

South Dakota Lutheran Secretariat

Via de Cristo Newsletter

Check out our website -- <http://www.sdlvdc.org/>

September 2017 Edition

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Looking ahead to 2018

Looking ahead to 2018...

Men: January 11-14, 2018
Women: January 18-21, 2018

1. Save the dates
2. Watch for team registration forms to be out in mid-April
3. Get your application in early!

2018 Rectors:

Men: Perry Pickens
Women: Belinda Leavitt

Grand Ultreya

DeColores!



South Dakota
Lutheran Via de Cristo
Invites you to a

GRAND ULTREYA!

For all members of the extended
4th Day Community

Sunday, September 24, 2017
3:30-5:30 pm

Bring your songbook, green Pilgrim Guide, and a potluck dish to share!

MUSICIANS: Bring your instruments to share in the fun!!!

We will join together for singing, worship & praise

Christ the King Lutheran Church
305 W. 25th Street, Yankton, SD

Questions? Contact Skip Gooch 605-261-0095
e-mail goski@midco.net

2018 Men's Rector

Brothers and Sisters in Christ.

My name is Perry Pickens and I have been asked to serve as the rector for the men's 2018 Via de Cristo weekend.

The theme verse I chose for the weekend is:

Psalms 63:3 KJV Because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.

I attended my weekend in 2003 and it was a life changing experience for me. As I look back before I attended my weekend in regard to my belief about God, it was a lot about do this, or do that, don't do this, don't do that.

By listening and learning from the series of talks and the christian brotherly love I experienced on the weekend I finally realized that I had become a human doing instead of a human being, and it was the result of believing the lie that there was something of myself that I can do, or something of myself I do not do to achieve the acceptance of God.

Some where during my weekend I quit believing the lie of the do and don't and started living in the truth of God's loving kindness.

Because of His loving kindness, I have learned it's best to praise my Lord regardless of what is going on. If I praise God and thank Him for the bad that happens in my life it releases me from the bad, and enables me to trust God and not turn away from Him.

When I praise God when things are good, the good turns into best.

Bottom line for me is if things are bad or good my lips will praise Him.

God's Peace
Perry

2018 Women's Rector

“...And I pray that you may have power to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the Love of Christ...” Ephesians 3.17-18

That is my simple prayer – that each of us who serve and each guest who comes will have the power, the God-given power, to grasp the measureless love of Christ. I love picturing the smile that must have been on Paul's face when he went on to write - “...and to know this love, which, *(by the way)*, surpasses knowledge.” ?!

So.....even though I can't fully understand it and have no possible way to measure it or earn it, I pray for the power to believe in the infinitely vast love God has for me. Praise be to God, He has answered that prayer over and over and changed my life forever. Receiving and sharing His love is my life journey.

My Via de Cristo weekend was the beginning of that journey. Those three Grace-saturated days opened my eyes and heart to the security of God's faithful, immeasurable love. I've never been the same. May God's Presence through our preparation, prayers, serving, and sharing unleash the power for each guest to grasp how much He loves them. And may they, too, never be the same.

Thank you for being on this journey with me.

Your Sis, Belinda



Messages from the Communities

Community Rep	Name	E-mail
Northern Tier (Madison/Howard Area)	Allen and Beth Abraham	inthedustaba@live.com
Southern Tier (Yankton Area)	Mike and Dee Diede	diede@iw.net
Nebraska	Lonnie and Margaret Svitak	finelyground@live.com
Iowa	Jim and Kathy Ewoldt	(Jim's email) Ewoldt5@yahoo.com (Kathy's email) Ewoldt9@aol.com

Watch the website (sdlvdc.org) for announcements regarding upcoming Ultreyas!

SOUTHERN TIER

Yankton Ultreya:

We are kicking off with a fish fry at our residence on Oct. 7 at 6:00, 2401 Walnut, Yankton. All are invited to attend. You may bring a side dish to share with others. Please RSVP so we can plan accordingly.

Thank you,

Mike & Dee Diede

YANKTON 4TH DAY COMMUNITY MEETS ON THE 2ND SUNDAY EACH MONTH FOR AN ULTREYA.

NEBRASKA

The South Dakota Via de Cristo has had many people attend over the past many years from Northeast Nebraska. Many of the participants have returned to be active in their local congregations and many have grouped over the years. The grouping I speak to currently is the group that I have been involved in in the Norfolk, NE area. Other groups may be meeting but I can speak to this Norfolk Area group. A group has been meeting for approximately 8 or more years. We are a group that was also initially involved in TEC in our area (besides having attended VdC).

