

Official Publication of the National Lutheran Secretariat, VdC

NLS 2005 Annual Meeting July 28 — 31, 2005 in Emmittsburg, Maryland

CASTING OUR NETS

It was a brisk fall day early in November when the NLS board and host committee went on a fishing expedition to the campus of Mount St. Mary's in Emmittsburg Md. With a backdrop of the remaining autumn leaves, we marveled at the stone structures that have been a part of the campus since the early 1800's. George Gelles, event coordinator for the Mount, was very accommodating and entertaining giving us some of the history of the university. Father John Dubois, the renegade (as George described him), founded Mount St. Mary's in 1808. Father John fled the French Revolution and landed in Maryland. The Catholic University today is home to 1400 students as well as a seminary. We are excited about being here next July and are anxious to be your hosts.

Our three state areas are rich in our country's history. From Emmittsburg we are just 1 1/2 hours from Washington D.C. and Annapolis, 1 hour from Baltimore and Harrisburg, 3-4 hours from Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Richmond Va., and the Jersey and Maryland shore. Gettysburg is within 1/2 hour. We hope you will consider "trolling" awhile in the area when making your travel plans.

For those who are planning on flying, please consult the not to scale map on the left. Harrisburg, PA International (MTD) and Baltimore, MD (BWI) are approximately equal distance from Emmittsburg. BWI is an hour travel time and MTD is about 45 minutes travel time. The two airports in the Washington D.C. area: Washington Dulles International (IAD) and Ronald Reagan National (DCA) are about 75 miles away and will take longer, two hours, because of D.C. traffic. There is an airport in Hagerstown, MD (not on the map) about 45 minutes west of the college, with flights from Pittsburgh. Our preferred airports are **Hagerstown, MTD and BWI**. The annual meeting begins with lunch on Thursday. You will want to consider travel time from the airports when making your flight plans.

At this time of year when we traditionally stop and give thanks, we are especially thankful that the Lord is guiding us in our planning for the 2005 annual meeting. We feel God led us to this facility and He has already blessed us with a most accommodating events coordinator, George Gelles.

May you all have a blessed holiday season!

Rainbow and Vineyard Host Committee
Diane Foor and Cathy Glumac Co-Chairs



Inside **CONEXIONES**

To "the Mount!" in Maryland

Page 3

"New Board" Minutes

Pages 4-5

President & SD Reports

Page 6

Casting our Nets

Page 7

Conference Call Minutes

Page 8-9

Outreach Report

Page 10

Palanca & Treasurer Reports

Pages 11

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Write in large letters - be very clear, computers rely on EXACT information

Connecting National and Local Secretariats



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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 71,500 who have participated in 37 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, ELCA bishops and the Directors of the Division for Ministry and the Division for Ministry in Daily Life about the activities of the National Lutheran Secretariat and its affiliated secretariats. Subscriptions to the above are free. If you know one of the above is not receiving CONEXIONES, call Larry Witham as 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, Jerry Lemcke, 6139 Sunnyvale Drive, Orlando, FL 32822; 407-277-2606.

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.

To “The Mount”!

First, I want to thank Tennessee. They did a wonderful job and we had a great meeting in the rolling hills taking time out on the veranda. Tennessee was able to pass the mantle, the banner, and quite a few dollars, on to the Vineyard / Rainbow group. Well done, Tennessee!

Second, I want to thank all of you who responded to the evaluations! 51% of all the people in attendance handed in evaluations, which is the best yet. We really do look at them and use them as a resource tool, which brings me to next year’s meeting. I cannot begin to tell you how excited I am about our next annual meeting. You will see changes in our agenda format and we are pleased to be going to “the Mount!” in Maryland. www.msmary.edu

That’s what the local folks call our 2005 Annual Meeting site! Mount St. Mary’s is a wonderful spot that will enable us to expand our agenda. We are thrilled to present you with (5) five seminars along with (2) two forums and a keynote speaker. How’s that for beefing up the program?

