

History of the Utah Prayer & Praise Ministry

By John Bradford

One special day, a few years after I attended a Via de Cristo weekend in 1996, I somehow realized that there was open to me an opportunity to expand my support of VDC. I had a computer and an email account at Aros.net. Aros is long gone (bankrupt I think) but, with your help, my new opportunity has grown and expanded through the years.

This opportunity was to gather email addresses from interested VDC people and use those addresses to share prayers from members of Utah VDC. This sounded to me like a simple project that might help bring peace, healing, & salvation to family members and friends of VDC people. Without knowing that it actually wasn't easy, I just started and then bounced over some bumps as time went on. This was a God sized project and we all know that means that it will work as long as we allow God to remain in charge.

I started with about twenty VDC email addresses and then I just began sharing prayer requests with those twenty. As each weekend came to an end I would have some new email addresses to add to the sending list. Many 4th day people would send me more prayer requests, and the process continued and grew in size.

At one point in time my internet service provider (Xmission.com) decided that I must be a spammer because I was sending too many email messages in too short of a time, exactly like spammers do. I called and discussed the problem and was given an optional plan. They told me that

I could use their "Mailman" file server free, "It sends lots of email fast and most people won't think it is spam". "Great" I said, "how does it work?" "Very well" they said, but since I get to use it free I also get to figure it out myself, it is freeware. Hmmm I said, OK I'll give it a try. Long story made short: Yes it is easy, after one first figures it out. I did manage to get it working and it has worked very well for several years. It is lightning fast but is written for computer nerds to understand and use.

So why have I used a different sending service the last two months, you may be asking? I am now using VerticalResearch.com to send the prayer & praise requests for a while because it offers a huge number of options that Mailman has never dreamed of - such as letting me know the email addresses that never open the messages. I'm using these months to determine those "never opened" addresses that I can purge from the list Utah VDC addresses. This will make it much easier for me to administer the sending list.

At this time we send to about 430 VDC email addresses and have shared more than 2000 prayer requests. I can't imagine how many prayers have been offered in response to these requests.

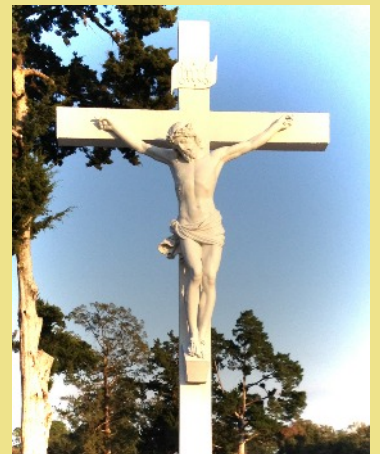
At the recent (July 2012) national VDC meeting in Denver I had several people ask me how I operate and manage the Prayer & Praise sending system here in Utah. I was surprised that many other VDC Communities aren't already sharing prayer requests within their communities. We should be praying for them to get started now.

God's peace, John Bradford



PS: The newly elected Spiritual Director for the National Lutheran Secretariat of Via de Cristo is named Pastor John Bradford. I think he is the good twin.

To add your email address to the Prayer Request & Praise Report, contact John at joab@xmission.com.



What is a renewal group?

