

Connecting National & Local Secretariats

CONEXIONES

Official Publication of the National Lutheran Secretariat, VdC

Friday
July 27, 2018
Volume 36, Issue 4

2018 VdC/NLS Annual Gathering's Orientation

After an awesome lunch provided by Palm Beach Atlantic University (PBA), the attendees moved to the DeSantis Family Chapel for Orientation as to what everyone could expect this weekend. Warren "Butch" Sealy, NLS' VP of Administration, gave a warm welcome, as only Butch could do, followed with an explanation that this gathering of secretariats is a time for everyone to share, learn and grow in our mission to become the face of Jesus to the world.

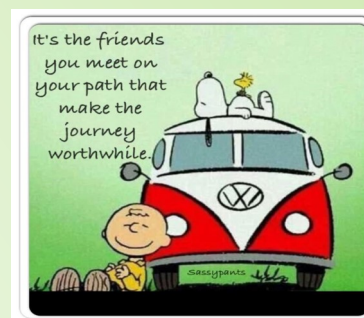
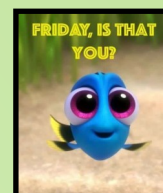
We next heard from Jonathan Prince, PBA's Dean of Ministries, who warmly welcomed everyone as well. Prince, a former pastor, has been with PBA 12 years. He proudly shared that PBA is a "Christ first" university focusing first on Jesus and then on the mission of proclaiming Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life. PBA is sincerely thankful that we chose to hold a "meeting with God" on their campus.

Dave Rankin, from Gold Coast VdC,

had the honor to introduce Magdala and Watson Ray as Co-Chairs for this weekend. They, along with people from seven secretariats in Florida, have been working diligently to make this weekend a success. Anyone with questions, or needing assistance, was told to reach out to the people in those lime green shirts as they are ready, willing and able to assist.

Before leaving this session, attendees asked to take note of evaluation forms found in the section #5 (blue) in their white 3-ring binders.

The NLS Executive committee would greatly appreciate having all three forms filled out and left where you check out on Sunday. They want you to know that future gatherings will be shaped and guided by your first hand opinions and suggestions of how things went for you this weekend. Also, feel free to let us know what things you would like covered in future NLS Gatherings and what things we can leave out. Leadership truly appreciates and thanks you for your input.



Keynote Address: "Behind the Curtain"

The audience was absolutely blessed to hear this powerful keynote address presented by the Reverend Dr. Carl Billings from Discovery Church in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota.

Pastor Billings embraced the theme of our weekend by showing us a clip of his favorite movie, "The Wizard of Oz." The highlighted segment ended with Toto (Dorothy's dog) pulling away a curtain to show Dorothy and her friends that the 'Great and Powerful Wizard of Oz' was hiding his true identity.

This could be a God critique of our culture today and how so many of us are hiding behind a curtain or a mask because out of fear of what people might think of us. We put the curtain up, or the mask on, so people will not see the real us.

Pr. Billings cautioned the audience that the real problem when we hide from God is that we are actually being a hypocrite. One of the original definitions of hypocrite is a mask worn by an actor when portraying a character role. We wear a mask to pretend to be something we are not. Pr. Billings encouraged us to drop the masks, take off the veil and pull back the curtain we are hiding behind. After all...it's "not just about you, it's about God's love for you!"

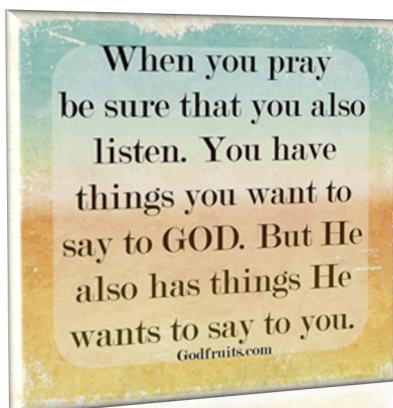
He challenged us to take a pause when we say the famous VdC line, "God loves you and so do I." He asked us to say God loves you... then STOP! Pause and think about that. God who created everything... is the same all powerful God who deeply loves you! This God will see behind whatever mask, curtain or veil we try to hide behind. God sees everything! And... He still deeply and passionately loves you!!

The message of the cross and that He died for us is about Jesus's love transforming us! Transforming us to be more Christ like at all times. Pr. Billings said that just because we go to church, confess our sins, make sure our children and grandchildren are baptized that we won't go to hell. Going to church is not like taking out a fire insurance policy. You know the type that gets filed away and forgotten about until we need it. We need to continually and faithfully worship our God all day in every day of our lives.

God's desire to transform us was further evidenced when Pr. Billings brilliantly weaved his message into the weekend's verse 2 Corinthians 3:18 by highlighting that we are continually being transformed into the image of Christ with every increasing glory shared. A caterpillar turns into a butterfly but it will always be part caterpillar.

He illuminated to us in many ways how our God's love for us is transforming and that we are to take that love home with us and touch all those around us with that powerful love. That it's about the Holy Spirit using us to love others!