We are asking for your cooperation, though. On the reservation form, you will notice a new section asking for your preference of seminars. We would like you to rank order them with 1 being your first choice, 2 your second and so on. Because of this new format and the time allotments we will run (4) four seminars simultaneously and (1) one during committee time. These will be repeated, but we believe your best efforts will allow each person to attend at least 3 out of 5 in the short stay at “The Mount.” Before anyone comments, let’s give this a try. This could just be the opportunity you need to send your delegates and or Secretariat members to different seminars, at the same time, and get more for your money.

Forums will remain open to all in attendance, without other activities scheduled during these times. In case you are unclear, forums are directed at issues facing all of us and are intended to give you direction from our resource materials and fundamentals.

A quick synopsis of the (5) five seminars.

1. The Top Ten Ways to Kill a Secretariat: Are you Guilty?
2. What’s So Apostolic About Action: The Original 12 Step Program
3. It’s Not a Mint on Your Pillow: Palanca
4. 501(c)(3) for Dummies: And Other Important Items for Your Treasurer
5. Shopping for Proper Secretariat Fishing Gear: Resources at Your Disposal

In order to schedule and be fair, the seminar that gets the least amount of responses will be run during the latter part of committee time.

Please also note that there are (4) four major airports and one (1) regional airport that you can choose from to get to the Annual Meeting in July. HOWEVER, we need to know which airport and when you will be arriving. Without this information, you may need a cab. The host committee’s preferred airports are **Hagerstown, Harrisburg and BWI**. Page one gives some specifics of the distance and time it will take to get from the airport to “the Mount”. Please take this into consideration when booking flights, especially if you plan on attending the orientation, which begins at 11:00 am on Thursday. Those traveling a distance may need to consider coming a day earlier.

To assist you in your flight planning here are airports (with the codes as seen on the map on page one) and their web site addresses:

Hagerstown Regional Airport - HGR
[Http://www.flyhagerstown.com/](http://www.flyhagerstown.com/)

Harrisburg International Airport - MDT
[Http://www.flyhia.com/](http://www.flyhia.com/)

Baltimore Washington International Airport - BWI
[Http://www.bwiairport.com/](http://www.bwiairport.com/)

Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport - DCA
[Http://www.metwashairports.com/national/index.htm](http://www.metwashairports.com/national/index.htm)

Washington Dulles International Airport - IAD
[Http://www.metwashairports.com/Dulles/](http://www.metwashairports.com/Dulles/)

We will begin our next annual meeting with an orientation, open to everyone, at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, July 28th. Lunch begins at 12 noon and our opening worship will be held at 1:00 p.m. Don’t miss a minute!

Tracy Ziemke,
 VP Administration



NLS Board Minutes - "New Board" Sunday, June 25, 2004

A meeting was called by President Larry Witham, and attended by, Diane Purcell, Tracy Ziemke, Ron Millard, Judy Laabs-Foss, newly appointed treasurer Jerry Lemcke, Pastor Joe Nilsen and Su Kralj. Larry asked everyone to introduce themselves to give the new board members a chance to learn a little bit about each one of us.

Meeting began by Larry passing the old letterhead around and asked everyone to please review their addresses and contact numbers and make corrections or additions as needed. Ron asked permission to rearrange the design of the letterhead and present options to the board. Diane's only suggestion was that he first talk with Lucy to make sure she did not mind her information being included.

The board then discussed the proposed dates for the mid year meeting. Tentatively, November 5 through the 7th was chosen for the meeting. It will begin at 1 pm and we should all plan to try to meet for lunch, providing our arrival flights will permit.

The board then went on to set the dates for the up coming year's conference calls. The following dates and time have been selected: September 19, February 27 and May 15, all beginning at 9 PM (EST).

Tracy said that she is thrilled that the following states are interested in hosting future annual meetings; 2006, California, Los Angeles area; 2007, INKY, in Indianapolis; and 2008, Florida or Georgia. 2009 will be either Florida or Georgia, who ever does not host in 2008.

