

# NATIONAL LUTHERAN SECRETARIAT ANNUAL GATHERING

Texas Lutheran University

July 23 - July 26, 2026

## EXCHANGE OF IDEAS (EOIs) / DIALOGUES

What	When	Where	Facilitators
<b>Financial Roundtable</b>	Fri 1:15		Jerry Gray
<p>This group will discuss the NLS finances and proposed budget for 2026-2027. In addition to answering questions about the NLS financials or budget, brainstorming ways to improve the financial position of NLS or your movement are likely.</p>			
<b>Lay Director Dialogue</b>	Fri 1:15		Brian Comeno
<p>This is an opportunity for Lay Directors to discuss issues that involve Secretariats and their leadership. It's a time to glean from around the country what's working well or what isn't. The structure of your Secretariat will determine if this is most relevant toward past, present or future Lay Directors.</p>			
<b>Spiritual Director Dialogue</b>	Fri 1:15		Pastor G. Karl Gaston
<p>This session is intended for Spiritual Directors. It is a time for Spiritual Directors to dialogue with other Spiritual Directors from around the country about issues that directly involve Via de Cristo and clergy. If you are a spiritual director or clergy, please feel free to join this dialogue.</p>			
<b>Outreach Dialogue</b>	Fri 1:15 or Sat 2:30		Tom Kirk
<p>What is the role of your Outreach person on your secretariat? Is your secretariat deliberately and effectively expanding the footprint of your movement by reaching beyond currently engaged congregations? Hear about what is working well for other secretariats across the country or come to generate ideas on how to fan the Outreach flame for your secretariat.</p>			
<p>This EOI will be repeated on Saturday.</p>			
<b>Using Technology</b>	Fri 1:15		Karen Weires
<p>This EOI will be an open discussion focused on how secretariats can use technology in your ministry. Anything is fair game...from using Google for nonprofits to how to incorporate the use of slides on weekends.</p>			

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<b>What</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Where</b>	<b>Facilitators</b>
<b>Our 4<sup>th</sup> Day Mission</b> Your 3-day weekend has ended, and your 4 <sup>th</sup> day has begun. What are you supposed to be accomplishing? Does it all come down to “make a friend, be a friend, bring a friend to Christ”?  This EOI will take place during both Saturday breakout times.	Sat 1:15 or 2:30		Wendie and Ada
<b>Secretariat Leadership</b> Who is on your local secretariat board and how long have they been serving in their role? Some secretariats are having success applying term limits and giving newer, younger cursillistas the opportunity to serve their secretariat. Meanwhile, some secretariats have considered dissolution as their secretariat leaders have been in their roles for so long, they’ve burnt out. We hope members of secretariats all along this spectrum will join in this conversation. Come and share what your secretariat is doing to keep your secretariat alive for decades to come or join us to get ideas on how to bring new life to your board.  This EOI will take place during both Saturday breakout times.	Sat 1:15 or 2:30		Brian Comeno
<b>Ways to Pray</b> This guided prayer workshop is designed to lead participants through a four-part spiritual journey of connection, reflection, and renewal. It emphasizes becoming rooted in God’s presence and open to the work of the Holy Spirit. Through silence, Scripture, creative reflection, and shared prayer, participants are renewed and rooted more deeply in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.  While this EOI will take place during both Saturday breakout times, the two sessions will have different facilitators.	Sat 1:15 or 2:30		Leslie Herd then Leeanne Cosentino
<b>Sponsorship</b> Sponsorship is a critical element to Via de Cristo. It does not end when you’ve dropped off your friend for the start of their weekend or even when you’ve returned them home on Sunday. When does it start and end? How is your secretariat equipping your community members so that they will be effective sponsors? What tools are available to sponsors to help them be successful? Let’s talk about it.	Sat 1:15		Tom Kirk
<b>Grouping</b> This EOI will be an open discussion focused on how grouping can be accomplished from the traditional in person at a church to via Zoom from different parts of the world. How are members of your 4 <sup>th</sup> Day community grouping?	Sat 1:15		Sharon Dobbs
<b>Hosting the Annual Gathering</b> This is an informational resource that meets every year to help those considering hosting an annual gathering get some clarity on what’s involved. Please come listen in on the discussion even if you’re just curious. What does it take to host an annual gathering? Can a newly formed Secretariat or a small Secretariat pull it off?	Sat 2:30		Carolyn Witham