

January 2010  
Arkansas-Oklahoma Lutheran Secretariat  
Via de Cristo



**Peace and grace to you, my brothers and sisters in Christ!**

**Today is Christmas and as we celebrate the birth of our Lord with family and friends, our hearts are joined in prayers and thoughts. We pray for each other and pray for the world and feel the bond of the call to be faithful in our fourth day.**

**The A-Ok Secretariat is requesting that we all set aside some time again when we all are praying and focusing our minds on Christ and His will for our world, our ELCA, our synod, our fourth day community, our church, our lives. We ask that beginning January 6th, Epiphany, and during the week following that the entire A-Ok Fourth Day Community pray intentionally and with a listening ear and heart for the will of Christ to be revealed and done in His world.**

**Because the heart of all palanca is prayer, we ask that your palanca for the week of January 6 through January 12th be intentional prayer with your fourth day groups and during your daily prayer times.**

**Let us begin on Epiphany with laying our prayers before the Lord as the Magi lay their gifts before Him. Let us pray for this world to which He came --- for the will of Christ to be manifest, that His will be done. Let us continue with the following days of laying our hearts open to Him and laying all the cares of our hearts before Him:**

**January 7th    prayers for the ELCA**

**January 8th    prayers for the synod**

**January 9th prayers for the Via de Cristo and the Fourth Day Community**

**January 10th prayers for our church**

**January 11th prayers for our lives and His purpose**

**January 12th prayers for the will of the Lord and for our acceptance of His will and His plan.**

Sometimes it seems easy to ask the Lord for our will and our desires to be granted during our prayers and to ask for our wants to be met. This time period of prayer is for us to put aside our desires and wants and intentionally place our eyes and ears and hearts on the desires of Christ and to listen to His will for us.

This is a wonderful palanca given to our King and my heart looks forward to the time soon that we are again bound together in heart and might for the glory of God.

In Christ's love,

**Becky Del Rio  
Palanca Coordinator**

### **Upcoming dates to remember**

January 23, 2010 – Secretariat Meeting, St. Scholastica, Fort Smith, AR

March 18-21, 2010 – Weekend #25, Catholic Pastoral Center, Oklahoma City, OK

October 21-24, 2010 – Weekend #26, St. Scholastica, Fort Smith, AR

## Greetings from the Lay director

Grace and Peace to all my Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I hope that 2010 brings only good things to you all year.

At the Ultreya for weekend 24 we elected new secretariat members. First of all, let me say a big Thank You to the members that have served their terms. We will miss you but know that the 4<sup>th</sup> day community voted in great replacement.

Carol Hoadley, served 4 years as secretary, Pastor Jonathan Litzner, served 3&1/2 years as Oklahom S.D. (finished Pastor Carl Hoffman's term) and Dorothy Bambrick, served 2 years as Leadership Trainer. I want to give a big Thank You to Carolyn Richardson, who agreed to serve another 2 years as pre-weekend coordinator. Now let us welcome the new members to the secretariat. Helen Widner will be the new secretary, Pastor Russ Lambert, Oklahoma S.D., Tina Smith, Leadership Trainer, and Dorothy Bambrick as Lay Director Elect. We have a planning meeting on January 23, 2010, to plan the direction we want to take in 2010, if anyone has anything to bring up please send me an e-mail and I will get it on the agenda.

At the Ultreya we also voted on a new updated version of our logo. Thanks to Jean Wuerdeman and Cindy Bray for submitting samples for the 4<sup>th</sup> day community to vote on. We will have the new logo up on the web site soon ([www.aokviadecristo.org](http://www.aokviadecristo.org)) and in the next newsletter.

Please remember to keep Dave Rollens and his team in your prayers as he prepares for Weekend 25. Via de Cristo Weekend 25 will be held at The Pastoral Care Center in Oklahoma City on March 18<sup>h</sup> through 21<sup>st</sup>. Please put the dates on your calendars now so you can attend the serenade and clusura.

