



DIAKONIA

News

Newsletter
of
FOUNDATION DIAKONIA
WORLD FEDERATION
of
DIACONAL
ASSOCIATIONS
and
DIACONAL COMMUNITIES

Editorial	2
President Letter	2
Review 20 th Assembly	3
New Executive	6

DIAKONIA WORLDWIDE

Introduction Regional Presidents	7
Executive Meeting	8

From Around The World

DAP	12
DOTAC	13
DRAE	14
DIAKONIA Yesterday & Today	16
Deaconess Nursing Dreams	16

Theological Reflections

The Contrite Heart	17
A Devotional Page	19
Prayer	20

Editors:

Jane Martin
16 Wentworth Road
DUNDEE DD2 3SD
SCOTLAND, UK
Phone/Fax: ++44-1382-813 786
english.editor@diakonia-world.org

Ulrike Kellner
Pressburger Str. 85
81377 München
GERMANY
Phone: ++49-89-7105 6814
deutsch.editor@diakonia-world.org

No. 95, May 2010

FROM YOUR EDITORS

Time passes so quickly and there never seems to be enough of it to do all that should be done and all that we would like to do. We apologise for the lateness of this Newsletter but hope it gives you a flavour of what has happened and what has still to happen.



DIAKONIA News Editors Jane Martin and Ulrike Kellner

As editors we have enjoyed reading some of the newsletters that are sent to us and thank you for these.

The material sometimes is not so suitable to share with everyone as it is often 'in house' as we say, but as Editors and members of the Executive Committee it allows us to get a feel for what is happening in DIAKONIA throughout the world. So we would ask you to keep them coming. If there was an item or story you would like everyone to know about please send it to us with such a request.

*Jane Martin, English Editor
Ulrike Kellner, German Editor*

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends in DIAKONIA,
It is just some months since I was elected for President at the DIAKONIA World Assembly in Atlanta.

To serve God by serving people – this I see as my calling in whatever mission, occupation, position or situation. Watchword and Doctrinal Text for July 26 2009 are guidance for me: Proverbs 8,13: The fear of the Lord is to hate evil. 2. Thess. 3, 13: but as for you brethren, do not grow weary in doing good. Also the theme of the DIAKONIA World Assembly: **Diakonia crossroads of grace – revive and reconcile** shows our mission, but also very clearly our challenges. In our doing and acting we are relying on Gods presence, on his love and caring. We can trust that God is with us on our way.

Diakonia – crossroads of grace – this could be the title for my life story as well. And so I want to introduce myself to you. I am very grateful to have grown within a family where Gods word, devotion and community were central pieces of daily life. Since 40 years I am "Diakonieschwester" within the Ev. Diakonieverein Berlin-Zehlendorf. After my training as a

nurse I worked in several hospitals in Germany before I went to Nigeria for the first time in 1977. It was a three-year assignment at a partner church of the evangelical Methodist Church in Nigeria.



DIAKONIA World President Doris Horn

After studying at the nursing college in Berlin, Germany (management and teaching) I returned to Nigeria for another 8 years. There I was helping build up a church health service. Since my return to Germany in 1991 I have been working as leading sister and nursing director, first in Cologne and now in Mülheim/Ruhr. Di-

aconal theological training at the Hei-mathaus of the sisterhood in Berlin led to my consecration into the ministry of the diaconate in 1992. During all these years my bonds with the sisterhood of the Ev. Diakonieverein have become stronger. Community and especially the diaconal emphasis were and are both, strengthening and assignment for me.

To work within DIAKONIA is a great joy for me, but also a challenge and a widening of the diaconal calling. To serve God in serving people – for me this is calling, mission and blessing all together. Not always is it easy to realise Gods presence or to experience an interchange as crossroads of grace. Gods way with me goes over ups and downs, but it is always a way together with him.

When I look back to over 60 years of DIAKONIA, there were ups and downs too, times where Gods grace was more

apparent than in others. But God is always there, crossing our path with grace and mercy.

Crossroads of grace – in lent season we are reminded how Jesus was meeting the people in his surrounding, how he washed the feet of his disciples, how he shared bread with everybody, also with Judas, how caring he advised, blessed, cried, healed and deliberated from death. Even there when he was captured or nailed onto the cross, he was full of love and facing the people.

Christ is meeting us in service, the crucified and the revealed. May he meet us again and again and bless us in our service. May we in DIAKONIA continue to build new possibilities for encounters with grace. Gods Blessing guides us!

*DIAKONIA President
Doris Horn*

20th Assembly of World DIAKONIA Federation **July 20 – 27, 2009, Theme: Crossroads of Grace – Revive and Reconcile**

Atlanta, Georgia, USA may well be the home of Coca Cola and CNN News but it is also the home of Georgia Institute of Technology where our Assembly was held.