A common bond between the adults grew. We have spent time in fellowship and also bible studies. This group has grown in number over recent years, a true blessing. Recently this group has grown to approximately 12 or more people and we have decided to split our group into smaller groups that would meet once or twice a month and then have local Ultreya gatherings quarterly. These small groups have started to meet and we held our first quarterly Ultreya in June. We are excited for this new venture in grouping in smaller groups of people but also a bit sad over not seeing the close

friends we've seen for so many years. As we move in this new direction we will look to what God is calling us to do so that our meeting will continue and still draw people. We truly believe in the VdC method of grouping and seek to further His Kingdom into our midst for His call upon us as a community of believers.

Margaret Svitak

Palanca

Palanca...a very important part of our VdC weekends. As you remember it means lever...or something that lifts something else up. Our weekends are filled with ways to be a lever in someone else's life - prayer, notes, table favors, hugs, smiles, etc. The most important of ALL of these is prayer. In recent years our mailroom has seen an increase in gifts being brought for placement into palanca mailbags. This really becomes a burden to the mailroom team to distribute these. The Secretariat is sending out a gentle reminder that if you want to give gifts please do it individually after the weekend is over, maybe on the way home as you visit with your guest about how their weekend went. Refrain from gifts being brought for mailbag distribution. PLEASE keep bringing the letters/notes for the mailbags, please write individual notes...especially to your guest. Palanca is meant to be a sacrifice not a burden. Lift this sacrifice up to Him for His blessing into someone else's life.

Spiritual Director's Message

Dear Friends,

This summer, I spent four and a half hours on a Friday night in a bar, for a good cause. Let me explain. I was at the registration and then the dealer table for the Rock and Rumble Poker run. I've never participated in a poker run, somehow Minivan just doesn't say Rock and Rumble. Perhaps you haven't either, so let me tell you how it works.

The poker run patrons arrive at the starting point, they lay out their registration fee (in this case \$20) they receive a map. On the map there were 5 establishments that they needed to attend to, the entire circuit would take about 2 hours. Longer if you felt the need to fellowship and enjoy liquid refreshments at each stop. At each stop, you had to secure a stamp or a signature to prove you had been there. Then you returned to the original table, presented your stamped map, and could then draw five cards. If you

didn't like your five cards, you could draw two more for \$10. All of this entitles you to a chance to win \$1000.

I was amazed at the attitude of the participants. NO one grumbled at the \$20 registration fee. No one batted an eye when we told them they would have to visit all five stops... No one protested, "But that place isn't even air conditioned, or that place will be chilly!" No one complained at all, the spirit was actually very joyful. And I couldn't help thinking.....why isn't church more like this poker run? I mean we're not offering a chance at something, we're offering a sure thing. And that pearl of great price we offer is far more valuable than the \$1000. Why is the poker fun so joyful, and church, well often it's so dutiful.

Matthew 13:44-46 "The Kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy, he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it."

I think this is what Jesus was getting at when he described the Kingdom of heaven like the hidden treasure or the priceless pearl, was the JOY that it brings, not the sacrifice it demands. It's just like human beings to focus entirely on the price tag so much that we miss the point of the parable. The point of this parable isn't the high cost of discipleship the sacrificial necessity of giving everything you have over to God in order to fully be worthy of the gift. Let's stop making that the point. Stop with the God demands everything you have. My goodness, what in the world is the Lord going to do with my mother's beanie baby collection anyway? He doesn't want it. In obsessing over the price tag which isn't the point at all, we miss the best part of the story.

That is when the Gospel is presented and recognized for what it is, people will cheerfully part with what they thought they wanted in order to acquire what they realize that they truly needed all along. And just as it was with the poker run patrons at MoJo's bar, there are no dissatisfied customers. Only joy. Pure joy at the prospect of the adventure.

One final thought: one of the gentlemen who purchased his map expressed just a tinge of disappointment, and it was over this: we're not all starting together, others have gone on ahead? The cool part is riding together. And I think Jesus would agree. After all, he did call 12 to be his disciples, and he has arranged for disciples to be found in families and churches because we are on a journey to part with what we cannot keep in order to acquire what we can never lose, and when the way grows long, or we grow weary, or there is suffering on the way, we can support one another, and remind one another of the joy which is ours because we have found the great treasure, we have discovered the one perfect pearl. And we can celebrate joys and sorrows and all that the years will bring, and the cool part is we can ride together.

Brothers and sisters in the South Dakota via De Cristo community, it is so cool to ride with you!

Pastor Dani Jo

So You Want to be a Sponsor

De Colores Brothers & Sisters!!

