

El Tintéro

El Tintéro is Spanish for "the inkwell." Legend has it that Martin Luther threw an inkwell at Satan who tempted Luther while he was writing.

November 2016

Welcome!

Briarwood Lutheran Retreat Center Hosts Weekend #98

Laura Talafuse

Observing Lay Director

My name is Laura Talafuse. I have been so grateful to spend this year preparing to serve as Lay Director. I have spent lots of time with Doug learning the ins and outs, as well as the responsibilities. I certainly have a very healthy respect for all that he has done for our community in his time in the position. The good news is that when I move into the role in January, Doug will still be around as the Communications Director, so I won't have very far to go if I have questions!

I know many of you, but for those of you I haven't yet had the pleasure of meeting, I made my weekend on Weekend 79 in 2009 at Lake Sharon Retreat Center. While I thoroughly enjoyed my weekend, as it turns out my husband, Tim, had a much larger "mountain-top" experience than I did. It took me a few months to let all that I had learned sink in and begin to work in me to change my perspective.

When I describe Via de Cristo to others, I tend to speak of it as a leadership development course. When we attend a Via de Cristo weekend, we may know a little or a lot about Jesus, but Via de Cristo teaches us a method for turning our whole lives to God. I don't always get it right, and frankly, that makes me all the more grateful for grace. But, along the way, I realized that there is responsibility associated with being a follower of Christ and I try to embrace that now in a way that I was never able to before.

So, if you are new to the movement, don't worry if you don't "get it" right away. And, if you have been a part of the movement for a long time, you know that one of our goals is to support each other along the way. Our life with Christ is a journey. It's a journey best traveled with others and Via de Cristo helps us do just that. I look forward to traveling with you. **Ultreya!**

A Word from the Lay Director

Doug Guinn

Lay Director

In preparing my article for this issue of the El Tintero, I came across a piece written by Marshall Segal, a Staff Writer for the <http://www.desiringgod.org/> website that fits the exact message Christian communities need. I invite you to read it on pages 4 and 5 of this El Tintero.

May God bless each of you as you live out your 4th Day, the rest of your life, in the all-encompassing, grace-filled love of Christ!

Greetings to All from Your Weekend #98 Rector!!

David Van Buskirk

Weekend #98 Rector

What a blessing it has been. What an honor and a humbling experience it has been. Our team had their first team meeting and everyone bonded like glue! God called and they responded. God equips the called, not calls the equipped. I have always known and took it to heart that this is a sacrificial movement. I had to ask myself "Was I ready to give till it hurt?" Jesus not only gave till it hurt, but sacrificed himself for us. He gave it all for us. Well, that answered my question. Here I am Lord.

Right now seeing what God put together as the TEAM, I can't wait to see who He sends as participants. It has been mind blowing. Please, Please, Please 4th Day, prayerfully consider sponsoring someone. Sponsors drop off will be a little different in that we will have the registrar in Quail Run and you can pick up your sponsor candle from Love Team.

Because the weekend is in November, our saint is St. Andrew. The bible verse is in Romans 12:2, "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing, and perfect will." **Ultreya!**

Welcome, Weekend #98 Participants!

PARTICIPANT	CHURCH	SPONSOR
Betty Glendye	Good Shepherd Luth., Irving	Elsie Kroussakis
Rich Fischer	Pleasantview Baptist, Arlington	Loretta Fisher
Ginger Anderson	Pleasantview Baptist, Arlington	Loretta Fisher
Nicole Gray	Faith Lutheran Flower Mound	Kathleen/Jerry Gray
Dan Lund	Messiah Lutheran, Weatherford	Dailey Taylor
John Tighe	1 st United Methodist, Weatherford	Dailey Taylor
John Miranda	Zion Lutheran, Dallas	Steve Lund
Brent Clemens	Calvary Lutheran, Richland Hills	Paul Dobbs/ Ed Kviz
Tom Hancock	Pleasantview Baptist, Arlington	Loretta Fisher

Weekend #98 Staff

NAME	STAFF ROLE
David Van Buskirk	Rector
Jane Winge	Observing Rector
Loretta Fisher	Rector's Cha
Carol Van Buskirk	Rector Cha's Cha
Janet Thorp	Music Cha/ Ideal
Jerry Gray	Food Cha
Marilyn Potter	Food Cha
Sharon Bartells	Palanca Cha
Bruce Chrystie	Palanca Cha
Phil Heinze	SD
Gaylene Chrystie	SD
Sharon Lowry	Table Leader
Carol Welch	Table Leader
Bill Harris	Laity
Christine Bingaman	Piety
Jon Allred	Study
Sandra Brenden	Apostolic Action
Mark Brenden	Leaders
Kathleen Bower Gray	Study-Evang. of Environments
Paul Bartells	Christian Community
Vickie Cornwall	Total Security & 4th Day

Via de Cristo Weekend #98 Needs You, Too!

