



# Strait From the Heart

*The Voice of Heart of  
Florida Via de Cristo*  
Nov/Dec 2004  
Jan 2005

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEWLY ELECTED SECRETARIAT MEMBERS!

Lay Director: Sandy Moore

Music: Jill Heroux

Post VdC: Bob Blasberg

Outreach: Open--To be appointed

Off Site PA: Del & Martha Harriman

Extended Palanca: Jan Fry

*Please call any secretariat member and offer your help. They would love to hear from you!!!*

Communications: Tammy Ortiz

## WELCOME NEW PILGRIMS!

### Welcome to the New Members of Our Community!

Anthony Gottardis

St. Mary Magdelan

Charlotte White

Orangewood Presbyterian

Fritz Stubbs

Lutheran Church of Nassau

Domonic Robinson

Church of Annunciation

Whitey Donald

Lutheran Church of Nassau

Amy Carson

St. John Lutheran

Dennis Glover

St. John Lutheran

Rosa Allen

Northland Distributed

Ronald Newbold

Lutheran Church of Nassau

Della Tindell

St. John Lutheran

Bradley Lightbourn

Lutheran Church of Nassau

Sandy Gaston

Spirit of Joy Lutheran

Matthew Wise

RLDS

Jackie Wood

Eastern Avenue Baptist

Rev. Samuel Boodle

Lutheran Church of Nassau

Kaaren Wallis

Various

Stephen Combs

St. John Lutheran

Alanna Hogan

Northland Distributed

John Schmidt

Abiding Savior Lutheran

Weegie Henry

Northland Distributed

November 13 at 4:45 P.M. is the Team/Pilgrim Reunion at St. John Lutheran. Please join us in welcoming these newest pilgrims at the Potluck following at 6:00 P.M. with the Ultreya at 7:00 P.M. Please don't forget to bring your contribution of food to the potluck.

### "NEXT-STEP" WORKSHOP

January 22, 2005

8:30 A.M.—12:00 P.M.

St. John Lutheran Church

I'm a new pilgrim, how do I follow-up my weekend experience?

Make your plans now to attend the informative and exciting "Next-Step" Workshop!

See page 3 for more information.

**MEN'S REUNION GROUPS**

<b><u>Day/Time</u></b>	<b><u>Location</u></b>	<b><u>Contact</u></b>
Tues, 2nd & 4th, 7:00 AM	Shakers, Edgewater Drive in College Park	Robert Dietz (407) 650-9092
Wed., 1st, 3rd, 5th, 6:00 PM	St. John Lutheran Church, Room 115/Chapel	John Vetter (407) 578-7883
Wednesday, 7:30 AM	Village Inn, University Blvd., East of 436	Bob Mansbach (407) 629-1273
Thursday, 6:30AM	Denny's, E. Colonial and Alafaya	Glenn Brown (407) 898-7600
Saturday, 8:00 AM	Toojays, E. Colonial at Bumby	Don Bonesteel (407) 339-9531
Saturday, 8:00 AM	Steak & Shake, Aloma Ave and Route 436	Dale Richardson (407) 678-9542
Saturday, 8:00 AM	Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Chapel	Jerry Lemcke (407) 277-2606
Saturday, 8:00 AM	McDonald's, Aloma Av at Howell Branch Rd	Bill Pohlard (407) 699-6817

**WOMEN'S REUNION GROUPS**

Monday, 7:00PM	Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Parlor	Peggy Stafford (407) 897-1177
Monday, 7:00PM	St. John Lutheran Church	Diane DeMark (407) 897-3669
Tuesday, 9:00AM	Village Inn, University Blvd., East of 436	Daisy Mansbach (407) 629-1273
Tues 1st & 3rd, 11:00AM	St. John Lutheran Church, Chapel	Jeanneal Engelke (407) 296-0786
Wed., 1st, 3rd, 5th, 6:00 PM	St. John Lutheran Church, Library	Donna McRee (407) 774-6639
Thursday, 6:00PM	St. John Lutheran, Back Entrance/Chapel	Marty Collins (407) 381-0317
Thursday, 8:30 AM	Prince of Peace, then out for breakfast	Carlene Lemcke (407) 277-2606
Thursday, 10:00 AM	Panera, corner of Red Bug Rd. & Tuscawilla	Jane Pohlard (407) 699- 6817
Thursday, 7:00 PM	Peoples' homes	Sheila Bender (407) 657-2683
Saturday, 9:30 AM	Mead Gardens, Winter Park	Nancy Blasberg (407) 381-1620
Sunday, 10:30 AM	Prince of Peace Lutheran Church	Cherie Nocks (407) 277- 2198

