



The

November 2016, Volume 44, Issue 1

Rooster Crows



From the Lay Director

Greetings! I would like to introduce myself: my name is Lisa Carpenter and I am the Lay Director for the Iowa Lutheran Secretariat. My husband Jim and I live in Milford, IA. Both of us enjoy coming back year after year to serve, rekindle friendships, and witness how God is moving in each other's lives. It's a great way to start a new year!



Lisa Carpenter

The Iowa Lutheran Secretariat is made up of a group of men and women that have gone through the Via de Cristo weekend. The responsibility of the Secretariat is to help select Rectors for the weekends, maintain the budget, distribute the Rooster Crows newsletter and, most importantly, pray for the movement. Currently we meet once a year in March and all are invited to take part in the Secretariat meetings. Information on dates and times can be found on our website, www.iowavdc.com. I'm excited to see where God is leading us!

Our Rectors, Tom James and Kim Weeks have been busy putting their teams together and planning the weekends. They have scheduled practice talks for Nov. 5th and Nov. 19th. As the teams are preparing, I am asking for you to prayerfully consider who you are going to invite to this Via de Cristo weekend. Keep asking, as sometimes there are many "no's" before a "yes." Please send those applications to Cryss Quanbeck, 2404 Lakeside Ave., Milford, IA 51351. The applications can be found on the website.

I hope to see you in January!

Blessings,

—Lisa Carpenter, Lay Director,
Iowa Lutheran Secretariat



Happy THANKS-giving!

From the Women's Rector

Greetings! What a beautiful time of year this is! The changing colors & the cool evenings are wonderful! Along with this time of year comes the busy-ness of harvest, fall clean-up, kids' activities and holiday preparations. While these things are all good, they can draw us away from what's really important – seeking God and enjoying the peace & rest only He can offer. The verse from Isaiah 26:3 has been playing in my mind, *"You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in You; all whose thoughts are fixed on You!"*

I feel this is what Via de Cristo does for so many each year – we refocus and fix our eyes and thoughts on God, and in return, He offers His peace, refreshment and renewal. We are then encouraged and ready to take this renewed spirit out to our environments and be a light to shine God's love. As preparations for the weekend continue, I pray that you are feeling the excitement of coming together with brothers and sisters to serve, reconnect, refocus and recharge and to share this gift with the Pilgrims. Be thinking of who you will ask this year! Praying for His peace to fill your hearts and lives as you trust and fix your thoughts on Him. Hope to see you in January!

—Kim Weeks, Women's Rector 2017



Men's Rector

¹Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. ²Worship the Lord with gladness; come into His presence with singing. ³Know that the Lord is God. It is He that made us, and we are His; we are His people, the sheep of His pasture. ⁴Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give Thanks to Him, bless His name. ⁵For the Lord is good; His steadfast love endures forever, and His faithfulness to all generations.

I think Psalm 100 is a beautiful summary of our upcoming Via de Cristo weekend. These words remind me of the singing, worship, praise, fellowship and fun, that we experience all weekend. This experience is just too good to not share with others. I pray that pilgrim (candidates) will answer the call to "Come and See" for themselves January 12 through 15. Please pray about potential candidates and ask for the Holy Spirit to work within each of them, so that they will take that leap of faith and join us for the weekend.

Our team is assembled. I think we have a great mix of experienced and new team members. I love seeing how the Holy Spirit is working amongst these men. Each person has answered God's call to impact our weekend. Please pray for our team members so that our hands may carry out God's work!

I cordially invite those who have gone through Via de Cristo to come back and serve on Palanca. Palanca is a great experience and a great way to meet and get to know others. From Proverbs 27:17; *As iron sharpens iron, so does man strengthen man.* This community of good men is unbelievable. Jesus commands us to love our neighbor as our self. There is no better way to love your brother than to serve him.

I can't wait to see everyone in January.