Larry asked everyone to think of items to discuss during our first scheduled conference call. A few ideas include the finalizing of our job descriptions, going over the evaluations from the 2004 annual meeting, and the secretary's reports from the annual meeting. Jerry Lemcke suggested that Tracy share briefly with the delegates, the results from the 2004 annual meeting at the beginning of the

2005 annual meeting. This is one way the delegates can visually see that the surveys do have an impact on what we do as an executive board and that the evaluations are reviewed. Also, discuss the "revised" How To Host An Annual Meeting" information.

And finally, the ideas that were brought up and the suggestions that are coming from the Long Range Planning Committee's sub committee, the visionary committee. Some of their recommendations and items of change should be reviewed by the executive board before they are brought before the delegates. These have been previously discussed in prior years and either are way out there, or have already been tried. Another discussion as to the consideration of a paid position and what that would entail.

Articles for the Newsletter are due no later than August, November, January and April 15. Each board member is encouraged to write an article.

Jerry Lemcke, new treasurer, informed the executive board that after much discussion with Diane Purcell, former Treasurer with the NLS, that he and John Bradford, newly appointed Distribution Center Manager, would like to each purchase QuickBooks for their respective responsibilities. The board approved the purchase. Diane interjected and continued with Jerry's thoughts and said that the financial spreadsheet that is in excel for the Distribution Center will continue to be used and interfaced with QuickBooks. Jerry said he would open a new checking and savings account with the \$1,868.00 offering that was collected at the worship service.

Another discussion spun off from the one about the distribution center concerning the purchase of NLS shirts of various styles and other NLS memorabilia. Diane let the board know that there would be an additional IRS form (990T) that would need to be filed if we decided as a board to provide these wares. After all was said and done, the

executive board decided not to go in that direction at this time.

Larry Witham turned the meeting over to Tracy. Diane Purcell moved that the executive board of the National Lutheran Secretariat pass a corporate resolution allowing Jerry Lemcke and/or Larry Witham, to be authorized to conduct business, handle all funds and have signature authorization. This resolution will stand until rescinded. Ron Millard seconded Diane's motion. Tracy called for a vote, all said yes and Larry and Jerry Lemcke abstained. Motions carried and passed.

Diane asked that Larry sign the Minnesota Charity Report up receipt, and mail it back to her when it have been fully executed.

Tracy turned the meeting back over to Larry. Diane continued to discuss with the board the duties of a financial advisor and what exactly that job would consist of. The executive board agreed to create a newly appointed position of Financial Advisor and that Diane Purcell would assume those responsibilities of preparing all tax forms and returns to be signed by the Treasurer. She will consult with the treasurer and review the NLS books as needed. A vote was taken and passed.

Ron Millard mentioned that he has had correspondence from a pastor in Uganda who is interested in attending a VdC weekend. Ron has been encouraging him to attend a weekend in Illinois. He would like the executive board to consider financially contributing towards Pastor Daniel S Namayo, of Jinja, Uganda weekend expenses. After much discussion Pastor Joe Nilsen, made a motion for the executive board to give \$500.00 towards the expenses of Pastor Daniel S Namayo of

Uganda, so that he can travel to the USA and make a VdC weekend for the purpose of outreach. Second by Tracy and the board voted unanimously "yes", motion carried.

Other Business Judy was reminding everyone to write an article for the newsletter.

Larry brought up a responsibility of the data base coordinator. At the moment, she (Lucy Hightower) is the only person who has a copy of the database. This information is almost complete, and with all the hard work that has gone into it from Lucy, it would be prudent for her to have a copy stored off site locally. Ron Millard suggested that a neighbor of hers keep a current copy. Larry asked if there was anyone else who should also have a copy and Jerry Lemcke suggested that Su have one. Ron said that a neighbor and Su could both have a copy.

After a short discussion, the consensus was that a copy of the current database should be sent to Su quarterly, or as needed by Su. Lucy will continue to supply Judy and others with labels and information as they request it. Ron gave a brief, a visual sketch on the blackboard as to what a batch processing was, and that is what Lucy is currently doing with the database.

Su passed out rough drafts of the minutes she had processed from the executive board meetings and the business meetings held at this year's annual meeting through Saturday afternoon. She asked that everyone take time in the next couple of weeks to review them and make corrections and additions. She will email everyone a set after August 1st, so they can make their corrections and email them back.

