

Vice President of Administration

2025-2026 Report for the 2026 NLS Annual Meeting

Grace and peace to you, dear sisters and brothers in Christ!

It has been my honor and joy to serve as the Vice President of Administration (VPA) this year. The VPA is expected to be a responsible servant of Jesus Christ who wishes to glorify God by coordinating the National Via de Cristo (VdC) Annual Gathering. I have diligently worked to meet or exceed the expectations of the role entrusted to me. It has been a privilege to work in Christ's name with the NLSEC and the host committee in preparing for this year's gathering. I trust that God will again be glorified this summer at the 2026 annual gathering hosted by Region 3 (Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma) at Texas Lutheran University in Seguin, Texas.

Beyond coordinating the annual gathering, a responsibility of this role is to pray - for all National Lutheran Secretariat (NLS) affiliated secretariats and the NLS Executive Board. Unceasingly, I've prayed for our secretariats, the 2026 Region 3 host committee, the 2027 hosting community, the NLS board and all appointed to the various national positions.

Throughout each of the last two years, I have asked individuals in multiple secretariats to prayerfully consider hosting an upcoming annual gathering. While some conversations are ongoing, no offers or commitments to host a specific year have been officially received yet. If your secretariat or region is willing to consider hosting, please let me know and send representation to the Hosting an Annual Gathering dialogue at this year's gathering.

With land-based options in the area being exceptionally expensive, a Florida team looking into hosting in 2027 offered to host the 2027 annual gathering on board a cruise ship. The Executive Committee held two town hall Zoom sessions to share and evaluate this option. After much deliberation, the NLSEC agreed to accept the Region 7 offer. In May, I traveled to Florida to inspect the MSC Seashore, along with four Region 7 leaders. I can confirm that the ship can accommodate all our needs for a national gathering and is as beautiful as the pictures seen online. Those attending the 2027 gathering are truly in for an extra special treat!

June has been exceptionally busy, gathering and posting details for the 2026 gathering while simultaneously working very hard with Region 7 leaders and the NLSEC to iron out sufficient details for the 2027 gathering to answer the questions that we anticipate will be raised about the cruise-based 2027 gathering. I also began renewing the Host Guidelines document as much of the document needs clarification or revision. This is no small task and it will continue into the coming year.

Please join me in praying for the 2026 gathering Region 3 host committee, the 2027 gathering Region 7 host community, as well as the hosts for 2028 and beyond.

Submitted in love with wishes for peace and joy to you,

Carolyn Witham