I pray you have been having a wonderful summer. Dee and I have been blessed to be able to do so many things this Summer and it's not even over yet. We are looking forward to the addition of our 2nd grandson in just a few days and have been able to spend some quality time with our children and 3 grandchildren over the last few months.

The next VDC weekends are coming soon and I hope that you have been praying and inviting those that God is leading you to. Just wanted to talk with you a little about being a sponsor. I know that for several years I thought I would just invite people to come and if they said "yes" great, we will get you to the weekend and then I figured we would just see what happened afterward. Well, for the past several years I have found that it is much more than that. One of the best things that we can do of course is "Pray". Pray for all aspects of the weekends, wisdom on how to invite, who to invite, and then if they do say yes, what is our role as a sponsor. For these answers I would encourage you to read the "So you want to be a Sponsor" instructions. One of the main things I believe is communication. Give them all the information they ask for, minus some of the special surprises of course. But let them know that you are there for them. If there are concerns about the \$\$ aspect of the weekend, which is many times a big thing, make sure you let them know what your plans are. Just make sure to communicate this with them up front so there isn't any confusion. Again, if there are questions about you role as a sponsor, please read the sponsor instructions. If you still have questions, please feel free to give me a call or text. 605-664-1388 PRAY PRAY PRAY!!!!

Looking forward to VDC 2018 and how God will bless us!!

Mike Diede ><>

HELP WANTED:

Looking for self-starters with a strong sense of commitment and follow through. No special skills required, with the exception of a solid faith and desire to continue to grow in God's Grace. All personality types needed, experience with attending at least one Via de Cristo weekend as a Guest is mandatory. Strong desire to have a positive impact on the lives of others is a plus. Must commit significant time and prayer to this job to be ensure a successful outcome. Willingness to set aside a fear of rejection to start the job process, and be open to this being an immediate or perhaps longer range hire. Salary is strictly intrinsic in nature, with fringe benefits outweighing actual monetary gains.

What kind of help are we looking for you ask? South Dakota Lutheran Via de Cristo needs YOU to step into the exciting, challenging, and deeply rewarding role as a Sponsor for a new weekend guest! Think back to the invitation that brought you to your VDC weekend experience. What a wonderful gift your sponsor gave you in extending

and ensuring you the opportunity to grow in God's Grace through the VDC experience. Sponsorship is vital to the growth and health of the VDC mission, and honestly is one of the most powerful personal growth experience you can have in VDC as a 4th Day Member!

Sponsorship is easy – think about who in your life at church, at work, in your social circle or neighborhood could benefit from attending the 2018 VDC weekends. Go onto the SDLVDC website and read the “So you want to be a Sponsor!” form. Review the expectations of sponsorship, pray about this opportunity, and then extend the invitation. Remember your cross from the weekend – Christ is counting on you! You need to help spread the message and the invitation.

Your South Dakota Lutheran Via de Cristo Secretariat is working to ensure sponsors understand the long-term commitment needed to help ensure a Guest has the best possible 4th Day experience. Feel free to reach out to any Secretariat member, we will gladly help walk you through the process or answer any questions that may arise.

Save the Date

Save the Dates:

Men's Weekend: Jan. 11-14, 2018

Women's Weekend: Jan. 18-21, 2018

The Weekend begins at 7pm on Thursday

The Way of Christ

Via de Cristo

Via de Cristo is a Holy Spirit filled weekend retreat to learn and grow in the LORD. The weekend is led by Pastors and Lay people. Take an opportunity to relax, learn more about the LORD, and be served by fellow believers.

For more information please contact:

Transportation is provided.

South Dakota Lutheran Secretariat Council Meeting

South Dakota Lutheran Secretariat Council Meeting

April 1, 2017

Christ the King Church, Yankton, SD

Members present: Skip Gooch, Lori Gooch, Pastor Dani Jo Ninke, Ed Hansen, Allen Abraham, Mike Diede, Dee Diede, Margaret Svitak, and Jim Ewoldt

Meeting was called to order by Lay Director Skip Gooch

Devotions and prayers were provided by Pastor Dani Jo Ninke

Minutes:

- Minutes of the February 12, 2017 meeting, sent prior to the meeting, were approve as presented

Treasurers Report:

- Ed Hansen presented a verbal reporting the account has a balance of \$7,264.90 with all bills paid

OLD BUSINESS:

WEBSITE:

- Skip shared that Rodger Wenzlaff is working with Sandi Pickens to transition the website duties to Sandi.
- Pastor Dani Jo suggested we ensure we have a second webmaster with access as a backup. Skip will reach out to Rodger to see if he will fill that role.

