

# Good News! Via de Cristo

Of Southeastern Michigan and Northwestern Ohio

## SPRING WEEKEND TEAMS ARE FORMING

The rectors for spring 2016 have been called and commissioned. As they begin to form their teams, please hold them in prayer.

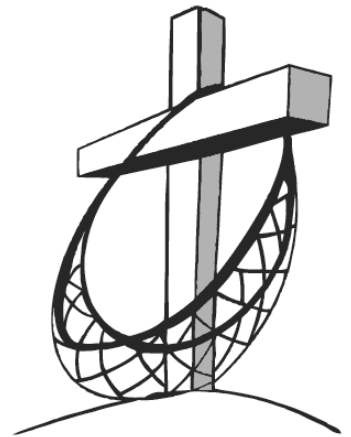
A survey is available on [www.gnvdc.org](http://www.gnvdc.org) to indicate your availability to serve on team or offer your support for the weekend in other ways— like kitchen support

on Saturday evening, providing a meal for a team meeting, or donating food and supplies for the weekend.

The information provided will be shared with the rectors for the upcoming weekends. While submitting an availability survey does not guarantee a place on the

team, the information is helpful to the rectors as they prepare to call people from within our community to serve.

If you have trouble connecting through the site, contact [communications@gnvdc.org](mailto:communications@gnvdc.org)



Our Mission: By grace with the Holy Spirit, we challenge leaders to discover and achieve their personal calling, assisting them with a method for influencing their environments.

## OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE:

### PARISH REPRESENTATIVES

In the past, each congregation with members involved in GNVDC has had a parish representative to assist with communication about events, ultreyas, sponsorship deadlines, and other information. Sadly, the data on who these individuals were has been lost. Re-establishing a working list of parish reps will help strengthen our active community.

Parish reps can be instrumental in encouraging others on their fourth day. If you are interested in serving in your congregation, please contact Penny Jongeward ([postweekendchair@gnvdc.org](mailto:postweekendchair@gnvdc.org))

### TECHNOLOGY TEAM

GNVDC is looking to put together a team of folks who can help upgrade, update and maintain our website and communications systems. Technology has changed since our site was first created. You could have the gifts and talents we need to make our online presence stronger.

If you are skilled in one or more of the following areas, please contact Jack Eggenberger at [laydirector@gnvdc.org](mailto:laydirector@gnvdc.org) :

Database Development    Object Oriented PHP  
 Word Press                      Server Skills  
 Web Development

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## STAY CONNECTED WITH GN!VDC

You may have noticed that this newsletter is not at the “usual” time to receive mail from GNVDC. In order to keep our community better informed, we are transitioning to newsletters quarterly instead of the previous semi-annual format. The goal is to provide you with timely information on weekends, ultreyas, and other important issues within our community.

In order to stay even better connected to GNVDC on your fourth day, here are some other steps you can take to make sure you are receiving important communications from the secretariat and community:

- **Sign up for a username** on our website ([www.gnvdc.org](http://www.gnvdc.org)) This will give you access to details on the community section of the site. The guest login no longer works in order to maintain privacy for our users. Having your own login will be the only way to have online access to team and participant lists leading up to a weekend.
- Join our **email list**. Follow the link on the community section our website to receive periodic updates and information from the GNVDC community. This will connect you with our Constant Contact list. After you sign up you will need to confirm your email address to start receiving email.
- **Update your information** in our database. Once you have a username and password on our site, you can follow the link on the website to update your contact information. Email addresses and phone numbers often change. Your current information helps us to stay in touch.
- Connect with other members of the community **on Facebook**. Search for Good News! Via de Cristo to request membership in our group.

# Sponsorship

There has been a growing trend in our community for the majority of our participants to be sponsored by the team members for that weekend, as people of our community are often waiting until they are called to a team to invite people to attend the Via de Cristo. Along with that trend, we have experienced a decline in the number of participants on our weekends, and worse, the cancellation of two men's weekends due to lack of registered participants. Sponsorship of participants for a weekend is one of the most significant ways that we can help to influence the world for Christ and serve this community, and is a role that each of us should be praying about.

