



Dear Friend in Christ:

Welcome! On behalf of the National Lutheran Secretariat (NLS) Executive Committee, I am privileged to share that you are part of this historic online adventure for the 2021 National Via de Cristo Gathering/Annual Meeting. Although we're disappointed we're not meeting in-person again this year, we're fortunate we've finetuned our skills to meet virtually and allow more people to attend without the travel. The Executive Board has been making plans and preparations for several months now.

We encourage you to dress comfortably and be prepared for a more interactive experience this year based on your feedback from last year.

We began on **Monday, July 19th** with the nominee's videos for you to preview prior to the Annual Business meeting. There is a PowerPoint presentation for your Orientation and it will be very informative. I encourage you to watch the Zoom Orientation presentation so you can be ready and informed on how to participate with the online meeting. Orientation can be helpful to anyone, but it is especially appreciated by anyone who has not attended a Zoom meeting before.

Before the Annual Gathering, you will be given access to the Virtual Binder, which you can review at your leisure. Everything from the Keynote Speaker Bio, Exchange of Information (EOI) Sessions and Annual Reports will be available for you to look over on your time. Our entire Annual Gathering is available online even after the Annual Gathering is over. Recordings of our Keynote Speaker, EOI Sessions, Spiritual Directors Session and Lay Directors Session will be available to you after the Annual Gathering. These workshops will help you and give you ideas on how to engage your Fourth Day Community. Please join us to learn, grow and take back information to your Secretariat!

On **Thursday, July 22nd**, we'll have our Opening Worship followed by a brief NSL Business Meeting to announce the **delegates representing the affiliated Secretariats and formally recognized as present** as well as take Nominations from the floor for NLS Executive Committee Open Positions. Dr. Carl Billings, Senior Pastor at Discover Church, will deliver our keynote about "Mission Possible, Mission Practiced" before going into breakout sessions to share our insights and return to the main room to debrief together.

On **Friday, July 23rd**, the Lay Directors and Spiritual Directors will meet early to have their own roundtable sessions. Everyone else will join later for our first EOI session on "Reclaim Our Mission Without Changing The Essentials" Roundtable led by Rev. Doug Givan from a Shared Ministry of two congregations on the Westside of Indianapolis. We'll go into breakout sessions to share our insights and return to the main room to debrief together. We'll end the night with an Open Q and A Session with All NLS Nominees.

On **Saturday, July 24th** you have a choice of EOI sessions:

- Think tank for weekends after COVID-19
- How are you renewing the Fourth Day community?

We'll break for a working lunch with our Regional Coordinators in separate breakout rooms. Our Annual Business Meeting will reconvene at 1:20pm central time. **The**

delegates will represent the “voice” of the NLS. Guests are welcome and encouraged to attend. During the Annual Business Meeting, guests will be able to chat/type/ask questions but cannot vote. The delegates will stay in the main room to vote and the non-delegates will go into breakout rooms to connect during the voting. The Annual Gathering is your opportunity to grow, learn and share with brothers and sisters in Christ from across the country.

The Annual Business Meeting concludes with a preview of the 2022 Annual Gathering in Texas and a closing prayer by our Spiritual Director.

If I can be of assistance to you with this 2021 National Via de Cristo Annual Gathering, please feel free to contact me. You can text or call me at 972-658-4387.

I pray for God’s mercy for all those affected by the Coronavirus and pray the Lord will continue to watch over us.

God loves you and so do I,
Jane Winge
NLS Vice President of Administration
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