SOCIAL MEDIA:

- Skip reported receiving two prayer requests which he could quickly share on the site
- Margaret will post reminders to members that the newsletter can be found online, and if they would prefer a printed copy to contact a Secretariat member

NEW BUSINESS:

COMMUNITY UPDATES:

Skip shared he was contacted by the new pastor at Alcester's Nathaniel Lutheran Church regarding getting involved with VDC. Pastor Dani Jo will reach out to him.

- Ewoldt's:
 - Jim reported at their March Ultreya they heard about "Brothers in Blue"; 4th Day community is serving Lenten soup suppers; next Ultreya the Saturday after Easter then they will break for the summer.
- Svitak's:
 - They have a group that has met and are looking at tentative dates for Ultreya in May or June; possible fall retreat together to Inspiration Hills over Labor Day weekend.
- Diede's:
 - Yankton 4th Day community meets on the 2nd Sunday each month for an Ultreya; several new 4th Day members attended; plans for April, May & June (BBQ) then off for July and August break. Start again in September; Dee shared that they are delegating some tasks of music, devotions, speakers, which has eased their workload.
- Abraham's:
 - Looking to host an Ultreya in late May or early June when Beth will be home stateside too.
- Gooch's:
 - Sioux Falls Renewal Group continues to meet and grow; has moved to a every-other Sunday night format and meet at Dow Rummel Village;

NEWSLETTER:

- Goal to have newsletter out in mid to mid-late August
- Deadline to get articles to Julie is August 10, 2017
- Each area rep will submit an update for their area, including contact information
- Skip will request Perry & Belinda provide a Rector update
- Dani Jo will submit an SD article and devotion
- Lori will do an article on sponsorship
- Margaret will do article on mailroom palanca (letters vs. gifts)

2018 WEEKENDS & BEYOND:

- Skip shared reports from Perry and Belinda
- Leadership Day 2 Training will be held Monday, April 24th at 6:30 p.m. at home of Skip & Lori

- Final clean up was a bit of a fiasco
 - Skip will request a “hand book” for facility use from Inspiration Hills
 - Team and 4th Day will be actively engaged in helping with final clean up
 - Option will be looked at to bag and move all luggage upstairs to hallway prior to final chapel to enable basement level to be cleaned and closed to all use once guests/team go up for Closura.
- Extensive physical drain on kitchen team for women’s weekend was discussed.
 - Ed will form a small committee to plan and simplify menu options, with goal to have each weekend mirror each other a bit more and reduce costs and work load while still offering nice meal options
 - Buffet and family style service were suggested to improve both the guest and team experience (wait time, serving sizes and choices, etc.)
 - Motion by Lori that Ed, Margaret and Mike will work together to bring forward suggested menus by July 1, 2017, not to include the banquet meal. Second by Jim. Motion carried.
- Dani Jo will work to assemble Spiritual Director manuals and communicate expectations
- Simplification is also needed in the mailroom (especially women’s weekends.)
 - Margaret will submit a newsletter article asking for mail vs. gift palanca
 - Ed suggested this also be included in sponsor training and letter
 - Only letter palanca will be delivered daily, gifts will be held and all given in bag at end
- Extensive discussion was held on the format and process for collection of registration and donation funds on the weekends.
 - Make MOP talk be more about the joy of giving and stewardship than funds collection
 - Dani Jo suggested making it a lower key emphasis, maybe at noon meal
 - Stronger emphasis on Paying it Forward to fund future guests
 - Expectations to be clearly communicated in sponsor letters, and by entire leadership team
 - All collections will be done through use of envelopes with name identification for accounting use. Envelopes will be sent with confirmation letters, and available at check-in at leadership table and Palanca chapel during weekend.
 - Team members (with the exception of conference room team) will be expected to turn in their fees on Thursday night to the Palanca Rector as per the manual. This will be clearly communicated in team letters, meetings and contacts from leadership team.
 - Guests and conference room team will turn in their envelopes on Sunday during MOP talk. Reminder to bring envelopes with to appropriate time to be clearly communicated by leadership to all team and guests.
 - Motion made by Lori to proceed with this plan (as outlined above) for collection for 2018. Second by Jim. Motion carried.