Over the years, I have sponsored five participants; three of which I sponsored while on team, and two of which I sponsored when not serving. In my opinion, the experience was more meaningful for me and for my sponsored participant when I sponsored them while 'in the community'. Here are my observations:

- Palanca (prayer) is the foundation for the weekend. You will have more time to pray intentionally for your participant before, during, and even after the weekend if you are not on team and occupied with other things.
- You will be able to focus solely on your participant prior to sendoff, being completely present with them and attentive to their needs. Conversely, if you are serving on team without a participant, you can fully engage in the activities involved in your team position.
- The participant has more "emotional space" to engage freely in the movements of the weekend if their sponsor is not present. Not all participants need that space, but there are some who will have a better experience with it.

## Reunion Groups

Reunion groups are the backbone of the fourth day. Finding a group to meet with for encouragement, prayer, spiritual direction, friendship, and general support on your faith walk can make a big difference in your life.

A list of reunion groups currently meeting is available from the post weekend chair ([postweekendchair@gnvdc.org](mailto:postweekendchair@gnvdc.org)) As groups change disband, and form, you can help us by updating your information.

If you do not currently have a reunion group, prayerfully consider joining or starting one. The Holy Spirit often works through our personal relationships. A reunion group is one way to be open to the working of the Spirit in your life.

Keep in mind:

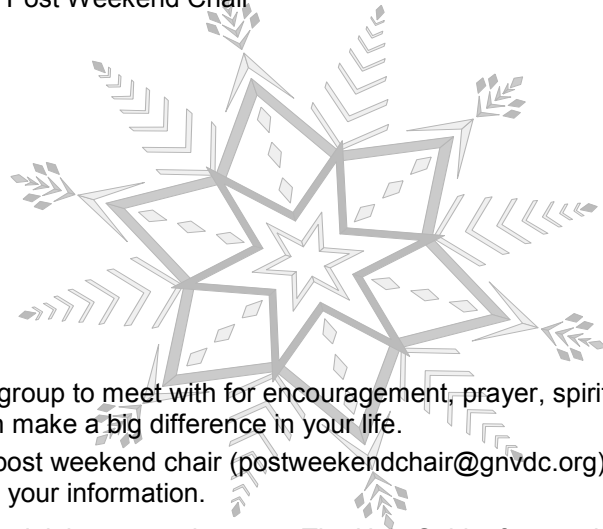
- \* Reunion groups usually are made up of 3-5 members. This allows ample time for everyone to share in about an hour.
- \* Conversations focus on piety, study and action. Use the card you received on your weekend as a guide—but don't view it as a checklist. It is meant to help us see where we are active, and where our practices could use more growth.
- \* Not every member of a reunion group needs to have made a weekend. Any Christian friend can benefit from sharing in this kind of relationship. If you have a hard time finding a group, ask some friends from your church to start one. Maybe they'll make a weekend at a later date. Maybe not. For now focus on supporting each other.
- \* The term reunion group can seem cliquish to some folks. Call it a prayer group, an accountability group, or a Christian life group (especially if your meeting will show up on a church building use calendar.) Whatever you call it, the purpose of the group is still the same.

- There is a marked difference in the conversation on the car ride home after clausura. The conversations with those whom I have sponsored when not on team have been more animated, since the ride home is their first opportunity to share their experience with someone who was not there. This conversation with the sponsor can help to reinforce the message of the weekend for the participant. In my experience, there is less sharing when the weekend has been experienced together. **My** being exhausted after serving may have factored into this difference also!
- I have felt more connected to the community when serving as a sponsor on weekends when I have not been called to team.

Members of the community can, and should, be sponsoring participants when they are not serving on team. Our weekends need the entire community, not just team members, to be engaged in our weekends in order for them to be successful! The time to start praying about who to invite as participants for our upcoming Spring Weekend is **NOW**... while our new Rectors are praying about who to call to team!

GLYASDI!

Penny Jongeward  
Post Weekend Chair



## A Word From Our Lay Director

**God loves us so much that he gave his only son that we might have eternal life. What are we willing to give in return?**



**Christ is counting on you...**

While meditating on a topic to write about in this newsletter a couple things came to mind and both were subjects that I was presented with in this last week. One was about the beatitudes, and the other is having an ear open to God's call.

