 2019