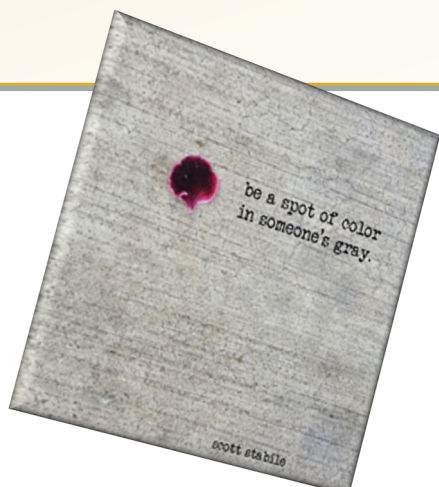
The message absolutely left us encouraged and hungry for more of what the Lord is going to do this weekend in all our hearts and lives.



Please stop by the Welcome Center on the first floor of the Lassiter Student Center to confirm your flights and times for your return trip! We want to send you off reflecting the glow of Jesus' love -- on time!

The Transportation Co-Chairs:

Jamey and Carol-
Ann Beers



Business Meeting Article

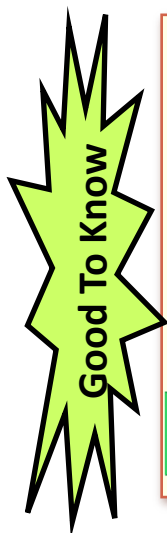
President Wendy Showalter called the first Business Meeting to the afternoon of July 26th in rooms 1291/1292 in MacArthur Hall. This action was followed by singing "Come Holy Spirit" as well as a prayer from Spiritual Director, Pr. Mark Marxhausen.

Next President Showalter explained why the motion to change the formula for allocating each secretariat's number of allowed delegate, which the Executive Board offered to the delegate body only to get table in that same 2017 Business Meeting, was being brought off the table so and the Executive Board could withdraw that motion. A motion was made by the Executive Board to withdraw their 2017 motion to change the formula for allocating the number of delegates each secretariats would be allowed was seconded and approved by a voice vote of the delegate body.

President Showalter presented the Executive Board's 5-Year Strategic Plan, which will be posted on the NLS website within the week. She encouraged delegates and visitors to attend the "Kick Starting Your 5-Year Strategic Plan" workshop by John Aclin, tomorrow, Friday, July 27th, 1:30 pm in room 1307 of Rinker Hall.

After a prayer by Pr Marxhausen and the meal prayer song, a motion was made and seconded to recess the business meeting until tomorrow. The motion carried by a voice vote of the delegates,

| Time | Event | Map | Location |
|----------|---|-----|---|
| 7:15 am | Breakfast | #30 | Lassiter Student Center |
| 8:15 am | Worship | #3 | DeSantis Family Chapel |
| 9:30 am | Business Meeting Continued | #24 | MacArthur Hall, Rms 1291/1292 |
| 10:30 am | Break | | |
| 10:40 am | Presentation #1 - "Who Do You See In the Mirror?" by Brett Koceja | #30 | Weyenberg Room 2nd Floor of Lassiter Student Center |
| 12:10 pm | Lunch | #30 | Lassiter Student Center |
| 1:15 pm | Development Workshops: Many Great Choices (see binder for details & room assignments) | #24 | Rinker Hall & MacArthur Hall Classrooms |
| 2:15 pm | Break | | |
| 2:30 pm | Business Meeting Continued | #24 | MacArthur Hall, Rms 1291/1292 |
| 3:45 pm | Break | | |
| 4:00 pm | Presentation #2: "Who Do You See In The Mirror" - Pr. Doug Pretorius | #30 | Weyenberg Room 2nd Floor of Lassiter Student Center |
| 5:30 pm | Dinner | #30 | Lassiter Student Center |
| 6:45 pm | Regional Meetings #1 | #24 | Rinker Hall & MacArthur Hall Classrooms |
| 8:00 pm | Evening Vespers | #3 | DeSantis Family Chapel |
| 8:45 pm | Hospitality & Fellowship | | Lassiter Student Center 1st Floor |



- All dorm rooms need to be vacated and cleared out Sunday by 9:00 am!
- Please check all closets and drawers for belongings.
- Please Leave the air condition in your room turned **ON** when you leave!
- The lanyard and swipe card is yours to keep!!
- The security charge for a lost dormitory key is \$100.00 (per key!!!)
- City ordinance has quiet hours from 9:00 pm to 9:00 am.
- Palanca Posters can be signed : Lassiter Student Center on 2nd floor
- Prayer Chapel: Lassiter Student Center on 2nd floor
- Transportation Changes: Inform Host Committee ASAP.
- Also, please do **NOT** walk alone at night.
- Palm Beach Atlantic Campus Safety: (561) 803-2500
- West Palm Beach Police Dept: (561) 822-1900
- Host Co-Chairs: Watson Ray: 561-312-3324 & Magdala Ray: 561-602-1639



The **CONEXIONES** is an official publication of The National Lutheran Secretariat (NLS) organization representing Via de Cristo, or Way of Christ, ministries throughout the United States. There are 45 VdC Secretariats, representing about 123,246 people, are affiliated with NLS.

The mission of this publication is to inform and encourage secretariats with news and information from the various activities and events at the Annual VdC/NLS 2018 Gathering.

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