

Southern Arizona Lutheran



# Newsletter

Q1 2018

## ...a Ray of Inspiration

My three-year term as Lay Director completed, I was prepared to move on to the “next thing” — whatever that was going to be. There was a vacated position in our Board that had one year remaining in its term — which apparently turned out to be the next thing for me. So, as Secretary, here are the “notes” I took from the more recent admonition meeting I had through the Holy Spirit:

### **Ray, there is work to do!**

[as I came to the recognition that while on earth there is no retirement plan or Social Security benefit for prior works completed. For if eternal life is in Christ Jesus, and this too is our inheritance through Him, when does eternal life begin? Sometime later? Certainly not. It cannot be “later” if it is eternal — eternity must be included in the “right now”. How does one retire from that? There are no “time outs” that I know of.]

But, there are things I want to do first, and things I need to do that are very important to me!  
AND, there are many people that would agree with me!

### **Ray, what’s new? There are always things you think you need to do or want to do! And, why don’t you seek agreement with me? What value is there in agreement with foolishness?**

[Clearly, the initial work of which I note is one of prayer and reflection. It is a discipline that I need to develop BEFORE I take action. And, I have to face the question that considers what possible difference what I want makes, or what value there is to what I think I need? Are God’s thoughts sufficient, or do the thoughts of my own enhance His? Did God forget what I need, and my intention serves to remind Him of what He neglected to consider? When I get what I want is the world somehow transformed into a new or better creation?]

I know that my first impulses are ALWAYS in accord with my preferences, my instincts, and my will. MAYBE some of these might be close to God’s will; but certainly not enough of the time! And even when they are, it is still according to ME. And, I have to pay constant attention to this human tendency so that I don’t get caught up in it and act in accordance to my own will alone. Admittedly, I continue to fail almost every time!

Nonetheless, Jesus tells us to “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness...”, and He wouldn’t tell us that if it were beyond our capacity to do so. And, we know that the desires of sin are, and have been, contrary to us from as far back as the beginning of the first Adam. “The Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, **sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it.**” (Genesis 4:6-7).

### **Ray, what’s your problem? What don’t you understand about this? Why do you act contrary to what you have been given to know? You must also rule over that which is contrary to you!**

Ouch! So, sin continues to sit crouching at our door! Its desires are contrary to us; and, we must [and can] rule over it. How? Obedience to the Will of God — all the time? Or, only when it’s convenient or fits into my preference?

God’s Will isn’t crouching at the door; it’s who we are in Christ. It’s desire isn’t contrary to us; it’s by the desire of God that who we are **is** in Christ Jesus. And, sin has already been overruled through the perfect sacrifice accomplished through Christ alone.

Choose Christ Jesus as He has first chosen you! I'm here for you, to help you, to guide you.

Simple enough — maybe not so easy; but simple!

So, long before we engage in our daily activities, let us all “prayerfully consider” what it is that God wills for us, so that when we are asked, we are prepared to say “YES”; to give what we have been given when asked — without hesitation or remorse; because we know that we are already living in the eternal inheritance that comes with our salvation that is through the Faith provided to us by the Grace of God. *“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”* (Ephesians 2:8-9)

There is indeed much work to do. I pray we find our “yes”(s) in this work to be with great enthusiasm whether we are washing feet, cleaning bathrooms, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, giving shelter to the exposed, cleaning dishes, listening to someone, writing a note, playing, or preaching. There is a lot of preliminary work that requires our attention and effort, so that the glorious work happens at the mountaintop.

*“And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, “If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all.”* (Mark 9:35)

God bless us!

Ray Gage



## Via de Cristo #39

Christ is counting on you...

Join Lutherans from across southern Arizona for this Via de Cristo four-day retreat as they each grow in their understanding of God's grace in Jesus Christ, and consider ways of responding to that free gift.

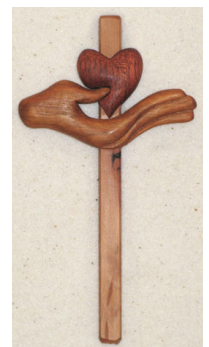
The Southern Arizona Lutheran Via de Cristo is affiliated with the National Lutheran Secretariat of Via de Cristo which includes communities throughout the US and several other countries. The Via de Cristo movement seeks to inspire, challenge, and equip local church members for Christian action in their homes, churches, and communities.