Ron Millard made a motion to close the meeting, and second by Tracy. Joe Nilsen closed in prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Su Kralj
NLS Secretary

TIME + FLIES = FUN

Wow, has this year flown by. I have come to realize that the older I get the faster time flies. Today I am real old because Thanksgiving and Christmas are just around the corner. And you know the other phrase, Time flies when you are having fun. So, I am not only old, but having a lot of fun as well. This means that every moment is very precious to me. You are precious to me. What a great time to be alive and share the good news. A nod, a smile, a wink and especially a kiss and hug, all intimate gestures that can signify a relationship of care and love ready to be shared. Those are a few ways I tend to communicate and express myself to people I know. Our Lord has blessed us all with ways to express ourselves to one another. Take some time to express God's love to those precious people around you.

SURVEY SAYS... yep; it's that time of year again. I always like to make my tasks and assignments a game. This year my game goal is to see how quickly your survey responses will come back to me. My strategy is to tell you now what I need, and maybe, just maybe, you will have it all ready before I even send you the form to complete. I am an extravagant dreamer who gets excited about the unexpected and I thrive on reaching for the stars.

Each year there are those who drag their whatever's, and yes, I even received authentic reasons, but last year I resorted to begging and pleading with a few of you to send me your information. This year I am going to approach you before you even see the survey forms. I know this is something you are not accustomed to, but hey, if it works, I could get a bonus point and win.

In order for your secretariat's pilgrim/pastor data to be entered into the National Data Base, you may need to do a few things. 1.) Send (preferably fax or email) the National Data Base Coordinator (Lucy Hightower) an updated roster from your secretariat as soon as possible. Double check your addresses, phone numbers and the positions you hold on your local secretariat. If you have already done this, kudos to you. 2.) Gather your statistical data and get it ready to send to the NLS secretary (that would be me). The data is the number of pilgrims and pastors who went through your weekends in 2004. 3.) When the survey sheet arrives in January complete it and return it as soon as possible. This is just way too easy; I see more bonus points.

AND ONE MORE ITEM OF INTEREST: Do you remember this past summer when we spent almost an entire business meeting discussing the bylaws and constitution? If I remember correctly, each secretariat's lay director and spiritual director were to sign, date and return that signature page to me. As of today, I am losing my game; no one has sent me anything. Ok, I have given myself another option, and with it, a possibility to still win this game. If you are reading this, and your secretariat has not returned the document I am speaking of to the NLS secretary (that would be me), would you kindly give your lay director and spiritual director a friendly reminder call and ask them to be sure to do this before the end of November (2004)? Oh, you would bless me real good and I would think Christmas came early if you accomplished this. Is that too much pressure? How about December 18th? I could possibly get my Christmas gift from you before Christmas. Now that you can do! (More points)

Be blessed. Know our wondrously awesome God loves you more and more each day and yes, so do I! (Wink, nod, smile, hug and kiss) May the precious reason for this every special season bless you today and always.

Merry Christmas! Su Kralj, NLS Secretary



Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

DeColores!

This year seems to be flying by very quickly. It feels like only yesterday that we were together in Tennessee. But in reality your Executive Board has met for many hours since that time, both on the phone and in person.

Early in November, we spent three days together in Emmitsburg, Maryland at the site of our 2005 annual meeting. We met with the Host Committee, toured the facilities, and made plans for next July. I think you are going to enjoy yourself at Mount St. Mary's University, set in the picturesque countryside of northern Maryland, just south of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

We have listened to your suggestions and requests and are planning to have more time in small groups, and an easier and more efficient method of seating the delegates. We also plan to have five seminars that are loaded with good information and ideas for you to take back to your local secretariats. The local clergy are working together to develop some great worship services and the Host Committee is busy planning on making your stay a comfortable one with lots of good fellowship. We all hope to see you there!

In the meantime as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Savior, I want to share with you a prayer for Advent that I recently read in the *Lutheran Book of Prayer*.

“Lord God, we praise You that You comforted Your people with the promise of a Redeemer. We praise You that in the fullness of time You sent Your Son as the Redeemer. We praise You that You give promise that You will send Him to us again to judge the world in righteousness.”