By Debbie Baum

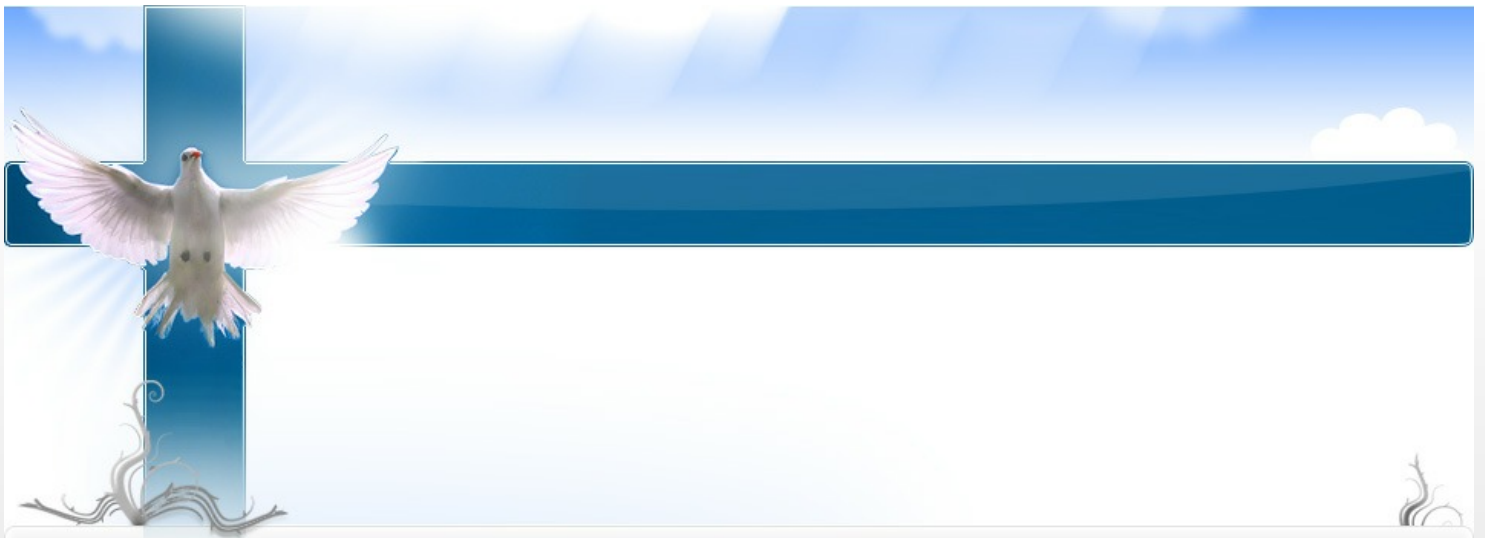
The first organizational principle of the church was small groups (Acts 2:41-47). As we become part of a larger body, it is even more important for us to connect with a smaller community for unity with each other. We rely on our smaller group during difficult times for comfort and prayer, encouragement and support, and most of all, confidentiality. We take delight in sharing praises with each other for all the great things God has done in our lives. Ideally, a renewal group should consist of 6-8 of those people that feel a strong connection with each other so that the group encourages openness and reaching out to each other. However, some renewal groups choose to be an "open group", meaning they are willing to accept additional members at any given time. Renewal groups can be made up of all men or women, couples, singles or mixed - it's completely up to the group and you can be in more than one group at a time.

Prayer is a vital part the renewal group and should be included each time, whether you pray for individuals or your group as a whole. It can be as simple as saying grace before a meal, or sharing prayer requests and praying for each other until the group meets again. Romans 8:26-27 tells us we don't have to be nervous praying privately or publicly, the Holy Spirit will give us the words when we pray. Some groups choose to incorporate a bible study along with prayer which facilitates an aspect of growth through God's word. Whichever your group decides, remember it is most important to keep it God centered.

Finally, no matter what the dynamics of the group are, allow God to work in each of you and change lives through spiritual growth, authentic community, selfless actions, servanthood and support of one another. Keep in mind that each person in the group is on his or her own spiritual journey and although we must let God guide this journey, we are to simply meet them where they are at.

If you would like more information about joining an existing or establishing a new renewal group, please contact me at 801-870-0147 or via email to Debbie_Doo_Little@comcast.net.

GLYASDI



VIA de CRISTO is based on the fundamentals of Christianity, concentrating on the person and teachings of Jesus Christ. The focus is not on VIA de CRISTO itself, but on the environment of the community of believers. The objective of the movement is to inspire, challenge and equip people for Christian action in their homes, churches and communities.



VDC Church Liaisons Needed

Liaisons are needed for the churches listed below. If you are a member of one of the church and are interested in helping in this capacity, please contact Denise McConkay via email at mccden@yahoo.com or phone at (801) 633-6366.

- Grace Lutheran, Bountiful
- Holy Cross, Brigham City
- Lehi Bible Church, Lehi
- Cottonwood Heights
- Mountain of Faith Lutheran, Tooele
- St. Matthews, Taylorsville
- Salt Lake Four Square
- Zions Lutheran

Next Ultreya

September 16th, 2012

3pm – 5pm.

Our Savior's in Roy

Please bring a dish to share, Weekend badge to help with names, and Abrazos for all !!!!

Palanca

The Spanish word, palanca, means "lever". As a lever, it is used to describe prayer and sacrifice because a lever allows a person to move things which are beyond his strength, just as prayer and sacrifice allows an apostle to accomplish more than he would otherwise be capable of accomplishing.



Preach the Gospel at all times... and when necessary, use words. – Saint Francis of Assisi

Stay Connected

With technology and gadgets today, there are so many ways to keep informed as to what's going on. People – Places – Events can all be found by using any of the following ways.

Utah VDC Website:	www.utahvdc.org
National VDC Website:	www.viadecristo.org
Face Book Page:	Utah VDC
Prayer Request & Praise Report:	John Bradford - joab@xmission.com
Prayer Meetings/Groups:	Cathy Ricci - cathy@riccifamily.com