God's Peace to you,

—Tom James

Inside The Rooster Crows

Page 2 - I Just Got Out of Prison
Page 2 - Treasurer's Notes
Page 2 - How to Donate
Page 3 - Palanca
Page 3 - Men's Spiritual Director
Page 3 - Weekend listings (Palanca)
Page 4 - Okobojo 2017 Teams
Page 4 - ILS Contact Information

Spiritual Director's Thoughts

I Just Got Out of Prison

Yes, I was in prison. My experience there is always physically and emotionally draining, but spiritually exhilarating. Last week, I went to prison for four days at North Central Correctional Facility in Rockwell City, a minimum security prison. Though it is a bit unsettling to watch and hear the huge barbwire gate lock shut behind me, I found that the men inside are beautiful souls who have the same hopes and dreams, human emotions and basic needs as any of us. I went as a part of a team of pastors and lay men and women leading a spiritual retreat called "Brothers in Blue." Our team was ecumenical, made up of Lutherans, Baptists, Methodists, Assemblies, Catholics, and various other Christian denominations.

The retreat is conducted in cooperation with The Church of the Damascus Road, a Lutheran congregation made up of prisoners, led by prisoners, pastored by the Rev. Paul Stone, an ELCA pastor of the Western Iowa Synod. The Christian messages originated as part of the Cursillo movement within the Roman Catholic Church in 1947. The different 'talks' presented are the same as those used at the Via de Cristo retreats held annually in January at Okoboji Lutheran Bible Camp in Wahpeton, Iowa.

From early morning until well past the setting sun, each day is full of worship and holy communion, singing, listening to and discussing Christian messages, prayer, music, fellowship, and food. The food is not 'good' but there is plenty of it, especially if one likes bologna or turkey sandwiches, casseroles, or prison bean dish. Smile.

As I said, the men in prison are beautiful souls, loved by God our Father, but who have obviously lost their way. The vast majority struggle with various addictions which led them to do 'stupid' stuff. Desperate people do desperate things. Most come from broken homes and dysfunctional families. Some have never heard the message of Jesus Christ, only using his name as an expletive. Some have never been inside a church, never been in Sunday School or worship, or received holy communion. However, others know the Bible inside out, probably better than I do. All crave love, a sense of belonging, forgiveness and new beginnings. Hope is always a precious commodity.

The Spirit stirred many powerful, wonderful things. This fall, we had over thirty men complete the retreat. Of those, two confessed faith in Jesus Christ for the first time and requested holy Baptism. Fourteen more, having been previously baptized, reaffirmed their faith and commitment to follow Jesus publically. In addition, many men in prison, having attended Brothers in Blue previously, supported the retreat in prayer and with messages of encouragement to their fellow inmates. All totaled, about ten percent of the whole prison population were involved.

We praise God for the lives that were changed by God's grace! We praise God for those who came to faith in Jesus for the first time. We go hoping God will use our witness to change lives, but in truth, we are the ones who are changed.

Jesus said simply, "I was in prison and you visited me..." [Matthew 25:36]

—Pastor Lee Laaveg



Pastor Lee Laaveg



Treasurer's Notes

Time is the element by which we measure our daily, monthly, and even yearly schedules. We refer to the participant's time when running races in **seconds**, baking various foods in different amounts of **minutes**, wages for our works of labor paid in dollars per **hour**, we keep our **daily** routines by organizing family member obligations, appointments, etc. often on a **weekly** or even **monthly** basis, **yearly** events mark our calendars with special dates like Christmas, Easter, July 4th, and Thanksgiving. Another year rolls around faster than the last, each of us looking for more 'time'!



Sorry to inform you, but all of us are extended the same length of time per day/month/year. Therefore I trust you have enjoyed this precious gift and you have used it with honor. Philippians 1:6 says, "being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus". When God starts a project, he completes it. Remember, don't let your busy schedule rob you of the joy of knowing Christ and that he promises to finish the work he has begun through and in you — participate in Via de Cristo weekends in January 2017 and get several pilgrims' signatures. God's grace will help you grow through being available!!

May the 4th Day Community be blessed through their continued financial support in being a blessing to others.

—Bonnie Sleezer, Treasurer

Want to Donate?

If you wish to make a donation to the Iowa Lutheran Secretariat for Via de Cristo, please make checks payable to Iowa Lutheran Secretariat and mail to: Bonnie Sleezer, Treasurer, 110 490th Street, Aurelia, IA 51005.