Peace and Love  
Cindy Perkins  
Lay Director

### “Saying goodbye is hard to do”

The end of 2009 wasn't so good for our 4<sup>th</sup> day community. We lost a family member of one of our 4<sup>th</sup> day's members and a dear (unforgettable) member of our 4<sup>th</sup> day community.

Eldon and Leta Goeringer lost their oldest son, Eugene 38 on December 8<sup>th</sup>, and his services were on December 15<sup>th</sup>. We continue to pray that they feel the strong arms of our loving God hold them in his arms as they grieve, remember, laugh, and cry.



On December 13th, Phil Richardson was called to be with Jesus. He was flown to St. Francis hospital in Wichita Kansas after suffering a heart attack in November. Phil's service was on December 17<sup>th</sup> at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Ponca City. I for one will miss his big beautiful smiling face, his sense of humor and his orneriness. I have been reminded why it is so great having and knowing the network of people we have through Via de Cristo. Don and Gay Burch, who live in Wichita Kansas, opened their house for Carolyn to stay on the nights she stayed over. Gay cooked Thanksgiving dinner for Carolyn and her family so they could be close to Phil. Patti, Judy and Tom Johnson sat with Carolyn and family while Phil had by-pass surgery and both Patti and Gay sent their pastors to the hospital to pray with Phil before his surgery. This is what I believe is having “the heart of Jesus” taking time to help our brothers and sisters with whatever is needed. Phil, May you rest in Peace, we love and miss you.

## Oklahoma Fourth Day

Greetings Brothers and Sisters in Christ. Weekend #25 is fast approaching and God is preparing for an awesome experience. Remember to PRAY first, last and always. If you only do one thing for the weekend make it PRAYER. My prayer is that each one of you is involved in a Fourth Day Group. Remember the group does not need to be large. I am in a group with four others. My friend Carol who lives in Norman, I live in El Reno so we meet halfway in OKC. Then The Father, Son, And Holy Spirit make up our group. When I moved to El Reno there was not a group close to me but I know how important the Fourth Day is to keep me connected and accountable. We can all make it work. If you need help forming a group please call me. I am here to serve you the Fourth Day Community.

Sharing God's Love with You,  
Tammy Weimer

Remember to attend Candlelight Serenade and Closura. Reservations at Charleston's just down the road from the Pastoral Center at 5:30 for all to meet for a meal and fellowship before Serenade. Place this on your calendar now and make the commitment.

Charleston's Restaurant

[5907 NW Expressway](#)

5:30 pm

Click on the address above and it will link you to a map to the restaurant

### Reaching out.....

Happy New Year!

In a few short weeks we will have new brochures ready to distribute – to congregations, to friends, to anyone! Reaching out!

Are you wearing your cross? I met a man at a funeral recently who noticed mine – he had been a Walk to Emmaus participant! What a great conversation starter!

Your Secretariat is working to get the good news of Via de Cristo out to the public, but we count on you to help. Talk to your friends about the wonderful opportunity Via de Cristo provides, after talking to God first!

With prayers for a healthy and happy new year,  
Lisa Milzarek  
Outreach

## Arkansas Fourth Day

### Greetings 4th Day Members -

So we have just started 2010. It was 10 years ago this year that we both attended our weekends. I can't believe it has been that long. Along with New Years most people make resolutions. I googled the top ten resolutions and you know that most people vow to lose weight, stop smoking, exercise more, etc. So as a Via de Cristo community it would be great to add a few of our own to this top ten list. When you look at the three areas of the green card perhaps make one resolution for each area. Is there something you should do better in Piety? (do you pray before meals, have devotions, worship and communion?) What about Study? (is it time to start a bible study or spend more time in the word?) Then there is Action. (are you sharing in your environment or helping those in need?)

So think about what Via de Cristo resolutions you will make for this year. Plug into a 4th day group too and continue your prayer palanca for Dave and staff for this upcoming weekend as well as who God is calling as a pilgrim.

Many Blessings  
Jona and Deb Sweeten

Also...continuing from my last post with recipes here is one of my new favorites!