The Assembly was hosted by DOTAC and it was therefore their choice to hold it in Atlanta. The College Campus was excellent and the weather was hot. The food was good and the fellowship was warm and engaging.

Over three hundred and thirty participants from around thirty countries gathered together and shared their life, work and witness.

The opening worship of the Assembly was held in St. Mark's Methodist Church and

the closing worship was held in Central Presbyterian Church.

Worship on the Sunday morning was shared among many Churches in Atlanta.

Main Speakers were:

Sara Miles – Sara is a well know author. She is director of Ministry at St. Gregory of Nyassa Episcopal Church in San Francisco and the founder of The Food Pantry, which provided free groceries to over 650 families every week around the alter of the Church. As well as telling us something of her own story Sara shared stories which give the courage to **be** Jesus. As Jesus, after his resurrection, breathes on his disciples saying "Peace be upon you... Receive the Holy Spirit...As the Father sent me, so I send you", she encouraged others to accept that new life giving breath to live as Jesus lived, to feed, heal and raise the dead.

(Themes of her presentation came from her new book, "After He Breathed".)

Dr. Glory E. Dharmaraj – led us in our Bible Studies. Gloria Dharmaraj is Director of Spiritual Formation and Mission Theology for the Women’s Division of the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church. She is also the author of a number of books. Her theme for the two Bibles Studies was “God Heals” and “God Sends”

Rev. Dr. Walter Altmann – is president of the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil (IECLB). He is also a Moderator with World Council of Churches. His message focused on the need for diakonia and the role of the diaconates in the churches today and in the future.

Dr. Altmann also led a lunch time seminar for those who are in leadership in their communities and associations.



Singing outside the meeting hall

Workshops: There was a choice from 35 workshops which could be attended. The workshops were designed to reflect the themes of the Assembly and to give participants an opportunity to see how these themes are being implemented by both the church and the Community. The stories of diaconal ministry in the world and presentation of pertinent topics allowed discussion on issues important to the World Federation members. Workshops were led by people from around the world and as well as some being informative, others allowed for refreshment and renewal of mind, soul and body, and to experience God’s grace in the midst of a busy time.



Example of a small group at the Assembly

Small groups: For many people this is the place where they make the best connections, not only to the theme of the Conference but with one another. Questions were given for discussion, which were helpful, but there was also the time and space for people to be able to share something about themselves.

There were also **daily themes** and Scripture texts to help us in our reflections.

Day 1 Opening Worship (and Closing worship) – Zechariah 8: 1-8

Day 2 God....Welcomes
Mark 9: 33-42 and Luke 14: 15-24

Day 3 God....Heals
Luke 13: 10-17 and Mark 8: 22-26

Day 4 God....Enfolds
Luke 16: 19-31

Day 5 God....Blesses
Luke 2: 25-38 and Mark 10: 13-16

Day 6 God....Sends
Mark 16:14-20 and Acts 26: 12-17

Day 7 Sabbath...
John 6: 1-21



Prepared to visit ministries

During the week one morning was given over to visit ministry cites throughout the

City and the afternoon to explore Atlanta's local attractions. And in the evening we enjoyed a Cultural Celebration of southern rock and blues music, Latin American dancers, and a youth step dance group.



Cascade United Methodist Church Gospel Choir

Two highlights of the evening were Cascade United Methodist Church Gospel choir who moved us with their singing and Todd Little, a local High School Art Teacher who created (painted), using his fingers, a wonderful portrait of Jesus.



WORLD FOCUS EVENTS

Three World Focus events took place, which showed in picture form, word and song, a little of the life and work of each Region. During these Focus Events the business of an Assembly of delegates was carried out by presenting the Financial Report, acknowledging new members (Canada & Nigeria), a History of DIAKONIA and something of the work that is done in our Executive Committee working groups.

It was also the time to thank the Executive Committee for their work over the past four years and a special thanks to Louise Wil-

liams who has been President not only for four years but eight years. Louise carried this task with great warmth and enthusiasm and was an encouragement not only to the committee but to the different groups she was able to visit and share time with. The New Executive Committee was presented and accepted and the new President Sr. Doris Horn was elected.

A lasting memory for everyone will be the times of worship when we were led so ably in our singing with music from a great band of musicians. The times of worship were thoughtful, joyful and sensitive.

Sr. Ursula Dangschat writes

A refreshing variety always in the singing and praying together, listening to each other, learning from each other and the hearing of God's word.



Queuing for Lunch

Deaconess Carmen Reinhardt

Boundaries cannot be overstepped - for example when visas are denied.

