



The Taste

newsletter for Taste of Grace Via de Cristo

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Message from Lay Director

After much prayer and soul searching we have decided to move the campsite where we will be holding our weekends. The new site is the Dixon Valley Camp and Retreat Center and you can find them on the web at www.dixonvalley.com.

The good news is that we the pilgrims rooms and bathrooms, the rollo room and the chapel are all in the same building. The team has their own building with bathrooms. The bad news is that we have had to increase the price to \$115 per head. We all hope and pray that this will not prevent you from serving on future teams or scare pilgrims away from the weekend. If price is an issue please contact a member of the secretariat as we do have a limited number of scholarships available for both team and pilgrims.

If you can't serve on team we would love to see you at the send off, serenade and/or clausura. Please don't forget 4th Day are always welcome on-site to pitch in on an ad-hoc basis

or, even more importantly, spend some time in prayer in the chapel.

On January 10, 2004, we have our first Annual General Meeting. It will be held at Peach Lutheran Church in Morris at 5:30. We have open secretariat positions for Pre-Weekend and Post-Weekend Chairs. If you are interested in serving on the secretariat and have questions please call me at 815-834-1385 and I will be happy to answer anything you may ask.

God loves you and so do I,
Simon Prior

Lay Director, Taste of Grace

Prayers & Praises

- Pray for Taste of Grace Men's and Women's Weekend #3 – the secretariat, the rector and rectora for continued guidance and direction, team members for servant's hearts, sponsors as they bring others to Christ and pilgrims as they make a commitment to strengthen their relationship with Christ.
- Our prayers continue for the cursillistas from Taste of Grace #1 and #2 as they continue their 4th day journey. May they remember the mountaintop as they work in the hills and valley.
- Pray for Pastor Kathy Flores who has been sick for a couple of weeks. Pray that her strength and energy return so she can continue the tasks God has given her.
- Thank you Lord, for the beauty of winter – the sparkle of frost and the uniqueness of each snowflake.

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Happy New Year!

Prayers & Praises

- Pray for God's blessings on Gene and Lisa Vincent (Living Water VDC). They had a fire recently in their home and Gene has begun to work as an independent manufacturing rep.
- Ultimate Healer, please be with all those fighting cancer. Be with the patient for healing, with the medical profession for wisdom and with loved ones for comfort – be specifically with Vera, Anne and Stacey.
- As of today, Jim and I are officially the parents of 3 college students. A few years ago we would have been very depressed about the finances; today we are ELATED! Please keep all 3 in your prayers for focus in the classroom; especially Kevin and Kelly because they are going to school while working full time. God Loves You and So Do I, Sue Scruggs
- Please pray for our struggling congregations: Abundant Life Lutheran Church, Peace Lutheran Church and St. Luke's Lutheran Church.
- Please pray for my sister Marybeth, her husband John and their son Donovan who are moving to Hawaii so she can

take a teaching position. They will be away from family and friends in an unknown environment with a small child. Thanks – Donna Weaver

- Prayers are needed for Judy Richmond (LWVDC). Also keep her family Kurt and Nancy in your prayers.

Calendar of Events

Jan. 10, 1-4:30 pm - First team training for Weekend #3 at Peace Lutheran Church in Morris (directions on page 4)

Jan. 10, 5:30 pm - Ultreya & Annual General Meeting at Peace Lutheran Church in Morris

March - TOG Ultreya

April 22 - 25 - Spring Taste of Grace VDC Men's Weekend #3

April 29 – May 2 -Spring Taste of Grace VDC Women's Weekend #3

May – TOG Ultreya

July (date TBD) - NLS Annual Meeting in TN

Nov. 4 – 7 – Fall Taste of Grace VDC Men's Weekend #4

Nov. 11 – 14 - Fall Taste of Grace VDC Women's Weekend #4

Secretariat Meetings held the 4th Sunday of each month.

Wrap-ups from TOG Weekends #2

Bah Humbug! T'is the season and all that.

Sometimes we get so wrapped up in ourselves that our feelings and our spirit reflect this sentiment. We forget that what we are really celebrating is a birthday of a child. It is not the birth of God or even the birth of the Son for they like the Spirit were from the beginning, but rather, it is the time when God chose to become man and start the new covenant with us. We celebrate the birth of God made man and the new beginning that it ushers in.

Taste of Grace also is a new beginning and attempts to help us understand the new covenant and the new relationship we have with our Heavenly Father. God's unending grace provided a wonderful team of Christian men for Taste of Grace#2 and His mercy provided candidates ready and willing to hear His message.

Now another new beginning is starting. Taste of Grace #3 with Bob and Deborah are laying the foundations for another renewal weekend.

My meditation and prayers this Christmas season are for all of God's people that we understand how special His gift to us is and that we take the opportunities offered to us to

renew our relationship with Him whenever we get the chance. To God go the glory now and forever.

Yours in Christ,
Larry Herrman
Rector Weekend #2

What a way to wind up a year. If you couldn't tell it wasn't me that put together a weekend like Taste of Grace #2. It's amazing how all the little details fall in to place. God is so awesome! I feel so small in God's infinite almighty plan.

It seems like after the weekend the year has flown by... Halloween, Thanksgiving and now our Savior's birthday is upon us. (like the blink of an eye). It makes a person think about James 4:14, "What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes."

My prayer for you, at this time of year, is to take some time each day and talk with your Lord. After the gift of God's Son, time is the most precious gift there is to offer.

God's blessings to you all,
LaDonna Strakis
Rectora Weekend #2

"Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him."

- Psalm 34:8

**Rector for
Men's Weekend #3
...meet Bob Deverick**

I attended Rainbow Via de Cristo weekend #19 in northern Virginia in the fall of 1990.

I attend Messiah Lutheran Church in Joliet, IL.