#### Cake Balls

1 Cake Mix

1 Can of Frosting

1 package of Almond Bark

Bake cake according to directions on the box. Allow to cool for five minutes and crumble in a bowl. Add frosting to the mixture until totally blended. Refrigerate to harden. Roll into quarter size balls. Refrigerate to firm. Melt Almond Bark in microwave safe glass bowl stirring regularly to prevent scorching. Dip cake balls into melted almond bark and place on waxed paper until hardened. Serve.

\*Use any cake mix and frosting combination. My favorites are (Cherry/Cherry, Lemon/Lemon, Rainbow Chip/Rainbow Chip all dipped in white almond bark)

Check out our website at [www.aokviadecristo.org](http://www.aokviadecristo.org) if you haven't in awhile. You can find information on weekends happening around the country as well as the brochure and registration forms.

If you did not receive a newsletter recently by email, then either we have no email address for you or the one we have is incorrect. If you would like to receive the newsletter by email and you haven't, please send me an email.

Peace in Christ,  
Lizbeth Huggins  
lizbeth\_vdc\_comm@swbell.net

Treasurer's Report November 30, 2009

<b>Checkbook Balance September 30, 2009:</b>	<b>\$5,473.58</b>
Income in October	+1,475.00
Income in November	+4,190.47
Expenses in October	- 2,045.19
Expenses in November	- <u>6,714.15</u>
<b>Checkbook balance November 30, 2009:</b>	<b>\$2,379.71</b>

<b>Savings balance September 30, 2009:</b>	<b>\$5,989.85</b>
Income in October	+ 820.98
Income in November	+2,300.00
Interest paid	+ <u>4.17</u>
<b>Savings balance September 30, 2009:</b>	<b>\$9,115.00</b>

**Combined Total November 30, 2009: \$11,494.71**

### **Weekend 24 Income/Expense Report**

#### **Income**

<b>Source</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Staff Registration		4550.00
Participant Registration		2100.00
APT Registration		1925.00
Closura Offering		242.00
Fourth Day Groups and Individual Palanca	Men's Friday Morning 4 <sup>th</sup> Day – Rogers, AR; Helen Widner; Nueva Dia 4 <sup>th</sup> Day – Rogers, AR; Faithwalkers 4 <sup>th</sup> Day – Rogers, AR; Pr Dick & Joyce Jebson	359.62
REFUNDS	From Food Team; Rector's CHA; From Food CHA; APT	458.65
Scholarship Gifts *	Fellowship, Tulsa, OK	100.00
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>9735.27</b>

#### **Expenses**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	<b>Amount</b>
St. Scholastica		5,380.00
Food & Drink	Staff Meetings Weekend Treats	415.16
Palanca Supplies	Bags, etc.	0
Staff Training/Rector expenses/photos	Rector Expenses	278.58
APT	Supplies & Food	200.00
Rector's Bell		35.00
Postage & supplies	palanca	94.99
Food Team		953.25
Scholarships Awarded		625.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>7981.98</b>

**Weekend 24 Income \$ 9,735.27**

**Weekend 24 Expense - \$ 7,981.98**

**Net Gain \$ 1,753.29**

Blessings to you, my dear Via de Cristo family!

I am so proud of all of us for what we have done this year. Many thanks to Rosann and Eddie Quilty for their generous challenge gifts to our Scholarship fund. The Quilts' dream of providing scholarships to ALL Pilgrims comes closer to a reality with every matching gift.

We matched their first \$1,000 challenge and they have now gifted us with another \$1,000 challenge. Please keep their challenge in mind as you figure your taxes and plan where to spend your IRS refunds!

The three weekends that we held in 2009 all ended in the black, but the Secretariat determined that the most costly weekend proved to be our summer weekend. Therefore beginning in 2010 we are returning to holding 2 weekends a year, Spring in Oklahoma City and Fall in Fort Smith. Our Food Teams have proven that our 4<sup>th</sup> Day Members can cook! We will continue the Food Team for all of our Fort Smith Weekends.