The Rooster Crows

Volume 44.1 November 2016

The official newsletter of the Iowa Lutheran Secretariat for Via de Cristo, affiliated with the National Lutheran Secretariat for Via de Cristo.

Published to bring news of the weekends, secretariat meetings and business of the ILS.

If you would like to receive this newsletter via email, just send your name and email address to:

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CDLng@aol.com

Also available for download at:

www.iowavdc.com

Palanca

Write a note to the events below to let the pilgrims know you are praying and sacrificing to “lever” their weekend.

ILS Weekends

Brothers in Blue at NCCF Rockwell City, March 2-5, 2017. Send palanca messages to Pastor Paul Stone, 239 North 11th Street, Fort Dodge, IA 50501. paulestone@aol.com

Brothers in Blue at NCF Newton, March 30-April 2, 2017. Send palanca messages to Rick Admiraal, 1002 Main Street, Pella IA 50219. PastorRick@newlife-prison.org

Brothers in Blue at MOCF Mount Pleasant, April 20-23, 2017. Send palanca messages to Robert Smythe. smythebob316@gmail.com

Brothers in Blue at NCF Newton, September 7-10, 2017. Send palanca messages to Rick Admiraal, 1002 Main Street, Pella IA 50219. PastorRick@newlife-prison.org

Brothers in Blue at FDCF Fort Dodge, June 1-4, 2017. Send palanca messages to Pastor Paul Stone, 239 North 11th Street, Fort Dodge, IA 50501. paulestone@aol.com

Brothers in Blue at MOCF Mount Pleasant, September 21-24, 2017. Send palanca messages to Robert Smythe. smythebob316@gmail.com

Brothers in Blue at NCCF Rockwell City, October 5-8, 2017. Send palanca messages to Pastor Paul Stone, 239 North 11th Street, Fort Dodge, IA 50501. paulestone@aol.com

Brothers in Blue at FDCF Fort Dodge, December 7-10, 2017. Send palanca messages to Pastor Paul Stone, 239 North 11th Street, Fort Dodge, IA 50501. paulestone@aol.com

Iowa Lutheran VdC at Okoboji Lutheran Bible Camp, Men's: January 11-14, Women's: January 18-21, 2018. Send Palanca to: Steve & Theone Quattlebaum, 228 8th St SW, Spencer, IA 51301. steveq506@hotmail.com

Brothers in Blue at MPCF Mount Pleasant, [dates TBA], 2017. Send palanca messages to Bob Smythe, 1700 Maple Drive NW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52405. smythebob@msn.com

Men's Spiritual Director

Hello to you, my sisters and brothers in Christ! It was just one year ago that my family and I arrived in Badger, Iowa and were moved into the parsonage across the street from the church. It has been a blur of many activities that fill up the calendar. Yet, each day is a precious day that we receive. Each day is an opportunity to make a difference for someone — to bring comfort, assurance, & joy by your presence and your witness that indeed your life is different because you are child of God, baptized and adopted into the Lord's Family — saved by grace through Faith — it is the work of Jesus' salvation, and we give Him the credit.

It is interesting to reflect on the idea of “home”. Some of you I have known for years and for others I am a complete stranger, at least until I meet you. I am an Iowa boy — and most recently returned to Iowa after living in Alpena, Michigan for almost 5 years where I was pastor of Resurrection Lutheran Church. I am near the town where I lived from age 2 – 18 (Manson). It is familiar and I have a comfort and safe feeling in this setting of semi-rural NW Iowa. A few people in our congregation know my extended family members and their stories and shared experiences also give me that feeling of being “home”. But is this truly home?

I have seen the familiar banner or plaque that says, “Home is where the heart is.” I understand that sentiment to mean that whatever setting you live in is home, it doesn't matter if it is the physical place of your childhood or your where your parents raised you or not. I have lived in some other locations (Germany, Oklahoma, Guam, Minnesota and Michigan) and because of the people that became close friends and people that were like chosen family — it felt like home to me. There was a feeling of deep friendship- you could even describe it as the love of a family. But is that truly home?