**GROUP ACTIVITY**

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**Painting Party: Putting Our Action to Work!**

As a part of the overall renovation of the St. John Retreat Center, Heart of Florida Via de Cristo has volunteered to paint the interior of the retreat center. **This painting will take place over two weekends: February 4-6 and February 11-13.** We are thrilled to also report that St. John is having the Retreat Center re-carpeted.

**We need lots of help as this is a huge project,** but it will make a tremendous change in the look of the retreat center. Please contact Martha or Del Harriman (407-876-0121 or 407-353-5675) if you can help or if you have questions/suggestions.

**We are in need of monetary donations for paint and supplies,** as well as for other items for the retreat center. It would be really nice to purchase some new sofas and perhaps new mattresses/pillows. A commercial washer and dryer would be greatly appreciated.

We will also announce the dates at the next Ultreya as well as send out an email. See you there!

Del & Martha Harriman

### **4<sup>th</sup> Day Workshop: The Next Step**

January 22, 2005

***The less you know about Via de Cristo, the more you want to change it!  
The more you know about Via de Cristo, the less you want to change it!***

“The Next Step” workshop will be presented at St. John on January 22, 2005 from 8:30 a.m. until Noon. This workshop provides an opportunity for community members to gather together and be encouraged to strengthen our commitment to reflect Christ in all our environments.

The workshop is designed to help all community members, especially new pilgrims, better understand the dynamics of the weekend experience and the VdC ministry in general. This workshop is offered after each set of weekends about a month after the team/pilgrim reunion or soon as it can be scheduled. New pilgrims and sponsors will receive letters of invitation, but all community members are encouraged to attend a workshop. Topics covered will include how the weekends work, VdC history, 4<sup>th</sup> Day support (group reunion and Ultreyas), how to sponsor a pilgrim and what the responsibilities are, and opportunities for service in our environments, churches and the Heart of Florida ministry. There will be time for questions and answers. Prayer, music and sharing among participants are part of the morning

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### **Make a Friend, Be a Friend, Bring Your Friend to Christ**

Via de Cristo is not just the weekend experience. Via de Cristo's primary goal is to create leaders for Christ by providing the tools (Piety, Study and Action) we need to grow our personal relationship with Him. Our dedication to these tools gives us the strength and courage to step out and become leaders, with one individual or with many.

Many of us have been so impacted by our own weekend experience or by team service, we want everyone to experience it. But we need to remember what we learned. Make a friend, be a friend, talk to God about our friend and bring our friend to Christ. The process is important. Just for instance, let us pretend some one new joins your church. You immediately see that this person is going to become an active member. You see the potential. You see a leader. Right away, you invite this person to a weekend. (And maybe someone else does too!) But your invitation is declined. But wait...didn't you forget something? Did you make friend or an acquaintance? Were you a friend? This takes time and a real relationship. Over time, your new friend may see Christ in you and want to explore that closer relationship. Did you talk to God about your friend and really listen for His answer? Or, you could point the person in the direction of someone else who has been to Via de Cristo and has already become a friend (and then follow up with the other person.) You do not have to be the one who is their sponsor.

Sometimes a new friend is a strong leader already and is in a close walk with Christ. Our friend may decline your invitation, and that is okay. Respect your friend's wishes. You still have a new friend to share your journey with.

God will lead you to whom you should invite. Listen to Him. By pressing the invitation, we risk alienating our home congregations. Remember Via de Cristo is about much more than a weekend...it is about linking leaders together to share God's love and grace with the world. It is about being Christ's hands and feet in the world, beginning in our families, our workplaces and our congregations.