### Some responses from those who attended last year:

*“I felt renewed and had a new appreciation for my faith walk”*

*“An experience that every Christian would love. Renewal of God's love expressed to the participants”*

*“Lifetime experience that will change you forever”*



# JUST A THOUGHT OR TWO....

**"Look at everything as though you were seeing it either for the first or last time. Then your time on earth will be filled with glory."**

**~ Betty Smith**



*The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched - they must be felt with the heart .....Helen Keller*

2018 Ultreya - Harvest				
DATE	LOCATION	PARISH REP POC	EVENT	ADDRESS
Friday 7pm -9 pm January 26, 2018 Tiros Fund Raiser 5pm -7pm	American Lutheran	Pastor Kim Taylor	Annual Meeting	115 N Tucson Blvd Tucson, AZ 85716
Sunday February 11, 2018	Tanque Verde Lutheran	Greg Paulsen Doug Pearson	Ultreya / Harvest	Linder Hall 8625 E Tanque Verde Rd Tucson, AZ 85749
Sunday April 08, 2018	Sierra Evangelical Lutheran	Jim Clevon Pastor Mark Perry	Ultreya / Harvest	101 N Lenzner Ave Sierra Vista, AZ 85635 North of Fry Blvd
Sunday June 03, 2018	Streams in the Desert Lutheran	Georgia Riggs Pastor Tom Dunham	Ultreya / Harvest	5360 E. Pima St Tucson, AZ 85712 Pima at Woodland Ave
Sunday August 05, 2018	Lord of Grace Lutheran	Tim Murphy	Ultreya / Harvest	7250 N Cortaro Rd Tucson, AZ 85743 Cortaro & Ina
Sunday October 07, 2018	Mount Zion Lutheran	Toni Joyce Suzie Strussenberg	Ultreya / Harvest	4520 W Ajo Way Tucson, AZ 85745
Sunday December 02, 2018	Resurrection Lutheran	Tim Bauer	REUNION	Gym / Kitchen 11575 N 1st Ave Oro, AZ Between Tangerine & Oracle Rd

## 2018 SALVdC Secretariat Representative

<p><b>Spiritual Director</b> Pastor Tom Dunham</p> <p><a href="mailto:pastortom@streams.tuccoxmail.com">pastortom@streams.tuccoxmail.com</a></p>	
<p>* <b>Lay Director</b> Dan Curtis</p> <p><a href="mailto:dcurtis827@gmail.com">dcurtis827@gmail.com</a></p>	<p>* <b>Assistant Lay Director</b> Toni Joyce</p> <p><a href="mailto:steelersaz@msn.com">steelersaz@msn.com</a></p>
<p>* <b>Secretary</b> Ray Gage</p> <p><a href="mailto:raygage11@gmail.com">raygage11@gmail.com</a></p>	<p>**<b>Treasurer</b> Paul Cassity</p> <p><a href="mailto:paulcassity@beckerspecialties.com">paulcassity@beckerspecialties.com</a></p>
<p>** <b>Three-day</b> Patricia Johnson</p> <p><a href="mailto:pensweat@yahoo.com">pensweat@yahoo.com</a></p>	<p>***<b>Pre-VdC weekend</b> Sandy Holm</p> <p><a href="mailto:smilinisheyes@cox.net">smilinisheyes@cox.net</a></p>
<p>***<b>Palanca Chair</b> Suzie Strussenberg</p> <p><a href="mailto:suziestrussenberg@yahoo.com">suziestrussenberg@yahoo.com</a></p>	<p>***<b>Post-weekend 4<sup>th</sup> Day</b> Kandice Karchner</p> <p><a href="mailto:kandice_k@yahoo.com">kandice_k@yahoo.com</a></p>
<p>* <b>Communications</b> Toni Joyce</p> <p><a href="mailto:steelersaz@msn.com">steelersaz@msn.com</a></p>	<p><b>Entire SALVdC Secretariat</b></p> <p><a href="mailto:soazviadecristo@gmail.com">soazviadecristo@gmail.com</a></p>

Newsletter: Deborah Martin / [deborahmartin.1023@gmail.com](mailto:deborahmartin.1023@gmail.com)