Open our hearts to receive our Redeemer now as He comes to us in Word and Sacrament. Open our eyes in awareness of His rule in our lives by His grace.

Make Advent a blessing to us as we welcome our King in faith and love. We lift up our heads to welcome Him anew. Fill us with gladness as He comes to us. Amen.”

My prayer for you is that you feel His presence and His love everyday of this Advent season. Be filled with joy and happiness as we prepare to celebrate Christmas. Let the peace of God rule in your heart during Advent and forever.

God loves you and so do I,
Larry Witham, NLS President

Merry Christmas 



IT'S THE CHURCH

Some years ago one of our Presidents reminded himself that if he were to be successful in reaching voters, he would have to keep in mind, “It’s the economy, stupid!” It was too easy to get diverted from the primary focus of the campaign. I believe that we in Via de Cristo need to constantly remind ourselves, “It’s the Church!” In our movement God has graced us with a wonderful tool of renewal. It has enabled us to refocus on the unconditional love of God. It has provided a practical way to live the life of Grace wherever we are “planted”. It has introduced us to great people across Church and denominational lines.

But remember, my friends, it’s all about the Church. That is our primary expression of Kingdom activity. And because there will always be those who will question whether or not Via de Cristo is a good thing for the Church, the onus is on us to show in word and deed that it IS – and that it is theologically sound and spiritually enriching.

Let there be no cloak of secrecy, no hint of self-importance. We are no better (or worse) than our brothers and sisters in the pew on any given Sunday morning. We have simply had the opportunity to share something unique – that’s all. To those who cannot fathom what a Via de Cristo weekend is or does, sometimes we just have to say, “You just had to be there.” There are many analogies to this in life.

We have had Bishops and theologians in our Church who have attended weekends and rejoice in this Grace-filled experience. I also know that there are many who are reluctant to attend or to encourage others to attend weekends. There seems to be an unspoken fear for some that a movement like ours represents some kind of threat to the unity of the Body of Christ. To them I would say, “Relax, this is ALL about the Church. It’s about people affirming the ministry of the local church and taking ownership in the Priesthood of Believers. And if one of us gets a little too enthusiastic about our Via de Cristo experience, please remind us in love that you haven’t ‘been there.’”
Sola Gratia,

Joe Nilsen
NLS Spiritual Director



CASTING OUR NETS - at Mount St. Mary's



Will you have a MERRY CHRISTMAS?

It is the worst of times. It is the best of times. The Christmas you have depends upon YOU.

The Christmas experience WITHOUT CHRIST

- C** - Credit Cards that help my spending go crazy
- H** - Headache when the house is over run by family
- R** - Remembering everyone's desire is fulfilled
- I** - Insult when my gifts are rejected
- S** - Stress while overwhelmed
- T** - Truckloads of food consumed
- M** - Massive debt that puts me behind all year
- A** - Awful feeling that I forgot someone
- S** - Sorrow from offenses received

The Christmas experience WITH CHRIST

- C** - Christ child who is born this day
- H** - Holy and righteous one to follow
- R** - Remember Christ who died that I may live
- I** - Inspiration to always give
- S** - Songs, Praise and Worship to the King
- T** - Thank the Lord for saving me today
- M** - Miracles that are for today
- A** - Almighty and merciful Lord I serve
- S** - Self-control, love, joy, peace, patience...

NLS Board Minutes — Conference Call September 19, 2004

President Larry Witham, Ron Millard, Jerry Lemcke, Tracy Ziemke, Judy Laabs-Foss, Pastor Joe Nilsen, Bob Northrup and Su Kralj attended the meeting. Pastor Joe opened the meeting with prayer and shared with us about observing the Sabbath and focusing on “Keeping the Candle Burning”

Presidents Report: Larry Witham said he would hold his report until we discuss the status of the constitution & bylaw revisions.

Vice President of Administration’s Report: Tracy Ziemke has been in contact with Vineyard and Rainbow Movements as to the mechanics of the 2005 annual meeting. They are ready for the NLS Board meeting in November. She received six pages of notes from Mount St. Mary College (MSM) stating their guidelines for NLS while on their campus. Tracy also mentioned that as of today’s date, no contract has been signed.