Boundaries can be overstepped – I made this experience.

As different as we are, we are connected by Christ. This connection you can feel at a DIAKONIA Assembly very intensely. We are different in our languages, nations or church denominations, but here we are united. This unity was sensed especially when we all prayed the Lord's Prayer, every one in his or her own language.

There will be many different memories of this Conference but the most memorable for all of us will be that of David and Edie Eickemeyer and their team for such organizing skills, their warmth of welcome and

continuous care throughout the week for each one who attended, from the moment we arrived till the time we left. At the closing Focus Event they were presented with the painting that Todd Little had done. A small gesture for a big work well done.

An invitation to hold the next Assembly in Berlin in 2013 was made by the Associations in Germany and this was accepted.



The new DIAKONIA World Executive Committee and their Alternates at the Closing Service

One of the places of interest visited was the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial and Exhibition Centre. This gave a very vivid view of his life and the struggle for freedom and equality for all blacks in the US and in particular the Southern States. It was done by word, sound and vision and was very moving.

Among the many souvenirs to be purchased was a postcard with these words which could be used to describe our diaconal calling.

“Everybody can be great. Because anybody can serve. You don’t have to have a college degree to serve. You don’t have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You don’t have to know about Plato and Aristotle to serve. You don’t have to know Einstein’s Theory of Relativity to serve. You don’t have to know the second theory of thermo-dynamics in physics to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.”

Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

DIAKONIA World President: Sr. Doris Horn, Germany

DAP President and World Vice President: Dc. Emma Cantor, Philippines

DOTAC President and World Vice President: Dc. Lisa Polito, USA

DRAE President and World Vice President: Dc. Jackie Fowler, England

Regular Members:

Dc. Shirley-Joy Barrow, New Zealand

Dc. Ingrid Vogt, Brazil

Sr. Elly Urio, Tanzania,

Dc. Terttu Pohjolainen, Finland

Rev. Marianne Uri Øverland, Norway

Sr. Margrit Muther, Switzerland

Sr. Sabine Ritter, Germany

Dc. Ulrike Kellner, Germany

Alternates:

Sandy Boyce, Australia

Ristua Sirait, Indonesia

Margret Robertson, Canada

Jan Cherry, USA

Eliayka Mary Oruko, Kenya

Marja-Liisa Sabbah, Finland

Merete Pelle-Poulsen, Danmark

Cathrin Fitzsimons, England

Peter Geene, Netherlands

Ekkehard Becker, Germany

Officers:

Treasurer: Laura Lazer, USA

English Editor of DIAKONIA News: Jane Martin

Secretary and Editor of DIAKONIA-Nachrichten: Dc. Ulrike Kellner

Webmaster: Capt. Neil Thomson

Introducing DIAKONIA Regional Presidents

DAP PRESIDENT: EMMA CANTOR



Emma is an International Missioner with Women, Children and Youth with the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church in the Philippines and is assigned

to the East Asia/Pacific region to facilitate gender training and leadership development.

Emma earned a BA degree in Christian education from Harris Memorial College and an MA in women and religion from St. Scholastica's College/Institute. She completed further studies in feminist theology through St. Scholastica's Office of Formation and Religious Studies.

She has worked for the library of the Institute of Religion and Culture in Quezon City, was also programme co-ordinator of the women's desk for the National Council of Churches in the Philippines, and as executive secretary for the Board of Women's Work in Manila.

Emma is married to Joselito Orate, and they have one daughter, Johanna May.

DOTAC PRESIDENT: LISA POLITO



Lisa is a member of the Lutheran Deaconess Association graduating from Valparaiso University in 1990. She served as the Director of Chaplaincy Services for Good Shepherd Lutheran Home of the West in Southern California before joining the staff at LDA as Director of Development and Public Relations for

seven years. In January 2008 she was appointed Executive Director of the Lutheran Deaconess Association.

As well as writing articles, Lisa speaks at Conferences and lead Retreats.

She has served on the Central Committee of DOTAC for a number of years before becoming President.

Lisa is married to Carmine Polito, a civil engineering professor at Valparaiso University.

DRAE PRESIDENT: JACKIE FOWLER

Jackie was born in England and is a member of the Methodist Diaconal Order.



She graduated with a B.A.(Hons) in Librarianship in 1981 and served as a Librarian in Government Service. She then graduated from

Queen's College, Birmingham in 1994 with a Diploma in Theology

Her working life has included both rural and inner city churches working with children, youth, elderly people, ethnic groups, refugees and asylum seekers as well as multi faith groups. A lot of her work has been done ecumenically in the communities where she has served.

She has also served on a number of Committees of the Methodist Church and recently on the selection Committee for those entering diaconal ministry.