Activity	Arrival Time	Location
<u>Wednesday Evening Setup</u> and <u>Food Palanca</u> Dropoff	Wed., November 9 th , 6:30PM	Streng Leadership Center and Oak Grove 4th Day Room
Thursday Evening Palanca/ <u>Food Palanca</u> Dropoff	Thurs., November 10 th , 6:30PM	Oak Grove 4th Day Room
Serenade	Sat. November 12 th , 12:40PM	Oak Grove Lodge
Wakeup	Sun., November 13 th , 6:00AM	Streng Leadership Center
<u>Clausura Setup</u>	Sun., November 13 th , 2:30PM	Streng Leadership Center
Clausura	Sun., November 13 th , 3:15PM	Streng Leadership Center
<u>Weekend Takedown</u>	Sun., November 13 th , 5:00PM	Streng Leadership Center
Homecomings	Sun., November 13 th , 6:00PM	Various Locations

“By the grace of God.....”

Tim Talafuse,
Treasurer

Do you remember the overwhelming feeling of God's grace, the power of the Holy Spirit rushing through you, and desire to share the great news of Christ's love on your Weekend? What a blessing God's grace is to us, and what a joy it is on our Via de Cristo Weekends to actually feel the weight of guilt and despair lifted from our hearts as we recognize that God has granted us that grace! Do you recall wanting to share those feelings with others?

Our Lutheran Via de Cristo of North Texas has for many years counted on the sharing of blessings from the 4th day community. From staffing on a weekend, to being a part of the Love Team, to helping with Weekend setup, take down, and hosting of Grand Ultreyas. The LVDCNT has also been very blessed by those who have offered to share in their financial blessings.

We now have a new way for you to help toward the cost of the Weekends by doing something you might already be doing! Are you an Amazon shopper? Amazon offers a program that allows you to direct a portion of your purchases toward the Lutheran Via de Cristo of North Texas. All you do is log into your Amazon account from the Smile.Amazon.Com webpage (or follow this link <https://smile.amazon.com>), select the Lutheran Via de Cristo of North Texas as your designated charity, and then shop away. When you checkout a percentage of your purchases are then deposited into our account. It really is just that easy for you to begin making a difference on the Weekends!

Ultreya!

Aren't grace weekends great?!

You know they are! Please consider making a contribution. Your gift of \$165.00 can sponsor a participant! Please visit the Donate page, or click on the orange **DONATE** button, found on our website (<http://www.vdcnorthtexas.org>) or contact Tim Talafuse, Treasurer, tstalafuse@verizon.net or (972) 966-0326 for the many ways that you can give to help support the Lutheran Via de Cristo of North Texas community.

It Only Takes A Spark...

Helen Mayo
Secretary

“It only takes a spark to get a fire going, and soon all those around can warm up in its glowing. That's how it is with God's love, once you've experienced it. You spread His love to everyone, you want to pass it on.”

It's wonderful to feel the warmth of God's love and caring in our hearts, minds and lives and to then pass it to others. Participating in the 4th Day community is one way of passing along that love. I know I have felt God's love in the caring and support I've received over the years as I've gone to my weekly small group. We can also attend regional Ultreyas and the twice a year Grand Ultreyas. At the last Grand Ultreya, we learned of an opportunity to offer prayers for an upcoming Kairos weekend. The June regional Ultreya at Calvary was a 3-hour grace mat party that resulted in 85 grace mats – wonderful gifts to be passed to future weekend attendees and staff alike. Do any of you have special mats that you have saved? I know I do. Read your El Tintero newsletter as it comes out – it will keep you updated not only on upcoming VdC weekends, but also regional and Grand Ultreyas.

At the last Grand Ultreya we were asked to reflect on how what we have learned at Via de Cristo has helped us on our daily life. My husband and I do a monthly service at the Atria, a senior retirement center in Carrollton. I know it's something we wouldn't have even thought of before attending Via de Cristo weekends. And it's such a joy to pass along God's love in this way.

Rejoice in God's all-consuming love and pass it on.

Ultreya!



It Only Takes a Spark

We Die a Thousand Ways in Love



Article by Marshall Segal,
Staff writer, <http://www.desiringgod.org/>

The night before Jesus was betrayed, he sat with his closest friends. He looked them in the eyes, and told them what was about to happen to him for their sake. His body would be broken for them; his blood poured out for their sin ([1 Corinthians 11:23–26](#))

Then he told them the one thing that would set them apart from everyone else in the world. “By *this* all people will know that you are my disciples . . .” ([John 13:35](#)). This one thing would mark them as true followers, and emphatically punctuate the gospel they preached. This one thing . . .

The world may have changed a lot since that night, but followers of Jesus still stand out in the same way: “. . . if you have love for one another.” We will be noticed and known by our love for one another.