Something that has really caught the imagination of our members has been our "Two by Two" campaign. Our members have been generous and creative in providing not only Green Palanca, but also Snack Palanca, Water Palanca, and also Table Palanca. Yes, our 4<sup>th</sup> Day gifted us with 6 round tables to be used in the Fort Smith Rollo Room.

Yes, it has been a good year. God has provided through the 4<sup>th</sup> Day Community, all our needs and we look forward to 2010 with great anticipation.

De Colores! Barbara Bambrick

## A History of A-OK Via de Cristo

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

De Colores! As we come upon another Via de Cristo weekend in October, I would like to remind all of the **past rectors** that the AR/OK Via de Cristo Secretariat recently decided to develop a record of everything from the past weekends. I am beginning the process of collecting all of those materials from each Weekend in one place to be used as a history of AR-OK Via de Cristo. The information will be available to see how we have changed and for use by future Rectors. That is where I can use your help. For now, **I am asking all of the past Rectors and APT Rectors** to please send me the information listed below. It can be sent to me by email, or if you wish, by mail on a CD, flash drive or, if you don't have that, you can send me copies of what you do have by mail. My email address is [wellsaid@sbcglobal.net](mailto:wellsaid@sbcglobal.net) and my home address is 1700 Martha Drive, Little Rock, AR, 72212

**The items we would like to have are:** Dates of the Weekend you were rector for and trainings (and where they were held), Rollo Room staff list, Pilgrim list, APT list, Food Team list (if there was one), Weekend theme and corresponding scriptures, Weekend logo, Banner, Song and lyrics, Schedules, Table names and who sat at each table, Pictures from each Weekend with names and name of who took the pictures, Training and Weekend worship programs.

If you have any other suggestions on what to add, please let me know. I would also like to try to put together a history of who served on the secretariat staff through the years. If you have that information, or records of past newsletters, I would appreciate that too. Hopefully most of this information is available on your computers so you can email it to me, but I do have a scanner if the information needs to be scanned in. Thank you for any help you can give me!

Blessings to you all,  
Bonnie Wells



Dear Friends in Christ and 4<sup>th</sup>-Day Sisters and Brothers:

First let me say how honored I am to have been asked to serve as the Oklahoma Spiritual Director for the Arkansas-Oklahoma Lutheran Secretariat. Being a “new” pastor, this came as an unexpected call. Most of you know that I did not take the “traditional” route into ordination. I came in through a process called “Theological Education for Emerging Ministries,” TEEM for short. In that process, I served as the pastoral caregiver for two Western Oklahoma congregations during my theological studies. In essence, I was the “pastor” without having the official title. After my theological studies and approval by the Candidacy Committee, I was ordained on May 30, 2009. That is why I say that I am a “new” pastor.

In March 2004, I was privileged to make my pilgrimage on weekend #9 at the Catholic Pastoral Center in Oklahoma City. I sat at the table of Beautiful Savior where Dave Rollens and Sterling Nelson were my table leaders. I made the comment early in that weekend that I thought God was calling me to ministry, and that I would “go right now if God would show me the way.” Little did I know that God was doing just that!

I personally found GRACE during my weekend. When I say I found grace, I mean that I learned what grace really was. I learned that God had always been showing me grace but I was too blind to see it. What a gift! I couldn't hold it in and my table leaders had to "rein me in" a little. Piety, Study, and Action made sense now. That was my response to God's great gift of grace. So let me see if I can say that another way.

*As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Col 3:12-17 NRSV)*

No one would dare get up in the morning and walk out of the house to go to work, the mall, anywhere without first putting on your clothes. The "emperor's new clothes" would be noticed immediately. Society dictates that we cover our nakedness, at least a little. Spending time in prayer will clothe us in compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. This clothing comes from love – that gift of grace from God.

Also most of us wouldn't dare leave the house more than a day without a shower. Again, society dictates that we not share our body odor with others. And usually we try to hide our sins – our dirt. So when we Study, we "let the word of Christ dwell" in us. When we bathe ourselves in the word of Christ, we can find cleansing from our dirt. As we spend time in the word, we find resources (of GRACE) that help us to steer away from the dirt of sin and helps us to move away from our own pet sins. All this is the power of the Holy Spirit working through the word and in our lives. Again, what a gift!