God Surely DOES LOVE YOU!  
Sandy Moore, Lay Director

## A Call to Action

It is with great humility that I begin my service to this community as Lay Director. It is my hope that together we can do exciting things to enrich our community and our individual involvement in our home congregations, our families and our environments.

I hope we can develop ways of showing our support for the mission of our home congregations. We are already making a start. You will see elsewhere in this newsletter plans to pitch in and help "beautify" the St. John Retreat Center. I see this as a good, solid way of returning to this congregation some of the wonderful benefits afforded to the Via de Cristo ministry over the years. Will you be ready with your paintbrush and work clothes during Feb 4-6 or Feb 11-13? Will you respond to a call of Action?

How are you demonstrating a commitment to enrich the life and mission of your congregation? How can we as a community help? Let us know. With enough advance notice we can mobilize an Action party! I have read recently in the newsletters from other communities how they have taken over a directory photo drive, served dinners for congregations and many other things. Each year Heart of Florida sponsors the Easter Breakfast at St. John, but that is a fund raiser for us. I am hoping we can demonstrate to our congregations that we are a support and active part of the congregations. Not as a fundraiser and not as a sponsorship tool, but as the Hands and Feet of Christ.

As we approach the holiday season, I pray the blessings, peace and goodwill to every member of this community. I have been truly blessed with your friendship, love and support!

Sandy Moore

## HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

### HAPPY FALL!



Being a Christian is like being a pumpkin.  
God lifts you up, takes you in, and washes all the dirt off of you. He opens you up, touches you deep inside and scoops out all the yucky stuff-- including the seeds of doubt, hate, greed, etc. Then He carves you a new smiling face and puts His light inside you to shine for all the world to see. This was passed on to me from another pumpkin. Now, it is your turn to pass it to a pumpkin. I liked this enough to send it to all the pumpkins in my patch. Happy Fall

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"May God Bless you"~~~Have a nice day"

### Spiritual Direction

*“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” Romans 8:28 (NIV)*

As I reflect on my involvement in one of the fall weekends, I'm struck by the unexpected blessings that came my way. The deer that crossed the yard and let us watch them. The flowers that appeared one day on the dining room tables. The personal stories shared with me by pilgrims and team members.

Of course, I expect God to bless our weekends and to touch our lives anew. I just never know what the specific blessings will be! God often surprises me.

I'm also struck by how frequently unexpected blessings come out of painful times in our lives. This has been true in my life. I've heard team members share stories about how God redeemed dark times in their lives. I've also witnessed pilgrims who began a weekend with a burdened spirit, and then left the retreat center with a joyful heart.

God surely works in all things to bring good to His children. Sometimes we see the evidence. Sometimes we do not. In my life, I have even had to look years back before I could see clearly what God was doing the whole time.

My prayer is that each of us keeps our eyes open to the glory of God all around us, and that our hearts are able to sense the wonder of God's amazing grace. And when we are too burdened to see or feel what God is doing, may we have Christian friends around us who will walk alongside until we reach a place in our journey when the blessings surprise us once again.

Tom McRee,  
Spiritual Director, Women's #30

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### Grand 7 Secretariat Ultreya

**Mark your Calendar for this special event on January 15, 2005.** Members from the communities of the seven secretariats in Florida are coming to join us in fellowship at Prince of Peace Lutheran on Curry Ford and Semoran Road. We are planning for 200 to attend.

For those who haven't attended for a long time, this is an excellent opportunity to meet old friends and start the new year in a spirit-filled evening with other Christians of Central Florida.

The event starts with a special Hawaiian Potluck at 5:00 P. M. Chicken Tenders with a Special & Sweet Sour Sauce will be the main dish that will be provided by a committee. Drinks will also be provided. **Please bring a salad, dessert or a side dish (Hawaiian, if you like, but any side dish is fine.)**

The Hawaiian Potluck will be followed by the grand ultreya at 600 P. M. We plan to have an uplifting program. The theme will be "Love", the first fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Special thanks to Sandy Boccuzzo for leading us in the "Washing of Sandy Feet" ultreya on September 18 at Northland Distributed Church. We were blessed both by Marty Collins witness talk on servant hood and by Sandy's talk on Jesus washing feet. Thanks also to Pastor Kevin Urichko for giving us Communion and to those who helped prepare for the potluck dinner before the ultreya.