But there’s an awful lot that looks like love in the world, and a whole lot of it isn’t Christian. So what did Jesus mean? If it’s still applicable today, how do we live out our loyalty to him in ways that draw others to him? If this love is the distinctive, unmistakable nametag of faith, there must be something distinct about it, something unusual.

Love Going Public

It’s important to note that our love for another will not tell anyone about Jesus if it’s not lived out in front of other people. Due to our weaknesses, even Christian love can have a tendency to become isolated and insular. Before long, all our friends are Christian, and all our free time is spent with Christians. Jesus wasn’t casting vision for a glorified clique when he spoke to his disciples that night. He spoke about a contagious love that compels people to come and see.

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” ([Matthew 5:14–16](#))

“Jesus didn’t cast Christianity as a glorified clique, but as a contagious love that compels people to come and see.”

For sure, Christian love happens behind closed doors — in families, in small groups, in one-on-one discipleship, in crisis. It must. But it’s not meant to stay there. Jesus intends for our love to be too loud to go unnoticed, too bright to hide entirely behind the scenes.

Love Goes Low

But what makes love *Christian*? Why would people see our love for one another and think, *That has the mark of Jesus*? Jesus’s words come between two stunning real-life pictures.

In the first, the King of kings shockingly kneels down to wash the dirt from his disciples’ feet. Jesus lowered himself to humiliating levels to demonstrate his love for the disciples. One by one, he soaks, rubs, and dries their feet. He says,

“You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.” ([John 13:13–15](#))

If God himself was willing, in love, to wash even feet, why would we refuse to lower ourselves, in love, for one another? Christian love sets aside social status, cultural norms, and the comfort of convenience to joyfully meet the inconvenient needs of others. That kind of love looks like Jesus — the sinless God-man on his knees before the sinful men he came to save.

Love Dies

The same word for love appears earlier in John 13: “When Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having *loved* his own who were in the world, *he loved them to the end*” ([John 13:1](#)). Jesus wasn’t done showing us how to love one another when he finished washing feet. No, he also put down the basin and the towel, and took up his cross — thorns in his scalp, nails in his hands and feet, his lungs collapsing slowly and painfully.

“How will we break through this present darkness? We will be noticed and known by our love for one another.”

Christian love suffers for the beloved. It costs us something. “Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends” ([John 15:13](#)). You probably won’t be asked to literally lay your life down for someone, but we die a thousand other ways in love.

- We give a little more than we thought we could — time, money, energy — knowing God knows everything we need.

- We cancel plans in order to be with someone in need, or make last-minute adjustments to fold someone else in.
- We keep initiating the necessary hard conversations with a loved one, even when the conversations seem to only be getting harder and harder.
- We have someone stay with us for an unexpected night or more.
- We set aside our preferences to bless someone with different desires.
- We consistently consider others' interests and needs as important to us as our own.

Those two brackets — dirty feet being washed clean and sinless feet being nailed to a cross — bring the love in [John 13:35](#) into greater light and clarity. This kind of love involves servant hearts and hands that are unexplainably humble, intentional, self-sacrificing, and free from the world's standards and expectations ([Galatians 5:13](#)).

Love Hurts

But what if we choose to love, and receive less than love in return?

Almost all love comes with the regular fees of disappointment, heartache, and sometimes betrayal. What does Christian love do when it collides with the realities of our sin-wrecked relationships here on earth?

"When you choose to love and are wronged in return, rejoice that Jesus will look even more real and beautiful in you."

In between kneeling to wash the disciples' feet and telling them to love one another ([John 13:35](#)), Jesus's sermon takes an unsettling twist. "After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me . . .'" ([John 13:21](#)). One of the men he had loved the most would be the one to hand him over to his killers — one of the men at the table with him right now, one of the men with freshly washed feet.

Why did Jesus turn his attention to Judas now? And why did John choose to put it here in chapter 13? Because servant-hearted, sacrificial love like his is prepared for betrayal, but it speaks even louder when we are wronged in response. When Jesus dropped to his knees with a washcloth before his betrayer, or hung naked on a cross because of him, did his love look stupid? Or did it look other-worldly?

When you choose to love, and are wronged in return, Jesus will look even more real and beautiful in your love.

Have you given up on loving someone in your life because you haven't been loved well in return? The foot-washing, soul-cleansing Savior reminds us that we have already been loved infinitely well, and that well is deep enough to sustain a lifetime of love in any difficult relationship or ministry.

[Marshall Segal \(@marshallsegal\)](#) is a writer and managing editor at [desiringGod.org](#). He's the author of [Not Yet Married: The Pursuit of Joy in Singleness & Dating](#) (2017). He graduated from [Bethlehem College & Seminary](#). He and his wife Faye have a son and live in Minneapolis.