The opposite of being home is a feeling of loneliness. Loneliness is a dangerous feeling. That extreme feeling of loneliness can leave a person who is even surrounded by people feeling depressed and deeply sad.

What is truly home? Someone once said, “Jesus is the center of this home; a guest at every meal; a silent witness to every conversation.” I think that quote brings me closer to identify what is truly home. If Jesus is the center of your physical home and your physical home is not only better, but actually the best place to be because you invite Jesus to be present in your mealtimes, and your conversations — then I believe that Jesus is truly home.

The author, George MacDonald, said, “God's thoughts, his will, his love, his judgments are all man's home.”

Jesus said, “I am the Way, the Truth and The Life — no one comes to the Father except through me.” John 14:6

To bring this thought to a conclusion, I will state that other than a physical location and sometimes in spite of the physical location where you are or you must be — That our Almighty God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is our home. I believe that we have a longing for True Home within us. I believe that we will struggle with loneliness and its inherent dangers unless we are truly home with the Lord.

I think we need that daily reminder — a daily renewal of our faith relationship with the Lord to remain in that condition of “Truly Home.” What a feeling of peace and joy to have our life centered upon the Rock of our Salvation — Our Savior Jesus. I look forward to 2017 Via de Cristo weekends at Okoboji Lutheran Bible Camp — and know that Jesus — our True Home will be proclaimed.

—Pastor Scott Meier,
Badger Lutheran Church,
Badger, Iowa



Iowa VdC Website

The new Via de Cristo website is up and running! You can find it at www.iowavdc.com. The new site gives the secretariat better access to get things posted and/or changed. The pilgrim application for January 2014 is now available on the site and may be filled out on screen and then printed or saved and then emailed in. The website is a work in progress and information will be added or changed as needed. We do want to keep it current and easy to maintain. If anyone has suggestions, please feel free to contact Laurie Simington at blsimington@q.com or Dean Mechler at mechler@smunet.net.



Make a friend, be a friend, and ask that friend to sign up for a life-changing weekend at the Okoboji Lutheran Bible Camp in January,

January 14-17, 2017 Men's Team

Rector	Tom James	Leaders	Nick Magelee
1 st Assistant Rector	Ryan Blau	Christian Community	Al Vanderberg
2 nd Assistant Rector	Nate Meyer	Group Reunion	Tom James
Past Rector	Todd Nicholson	Auxiliary	Kyle Norris
Spiritual Rector	Scott Meier	Auxiliary	Todd Silliman
Ideal	Jarrett Valen	Palanca Rector	Joe Simington
Laity	Ryan Waltner	Music Rector	Dave Bennett
Piety	Dave Jenson	Conference Room Tech	Dean Mechler
Study	Dan Antoine	Kitchen Rector	Jeff Anderson
Apostolic Action	Brad Simington		

The Rooster Crows
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November 2016

January 21-24, 2017 Women's Team

Rector:	Kim Weeks	Auxilliary:	Ruby Nitzel
Assistant Rector:	Kathy Sindt	Auxilliary:	Shelly Robison
Assistant Rector:	Cryss Quanbeck	Auxilliary:	Angela Murray
Past Rector:	Lisa Carpenter	Auxilliary:	Chelsey Phipps
Spiritual Director:	Wendy VanTassel	Palanca Rector:	Andrea Crew
Ideal:	Karen Brandt	Assistant Palanca Rector:	Dee Vaage
Grace:	Donna Gray	Palanca Spiritual Director: ...	Chris Lang
Laity:	Sara Brock		
Grace in Action:	Chris Lang		
Piety:	Rachel Simington		
Study:	Allison Antoine		
Means of Grace:	Deb Mechler		
Apostolic Action:	Susan Christensen		
Obstacles to Grace:	TBA		
Leaders:	Laurie Simington		
Environment:	Michelle VerSteeg		
Life in Grace:	Wendy Van Tassell		
Christian Community:	Kris Behrens		
4th Day:	Kim Weeks		



Secretariat Contact Information

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Sara Brock	Secretary	mllsbrock@gmail.com
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Pastor Lee Laaveg	Spiritual Director	lee@smunet.net
Carroll & Judy Lang	Rooster Editors	CDLNg@aol.com