Highlights from the 2004 evaluations were very good. Tracy observed the more detailed the evaluations; people seem to be more expressive with their responses. The orientation meeting was well received. Those who attended thought it would be good to open it up to everyone, not just those who were attending an annual meeting for the first time. The copier issue needs to be discussed and more details ironed out. The setting was great and worship services wonderful. The only negative response with low ratings was the procedure used in the seating of the delegates. It was an issue and concern and Tracy mentioned it reflected poorly on the board. Is there a better way to seat the delegates that can be more efficient? Due to the growth of our movement it is evident that this procedure does need revamping. Several suggestions from the board were discussed and will be a topic at the mid year meeting. This year 51% of the surveys were returned. The numbers for the 2004 annual meeting had a combined total of 194 attendees and host committee (160 attendees and 34 host commit-

tee). Please note that these numbers did not include numerous visitors who also were in attendance.

This year we saw something that has been missing for quite some time, several movements wanting to host an annual meeting. At this time, it looks as though the 2006 meeting will be hosted by California.

Vice President of Outreach: Ron Millard, shared about the areas of the country he has been working with:

1. He made his third trip to Kansas City. It looks as though they are ready to form their secretariat and as they continue to organize, they will start holding Ultreyas.
2. He has a pending visit scheduled in late October for Bonners Ferry, Idaho. They are serious about trying to get a new movement started.
3. Ron is planning to attend send off or closing in the Seattle area.

The executive board had previously approved a \$500.00 financial contribution towards Pastor Daniel S Namayo, of Jinja, Uganda for expenses so that he could travel to the USA and make a VdC weekend for the purpose of outreach. After two attempts of applying for a visa, it doesn’t look as though the government will approve his trip. Each process has a \$100.00 non-refundable fee. The board agreed to refund Pastor Daniel the \$200.00 for his efforts in trying to secure a visa.

Secretary: Su will be re emailing a clean copy of all the approved minutes from the 2004 annual meeting.

Treasurer: Jerry Lemcke has opened a bank account with the collection from the last worship service at this year’s annual meeting. Diane Purcell will be forwarding a check for the balance of what was left in the Minnesota account. Name changes on the Thrivent accounts and Quest accounts still need to be made as well as a copy of NLS QuickBooks accounting sent for merging.

Jerry reported that John Bradford, the newly appointed distribution coordinator, has encountered difficulties with the State of Utah. It seems he needs to have a business license in order to operate within the state. Diane Purcell, who has knowledge in state laws, statutes, and exemptions, is looking at Utah’s requirements to see how she can assist John in becoming compliant and what will work best for NLS.

Spiritual Director’s Report: Joe Nilsen has set up an email-clearing house for spiritual directors. So far he has over forty listings. This has generated a response of questions and concerns and given him an opportunity to respond. He is also in the process of sending a letter to the bishops. His mission is to let them know that we are available and will work within the church. It is designed to inform the bishop’s about Via de Cristo as an outreach resource, as well as who we are and what we are about. He read his rough draft to the executive board and received a warm approval

Pastor Joe shared that the Tennessee Host Committee has a total of \$3,000.00 they are passing on to Vineyard and Rainbow Host Committee for the 2005 annual meeting as seed money.

As an outreach, Pastor Joe will be not only be attending the Nashville area’s Pastoral Association’s meeting, but will also be on the agenda. He is taking Pastor Carl Olin with him. President Larry also gave him Bishop Bolick’s name from North Carolina, who could be an asset to him, if he so desired.

Newsletter Editor: Judy Laabs-Foss announced that the next deadline for the next edition of the newsletter is November 15, and it will go to print on the 21st. Larry and Su both requested hard copies of all the newsletter’s be sent to them for the NLS archive files.

Web Page Coordinator: Bob Northrup will write an article for the up

coming newsletter encouraging movements to set up a web page by giving basic information on how to do this for themselves. This is a result of members of the board sharing that people have had difficulties in locating the NLS web site.