- Skip shared a 4th Day handbook available from National for \$1 each. Group in agreement to order these in and eliminate many of the poor quality handouts we provide in the packets for each guest at the end of the weekend.
- Photo costs on the weekend were higher due to extra photos being printed beyond what was done in the past. Skip & Lori will work with leadership teams to come up with a better plan for team & guest photos to be used to document the weekends.
- Leadership will emphasize to team and guests at the start of the weekend that no photos or social media posts from the weekend should be occurring to ensure the privacy and integrity of the weekend.
- Skip shared that a 4th Day member had brought forward concerns on a potential leadership for another 4th Day member. The Secretariat appreciates input, and would encourage any concerns of this nature be brought to our Spiritual Director. Our position will remain that we are an inclusive, non-judgmental body of Christ, and leadership suggestions from the entire 4th Day community will be honored and prayerfully considered.
- Discussion of leadership selection process was held.
 - The need to develop and updated list of potential leadership candidates was identified. Dee, Mike, Allen and Ed will work with Julie to do this, with notations made of service on palanca, auxiliary, rollistas, and other leadership roles.
 - Leaders for the weekends will be cautioned to not assume an on-going progression as has occurred, but an expectation that a variety of leadership experiences will be required to ensure readiness to be a weekend Rector.
 - The route to obtaining this experience may vary over time and order of experience based on personal and team needs.
 - The actual selection of all weekend Rectors remains the sole responsibility of the Secretariat, and no assumption based on past or current leadership role should be made by anyone as to upcoming weekend Rectors.
 - The Secretariat will vote to extend invitations to future Rectors at the board meeting prior to a weekend, with the upcoming Rectors announced at the Closures of the weekend.

ARISE: The Arise song is creating copy write issues the generate a costly penalty or fee.

- Motion by Pastor Dani Jo that we replace Arise with Sanctuary. Second by Margaret. Motion carried.
- Lori will communicate this to the leadership team at the April 24th training.

FORMS:

- Updates were reviewed and approved
- Permission to post name and home church on website will be requested with application
- Lori will update forms

- Medical question will be removed, and the name tag medical slip used to replace this need

SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR SUGGESTIONS:

- Pastor Steve Carmany provided many good suggestions
- Skip will ask Julie to send Pastor Dani Jo the list of SDs from the past 5 years
- Secretariat direction to all Rectors in the future (starting with 2019 weekends) will be to provide Pastor Dani Jo a list of potential pastors they would like to see on their weekends (a wish list) but they are not to contact the pastors. Pastor Dani Jo will select and call all SDs for all weekends.
- Rectors will also be asked starting with 2019 year to provide the Secretariat and Pastor Dani Jo with the names of all they intend to invite to be Rollistas prior to the invitation being extended.

SECRETARIAT ASSIGNMENTS:

- Skip revisited the leadership and secretariat needs chart brought up at last fall's meeting.
- Each Secretariat member is asked to let Skip know what areas they are willing to serve to help spread out the workload of the Secretariat.
- Suggestions of 4th Day members who could be asked to help with specific tasks are also to be sent to Skip.

BRAINSTORMING SESSION:

- Brainstorming on what are our hopes, dreams and goals for SDLVDC was held.
 - Brothers in Blue outreach expansion
 - Better sponsor training – invite the 4th Day to practice weekends
 - Involve 4th Day community more in weekends even if they cannot work
 - Come hear the talk given by a renewal partner, special connection
 - Community could volunteer to come prepare/clean up agape to relieve kitchen crew
 - Write palanca notes of encouragement
 - Do more for our VDC 4th Day by sending personal notes mid-year by leadership
 - Do more to help educate Guests and 4th Day on the extent of our 4th Day community at large, and ways to stay connected and involved
 - Set up a SDLVDC prayer chain
 - Cards of encouragement sent by Secretariat 4-6 weeks after the weekend
 - Evangelize through growth! NE South Dakota ripe for hosting a weekend with our help. Rapid City maybe too.
 - Host a Grand Ultreya midyear, with a talk on sponsorship responsibilities and training.
 - Committed to doing one either September 17 or 24, 2017 (Dani Jo will let us know which is best on her end.)
 - SITE: Christ the King, Yankton, SD

- TIME: 3:30-5:30 p.m. (Service first, followed by potluck!)
- Secretariat annual meeting 2 p.m.
- CHAIRMEN & SET UP: Mike & Dee
- CLEAN UP: All Secretariat members!
- PROMOTIONAL POSTER: Lori
- COMMUNION & LEAD SERVICE: Dani Jo
- SPEAKER: Skip will secure someone
- Bridge the gap for TEC graduates through encouragement from VDC community

NEXT MEETING:

- Tentative date of September 17 or 24, 2017 from 2 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. was set in conjunction with Grand Ultreya at Christ the King Church in Yankton, SD
- Skip will send out more information on this in the future

Meeting was closed in prayer by Mike.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Gooch