The Beatitudes are the parts in the Gospel that go like, blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are the meek, the merciful, those who mourn, the peacekeepers, and so on. This is so much against what society would say we should be. Society says we need to think about ourselves, we need to look out for number one. If we grab life by the horns we will win. Even if it means we have to hurt others to do it.

The beatitudes call us to not think of ourselves. They are all about teaching us what Jesus did, to love each other. And when we meditate on these things we should be called to change our hearts, to help our brothers and sisters, to lead our friends the one who calls us to "love each other as I have loved you". Let us not be afraid, but rather be bold when it comes to sharing our love of each other.

This leads me to my second idea, our calling. God loves us so much that he gave his only son that we might have eternal life. What are we willing to give in return? Where are we called to respond? To whom will you share this good news?

Perhaps it is serving at your church, inviting your family and friends to services, serving on a team, calling a friend to participate on a weekend. *Please pray about where you are called and make it a point to stretch yourself.* God will be blessed and so will you. My rule of thumb is that if I hear what might be a call in more than one place, then maybe the call is from God and I would do well to listen to it.

Lord, make us to be bolder than the ones serving Satan. Protect us, lead us, and Lord may your will be done.

God Loves You and So Do I,  
Jack Eggenberger  
Lay Director GNVDC

## National Lutheran Secretariat 2016

Each summer, leaders from Via de Cristo movements in the US gather for a national meeting. In 2016, Good News! Via de Cristo will be hosting this event the weekend of July 21-24! We anticipate 200 people to participate—and it's our job to make the weekend a great experience!

There are plenty of opportunities to help with this project. If you can help with transportation, worship, music, office and communications, greeting and hospitality—or any other area a large event like this needs, contact Tracy Schmidlin to be connected with a service team! (tzvdc@aol.com)

There are positions that organize things ahead of time, people needed to be on site through the entire weekend, things that can be done for one day or one evening, supplies to be donated.... **There are many ways to use your gifts!**

**For example:** The hospitality committee for this year's NLS Gathering could use your help. We are responsible for making

our guests comfortable and providing snacks throughout the weekend. We would like to provide a variety of snacks, including sugar-free and gluten-free. Ideally we would like as many as possible to be donated.

This is where you come in. If you know of any company or store (or reunion group) that may be willing to donate individually packaged snacks or bulk baked goods, we would appreciate your help in contacting these people. Normally corporations plan their charitable giving in the first couple months of the year so it would be imperative for you to contact them ASAP. The actual dates of the NLS Gathering are Thursday, July 21 through Sunday, July 24, 2016. We would not want to obtain the food too early because of expiration dates. This would have to be conveyed to the company. An added perk would be to get items that are "Made in Michigan" or "Made in Ohio" to highlight some of the great items that our states have to offer.

### National Lutheran Secretariat Gathering

JULY 21-24, 2016  
Lourdes University in Sylvania, OH

To volunteer or for information contact:  
Tracy Schmidlin tzvdc@aol.com

To register contact:  
Debbie Maxwell  
mrsdebbie228@msn.com



## GOOD NEWS! VIA DE CRISTO

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*Christ is counting on you!*



## Upcoming Events For Your Calendar

### Winter Ultreya

**Sunday, January 31, 2016**

**3:00-6:00 pm.**

Emmanuel Lutheran Church

34567 Seven Mile Rd

Livonia, MI

Ultreya is a great way to stay connected. We will hear a speaker talk about their fourth day, spend some time in small group conversation, sing, pray, and share a meal together. All are welcome.

Please bring a dish to share as you are able.

### Spring Weekends

Men's and Women's weekends held at:

St. Michael Lutheran Church

5790 W Temperance Rd

Ottawa Lake, MI

#### **Men's #58**

April 14-17, 2016

Application Deadline: April 4

#### **Women's #58**

April 21-24, 2016

Application Deadline: April 11

### Spring Post-Weekend Ultreya

**May 15, 2016 3:00-6:00 p.m.**

St. Michael Lutheran Church in  
Ottawa lake