Finally, when we find God's gift of grace in our lives, it's hard to be quiet about that. "And whatever you DO, in word or deed, DO everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." DO=ACTION! So when you are asking (during your piety) for God to plant a name in your heart, DO that in the name of the Lord Jesus. When name comes to you, make and be a friend in the name of Christ. And give thanks to God when "through [Jesus]" Christ reveals himself to your friend. It's all God's work! Amen!

*In Christ,*

*Russ Lambert*

In October, I received a letter from Fourth Day Community member Betty Stehr, of Clinton, Oklahoma. She has asked me to share her story with you. Betty writes:

I would like to share some, what I like to call "miraculous healing" that happened to me. In November of 2008, my mother had knee surgery at the Jackson County Hospital in Altus, OK. She had the surgery on a Monday and my daughter and I were going to see her on Tuesday. Upon the way to see her coming from Lone Wolf, OK, from her house where we were staying, we stopped at a Dollar Store because my daughter wanted to get her grandmother a present. After parking and getting out of the car and proceeding to go to the store, I tripped on a parking pole and fell on my stomach and face. I tried to get up but was unsuccessful. I did not know what exactly I had hurt. I busted my lip and had gravel in my mouth. My daughter started hollering for help to help her mother get up but I could not. Fortunately, a lady with a small child came to my aid and asked me if she should call an ambulance. I said yes and she did. I was hurting so bad that I didn't even realize when the ambulance got there. All I can remember is when they turned me over on my back, my left leg hurt something really bad. The EMT felt of it and told me the large bone was broken. I was hysterical. I screamed so loud that everyone could hear me. Before I knew it, I was in the emergency room, crying because I did not know what was going to happen. My daughter was also crying and kept telling me she wanted to stay with me in the hospital. So after I was admitted and settled in a room my daughter stayed with me for the duration of the 2 weeks I was there. Oh, yes, I did have surgery on November 22 and spent Thanksgiving in the hospital. During all of this my mother was transferred to the hospital in Hobart, Oklahoma, where she would stay in order to receive physical therapy for her knee surgery. After my day of surgery, I stayed one week at the Altus hospital and then I was forced to leave because my insurance would not pay for any more days at Altus. So I decided to be transferred to the same hospital my mother was in, which was Hobart, and I could be her roommate because she had a semi-private room and it was okay with her to be there with her. I went there also to receive physical therapy.

Starting the first night that I was there I prayed really really hard for God to help heal my leg so I could go home. The doctor that did the surgery said it would take 8 months to a year to heal. But I fooled them all. With the help and healing hands of our Lord God Almighty, I started healing right away. I was in the Hobart hospital from the day after Thanksgiving to February 6, 2009. My mother got to go home in December and to keep doing PT at home with home health. Upon dismissal from the Hobart hospital I was told to go somewhere for home health help. So my mother insisted that I stay with her at her house in Lone Wolf, OK. She did not realize what she was asking for. I stayed with her from February 6<sup>th</sup> to April 18<sup>th</sup>. On that day my daughter and I packed the car and came back home to Clinton. It was really good to be home, even though I missed staying with my mother. But I had to push myself to get better and with God's help I did. I was improving every day and healing every day. I even got to the point of driving again. In May I started Aquatic Therapy (water therapy) here at Clinton. That really helped. Now I am still using a 4-prong cane and a lot of times I walk around my house without it, but do hold onto various things. My leg still hurts and probably will for the rest of my entire life but at least I can walk and drive and do things that I want to do even though I don't have a job. I am just blessed that God helped me heal and gave me the confidence that I could get better no matter how excruciating the PT was and how much pain I had.

My family wanted me to move to Lone Wolf but there were just too many complicating problems. I love my house here in Clinton and I need to be with my daughter. We all have our struggles but in the end it's the ones we love and be loved that count. My daughter and I have devotions every night before we go to bed, and it feels good knowing that you have God on your side as you rest.

THE END



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