Old Business: “How To Host a NLS Weekend”, is being updated by Tracy. She is working on the last part of it and will possibly have this document ready for the board to review by mid-year.

Job Descriptions: Larry thought they looked great. Tracy will make sure all the newly elected and appointed members of the board have copies to review. This may also be discussed at the mid-year meeting.

Web Page: It will show Emery’s as distribution coordinators until John Bradford is up and running.

Visionary Committee Report: Will set up a plan to present at the 2005 annual meeting.

Constitution & Bylaws Revisions: They were approved at the 2004 annual meeting. Fred has the document ready to be sent out and ratified. President Larry read the letter he had drafted to go with this package to the executive board. A ratification form will also be included in this package. It contains a signature line for each lay director and spiritual director from each affiliated secretariat to execute and return to the NLS secretary, Su Kralj. All this information will be sent to Diane Purcell. She was appointed by the board to oversee this process and that the mailing should be complete by the end of September 2004.

Data Base: It was determined that a quarterly back up of NLS database should be stored off site. The data base coordinator sent a test email to Ron Millard and was successful. Therefore, Ron Millard will have possession of a quarterly back up of NLS official database.

Future Annual Meetings: Tracy has commented in her report that So. California and Central Valley has expressed an interest in hosting the 2006 annual meeting. Iowa/Illinois has a lot of

questions and Tracy is communicating with them hoping to get a firm commitment for 2007. Indiana/Kentucky (INKY) are looking at hosting 2008, and at this time, Florida is willing to fill in the gap or host in 2009, unless another movement expresses interest and steps forward.

New Business: Distribution Center: John Bradford has run into a few obstacles and is getting assistance from Diane Purcell in securing a license from Utah.

Palanca Coordinator: Paul Sabatier-Smith has contacted Mark Carnes and is collecting data needed to move forward with this position. He is excited about all the contacts and information that is coming in. He will be posting the information on future weekends to the web page and sending to Judy for printing in the newsletter.

Mid-year meeting: Tracy has coordinated with Rainbow/Vineyard and has the meeting location and lodging arranged. The board will be ten minutes from the 2005 site. The board is to send Tracy their flight schedules so a coordinating effort can be made for transportation to and from the airports.

Nomination Committee: President Larry will ask a few people to serve on a nominating committee for the 2005 meeting. This year Larry & Su are up for re election and Ron Millard is going off the executive board. Ron has suggested several people for the nominating committee to consider for the position of Vice President of Outreach.

Newsletter: Judy reminded everyone their articles for the next newsletter are due by **November 15**.

Other New Business: President Larry and Pastor Joe both asked Ron to send them clean copies of the revised letterhead.

Tracy made a motion to adjourn, and was seconded by Jerry Lemcke, and Pastor Joe closed in prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Su Kralj,
NLS Secretary

The CHRISTMAS STORY



And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone around about them; and they were terrified. And the angel said u n t o t h e m ,

"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." Luke 2:7-12



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— NLS Executive Board

NLS OUTREACH NEWS

I just returned from a joyous meeting at the site of next year's annual NLS meeting with the other NLS board members. For those attending next year, you are going to be in for a real treat! The setting at Mount St. Mary's University in Emmitsburg, MD is very nice, with many buildings dating back to 1835. The cafeteria is about the size of a football field (an exaggeration, but not much), the auditorium we will be using seats over 300, and all the other rooms for the forums and seminars are very large and accommodating.

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find the exciting seminar topics coming up next July. There are a couple of sand volleyball pits, so bring some shorts and old tennis shoes. It's absolutely true that the NLS board has NEVER lost a beach volleyball match! There will be other articles in this newsletter that will go into more detail than I'm mentioning, but the Spirit moved me to put in my plug here...

Now, down to some other outreach news. I had the privilege of attending the sendoff and clausura for the first weekend of Via de Cristo of Western Washington October 28-31. It was a co-ed weekend and there were 19 team members and 12 candidates. The team members made great sacrifices of time and money to serve on this first team, some coming from California, Arizona and Utah, plus those from Washington. Thanks to all those who helped out the folks in Washington, and in particular Max Turner who served as the first rector for this new movement. I have included a weekend picture (see below) with this article.

