

## 2026 ANNUAL REPORT – Archivist

The NLS Archivist is a little-known position whose job it is to maintain “authentic, historically accurate records of Via de Cristo activity from formation to present.” As one might imagine, the quantity and quality of these records varies with time, but surprisingly many of the oldest records still exist in paper form. Since the early 2020s, nearly all archived records are digital only.

The last comprehensive effort to capture the histories of local Secretariats was the 2011 Publication “A History of Via de Cristo”. That effort has now been updated through a series of “History Sheets” which provide thumbnail sketches of 60 Secretariats. This includes every secretariat which has ever affiliated with the National Lutheran Secretariat, including the founding members in 1981 and others with lifespans as short as 1-2 years. This effort involved more than 150 contacts over the past 18 months. A link to these history sheets is on the NLS Website.

Also in the past year, a comprehensive matrix of active Secretariats and attendance at Annual Gatherings was developed. This covers the period from inception through 2025.

I want to acknowledge Sandy Simonsen in Columbus, OH, who donated quite a bit of material from the library of her late husband, Ed Simonsen. Ed was one of the driving forces in the establishment of the National Lutheran Secretariat 45 years ago and key to the development of Via de Cristo communities across the country. These types of donations of material from long term members help fill in gaps in the archival record. Let me know if you have something to add.

Some of the archived material, especially newsletters and meeting minutes, is already accessible via the Via de Cristo website, with more material to be posted in the future. If there’s something not there that maybe I can help you find, drop me a line at [archivist@viadecristo.org](mailto:archivist@viadecristo.org) and I’ll try to chase it down.

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