I am married to Karen for 29 years this February. We have a son, Rob and daughter-in-law, Kim. They live in New Jersey and have one child, our grand-daughter Kylie, who will be one year old this January. We have one daughter, Lisa, living at home with us. Lisa works at an independent assisted living center and will be attending Real Estate classes in January at the local Junior College.

Hobbies are few due to time constraints, but I putter around the house and read a bit.

My life verse is 2 Corinthians 5:17. "If any one is in Christ they are a new creation. Old things have passed away; behold all things have become new."

This is very encouraging to me. It reminds me that although I am a mess, I am still loved and forgiven. I can start fresh each day. I am in great company. I would pass that encouragement on to others. Each day is new from the sunrise to the sunset and all that occurs in-between. New is God's gift to us.

**Rectora for
Women's #3
...meet Deborah
Herrman**

I attended Living Water Via de Cristo Weekend #6.

My family and I attend Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Seneca, IL.

My husband is Larry and we have 2 sons, Tyce age 13 and Grant age 10.

Hobbies included horses, music, perennial gardening and reading.

3 Short & Funnies

An ad for a Church has a picture of two hands holding stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments are inscribed and a headline that reads, "For fast, fast, fast relief, take two tablets."

Q. Why did Moses wander in the desert for 40 years?
A: Even then men wouldn't ask for directions!

An elderly lady was well-known for her faith and for her boldness in talking about it. She would stand on her front porch and shout "PRAISE THE LORD!"

Next door to her lived an atheist who would get so angry at her proclamations he would shout, "There ain't no Lord!!!"

Hard times set in on the elderly lady, and she prayed for GOD to send her some assistance. She stood on her porch and shouted "PRAISE THE LORD. GOD I NEED FOOD!! I AM HAVING A HARD TIME. PLEASE LORD, SEND ME SOME

GROCERIES!!" The next morning the lady went out on her porch and noted a large bag of groceries and shouted, "PRAISE THE LORD."

The neighbor jumped from behind a bush and said, "Aha! I told you there was no Lord. I bought those groceries, God didn't." The lady started jumping up and down and clapping her hands and said, "PRAISE THE LORD. He not only sent me groceries, but He made the devil pay for them. Praise the Lord!"



Taste of Grace VDC Secretariat

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Pre-Weekend

Position open – see job duties listed below

Weekend

Ed Walter
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Post-Weekend

Position open – see job duties listed below

Pre-Weekend Chair

1. Distributes, receives and processes candidate applications
2. Functions as registrar for the weekend
3. Conducts send-off
4. Works with lay and spiritual directors for outreach
5. Provides candidate list to the rector, rectora, communications/ publicity coordinator & leaders coordinator (list includes home address, congregation, etc.)
6. Prepares newsletter articles as needed

Post-Weekend Chair

1. Arranges for 4th Day activities including reunion group opportunities

2. Organizes ultreyas, including obtaining a host/hostess for the event
3. Prepares newsletter articles when needed

Secretariat Report

The following report was from the meeting held on November 23, 2003.

Treasurer's report was discussed and is being prepared for Annual General Meeting which is scheduled for 1/10/04.

Supply kits have been given to Rector/Rectora for Weekends #3.

Property inventory will be taken 12/2/03.

Karen Deverick will handle e-mail communication in Donna Weaver's absence. Donna will continue with newsletter and website.

Reunion Groups

If you belong to a reunion group we need to hear from you. We are trying to keep a record of the following information:

- Day, time & place your group meets
- Name of people in your reunion group and their original VDC weekend

If you don't belong to a reunion group yet, let us help you find one in your area or connect you with someone else looking to join a group contact Donna Weaver for more details.

**Message from
the Editor**

“Greet all the saints in
Christ Jesus”
– Philippians 4:21

One of the things I have always enjoyed doing is writing letters. A few years ago my leisure activity became a ministry... a card ministry at church. I began expanding my normal territory of greetings, and well wishes to include my church family and friends. At first I had difficulty thinking of my passion as a “ministry” but one evening I was reading my devotional and it was a story about a woman who wrote many cards for her church. It talked about what a calling it was and how it was a blessing to the people that received her notes. It talked about what a commitment it took to do it. I began to consider my many notes in a different perspective. The devotion got me thinking of my cards as “palanca letters.” That night I decided to start praying for the people as I wrote their cards. This has not only focused my ministry but it has allowed me to move more deeply in to intercessory prayer. It’s amazing how a small enjoyment can become a ministry with a “nudge” from God.

I am sharing this thought because many of us have just gotten done with sitting down to quickly sign our names to many cards, just to get them in the mail in time to be received by

Christmas. It has been said “Christmas is the universal time when we make that special effort to connect with family and friends whom we don’t see on a regular basis. It is also one of the few times when non-Christian friends will allow Christians the freedom to remind them of Christ’s real presence in the world.”

Now that the holidays are over, let’s not forget to keep in touch with those friends and family. Why not go through some of the cards you received and pray for that person or family member. Send them a note, letting them know you’ve been thinking of them.

You may even want to ask God if you should extend an invitation to that person for the Spring Weekend.

Remember the true spirit of Christmas is not about spending and it doesn’t end in December, it’s about giving – from the heart.

I hope you have enjoyed this issue of “The Taste.” Each month we strive to meet the needs of our Taste of Grace Via de Cristo community. If you would like to submit newsletter items please contact me.



Shalom,
Donna Weaver, Editor

**Database
Maintenance Form**

Please PRINT your name and check appropriate box, then PRINT new information in space provided.

Name:

Change of address

New Address:

Updated Info

Email:

Other:

**Delete me from
your mailing list.**

Effective date of change:

*Send all forms to:
Donna Weaver
905 Old Magnolia Drive
Conway, SC 29526*