Bob Blasberg, Chairmen,  
Post Via de Cristo

### De Colores!!

The fall weekends have come and gone and the holidays are fast approaching. Time seems to move quickly around this period of the year; where does it go? I have been evaluating my time lately. I am on the go from the time I get up each morning until the time I fall asleep at night. I don't always feel that I get everything done and too often I feel that I never have any time for myself. I'm in a Bible Study on Wednesday night and this past week's study was on "Staying on Track to Success". Now you may wonder, "What does that have to do with Via de Cristo?" Everything!

You are now in your fourth day; you have come off the weekends ready to spread God's love and grace. Wow! You can do it, you have the tools now and they seem so easy. Right? Well, I wish I could say that it is easy to follow the steps of piety each day, but it's not. We all fall off track from time to time. Sometimes our journey may be difficult and strenuous, but for those who stay on track there will be great rewards. This is also a great time to be involved in a Reunion Group, to help each other through the good and bad times.

When good things happen, we often want to rush on to the next challenge. Waiting for direction for the future requires patience. The stop signs of life have a purpose. Don't miss God's purposes by rushing through them or only slowing down! You may need to come to a complete stop—until God directs you to move.

At times, God asks us to stop and evaluate our lives to consider where we are and where we are going. Some of those realities of life may be painful ones and might include caring for an aging parent, facing cancer or standing at the graveside of a loved one. Happier ones also cause you to stop and evaluate our lives: graduations, job promotions, the birth of a child, a new home.

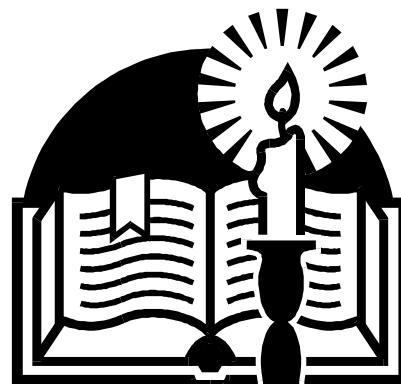
Take the time to think what kind of journey God has planned for you. Do you make the time to spend with Him each day? Is it hard for you to find time to be still? We get so caught up in our busy lives, we sometimes don't see the things right in front of us. Take time from your activities of the day to stop and savor time in our Heavenly Father's presence.

Take time to read scripture, to read a devotional, to do something for someone in need, to send a note to a friend, to make a phone call to someone you have not talked to in awhile, take your grandkids to the park and most important take time to pray!

Thank you to everyone who helped to make these weekends successful. No weekend comes together without everyone's help and the presence of our Lord. You are true servants!

God Bless you my brothers & sisters in Christ,

Sheila Bender,  
Local Palanca Chairperson



### Secretariat Happenings

The members of the Secretariat would like to sincerely thank Jerry Lemcke (Lay Director), Marty Collins (Music) and Jane Pohlada (Communications) for their dedication to the Secretariat. Please know that your efforts were greatly appreciated. We will miss you on the Secretariat, but we are sure you will continue to give your support to Heart of Florida Via de Cristo in many other ways.

I had the honor of serving on the Heart of Florida Women's Team #30 where I gave the Rollo, Apostolic Action. Please continue to Make a Friend, Be a Friend and Bring Your Friend to Christ on your 4<sup>th</sup> day. The next weekends will be held as follows:

**Men's Weekend – April 14-17, 2005**  
**Women's Weekend – April 21-24, 2005**

May you have a very Happy Thanksgiving, as we thank God for all of our many blessings.

My best wishes to you for a Holiday Season and New Year filled with peace, joy, happiness and love.

In His Love and Service,  
Joyce Rodriguez, Secretary

*God Bless Us Everyone!*