On the same trip, I visited some folks in the Spokane, WA and Coeur d'Alene and Bonner's Ferry, ID areas who are possibly interested in a new Via de Cristo movement there. In attendance were George Periman, Charles Aase, Pastor Norm Braatz, Kurt Wandrey, Bob Chenault, Richard and Terri Olsen, and Les and Jeanette Levig. For those reading this article, perhaps some of these names will be familiar to you. If you are near this area and want to help, please contact Norm Braatz nvbraatz@meadowcrk.com. I have included a picture (top right) of some of the group with this article.

A new (and unnamed as yet) group in the Kansas City/Ottawa, KS area is having their first ultreya November 20. Let's all pray for this new movement to "get off the ground."



The group in Nashville may be making some progress. Some pastors (including the NLS spiritual director Joe Nilsen) spoke to a group of clergy in the Nashville area a few days ago, and that is probably going to provide an additional spark to help that movement get started.

I'm still hoping and praying that Kansas City and Nashville will be welcomed as new secretariats in late July at the annual meeting. There could possibly be some others also.

My term as VP of Outreach will end in July. There will be a nominating committee examining the possibilities of someone to take over these duties, so I will not recommend anyone. Because of the large amount of email correspondence and the need to keep the outreach portion of the NLS web site current, the person will need to be highly computer literate. The person will need to be highly knowledgeable of the methodology in order to correctly present Via de Cristo to others and to answer the many questions and inquiries that continually come in. This position does require a lot of time, so the person will be expected to volunteer their time and when needed.

Let's continue to work together to "Expand our territories" as described in the Prayer of Jabez.

God's blessing,
Ron Millard
VP of Outreach, NLS



NLS Distribution Center

Dick Emery, Director Phone: (239) 590-8958
E-Mail: ricisa@aol.com

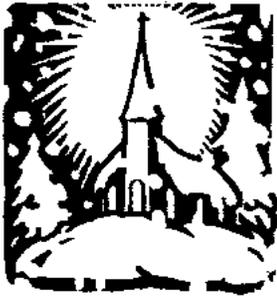
Annual Meeting Items Available

All the material that was available at the 2004 Annual Meeting and video tapes from the meeting are available from the Distribution Center. Order forms for all NLS materials can be found on the web page.



Conexiones Subscription

About 300 of you are choosing to obtain the Conexiones through mail delivery. The suggested annual donation is **\$6.00** and can be sent to the treasurer, address is found on page two. Please help us to be good stewards of these materials and we thank you in advance for your payment. Again if you would prefer to receive an email notification, just fill out the E-Mail Notification Request Form that can be found on the web.



Order Forms

In this newsletter you will not find order forms for our NLS materials or tapes and the numerous crosses from Symbols, Inc. Those forms can be found on the web and can be downloaded as needed. I have also put a smaller version of the email request on page two as a reminder to sign up, but that too can be downloaded off the web. This change has been done to continue to be good stewards of our resources, since it will save us and you time and money in printing costs. We are aware that not everyone has access to the web and email service. If you are in need of either form, we encourage you to talk to someone in your secretariat who can obtain a copy of that form for you. Don't hesitate to contact the board with any of your questions in this change. Their address, phone numbers and email addresses can be found on page two. Thank You!

Visited our Web Site Lately?



<http://www.viadechristo.org>

Webmaster: Bob Northrup

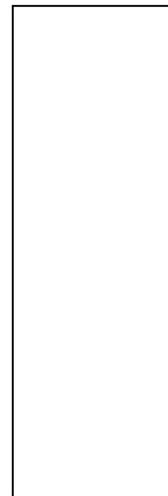
CONEXIONES-ON-THE-WEB

Are you interested in saving the NLS money? Please sign up to receive the E-Mail Notification by filling out the E-Mail Notification Request Form. How this works is that you will receive an email notification when the latest edition of the Conexiones has been posted on the NLS Web Page. You then can view the newsletter at your leisure and chose to copy it.



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