As a member of DRAE she accompanied the president on a visit to Zambia and South Africa.

Jackie was also very involved in the planning of the World Assembly at Durham in 2005.

DIAKONIA WORLDWIDE

DIAKONIA's main web address: www.diakonia-world.org

DIAKONIA EXECUTIVE MEETING AT LAHTI DIACONAL INSTITUTE, LAHTI, FINLAND, March 14 – 20th 2010

President, Sr. Doris Horn, welcomed the new Executive Committee to this their first full meeting after the World Conference. A warm welcome was given to **Laura Lazar**, from the USA as the new Treasurer for DIAKONIA World Federation and an expression of gratitude was made for the work of the previous Treasurer, **Pieter van Rijssel**.

One evening, the Executive Committee was formally greeted by the director of Lahden Diaconal Institute, Timo Pokki, who gave an overview of Lahti Diaconal Institute.

They are the second oldest Diaconal Foundation in Finland. Although it is a diaconal school, unfortunately they no longer train deaconesses and deacons. This training is now done in the larger polytechnic school in Helsinki.



Pekka Särkiö, Timo Pokki and Maja Vehvilainen of Lahti Diaconal Institute and DIAKONIA President Doris Horn

On another day the Committee spent time in discussion regarding the diaconate in Finland with 20 deaconesses and deacons, as well as some staff from the Lahti Diaconal Institute. They also shared something of the work that they do.

One evening we had the opportunity to attend the rehearsal of the theatre group of the Institute. They performed a play regarding human trafficking. This was one

of the topics the Executive Justice group were looking at.



At the outing

One evening we had an outing through the snowy woods of Southern Finland to spend time at an old rural restaurant where we experience Finish hospitality with sauna, swimming in an ice hole and traditional food cooked over an open fire. This was a gift from the Lahti Diaconal Institute.

President's Report

As it was only a few months since the President was elected there was not a great deal to report. Doris did express her wish that the executive members would grow together and work in a good way for DIAKONIA World Federation, to bring good news, to proclaim peace and salvation. She also reminded us about the prayer day and how this can be used in a better way. Although when it started it was a personal thing that Doris had taken on board she felt it should now be seen as belonging to the World Federation and she was encouraging all groups to send items for prayer and to take ownership of such a great means of communicating the needs of the world.

As President, together with the Secretary she had spent time in seeing that the Finance of the World Federation was in order, as far as was possible, for handing over to the new Treasurer. Thanks was given to Sr. Doris and an encouragement for the year that lies ahead.

Secretary's Report

Sr. Ulrike again reminded us of our problems of communicating poorly. Although most of the committee had an email address sometimes this method failed to get the required responses. There is a need for everyone to be vigilant in our communication. With a World Assembly the past year had been busy with evaluations and tidying up. The Executive Committee expressed their thanks for all the work that Sr. Ulrike does on our behalf.

Regional Report DAP

Both the Regional President and the Vice President expressed their disappointment that the 2013 DIAKONIA World Assembly would not take place in the DAP Region.

Philippines: Diakonia of the Philippines held their 27th biennial assembly in October 2009 and adopted the theme of the World Assembly "Crossroads of Grace"

The Diakonia Sisterhood in **Korea** is now registered as a social work foundation. There are plans to send some students to Australia for a programme on diaconal vocation and English Language.

Vietnam will also be sending a student to Australia for deaconess vocation training. The Methodist Deaconesses in **India** are preparing to a Deaconess Assembly in July 2010.

Sri Lanka Methodist Church has established a deacon and deaconess Order within their church structure and will send two students to Harris Memorial College in the Philippines for vocational training.

Regional Report DOTAC

The **next DOTAC Conference will be in Oklahoma, Ohio, USA, 10-14 July 2011. The theme will be 'Chairs at the feet of God'.**

All officers in DOTAC are new this year and this is a special challenge as is translation. The next DOTAC Overcoming Violence Experience (DOVE) is to be held in September 2012 in Recife, Brazil.

Regional Report DRAE

This is the biggest Region within DIAKONIA World Federation with 56% of

the World membership and 74% of the people. There are 19 languages.

In their Regional Executive meeting prior to the World Executive meeting a discussion took place regarding new representation of members on the Executive, both DRAE and DIAKONIA World. A final decision is still to be made.

The next DRAE conference will be held in Moshi, Tanzania at 21-16 July 2011. The theme will be 'Help from beyond the Mountain'. Places are limited and the aim is to enable 60 African individuals to attend.

Finances

Annual Report 2009

The new Treasurer Laura Lazar presented the annual report for 2009, prepared by the former Treasurer Pieter van Rijssel. Due to the fact that the Atlanta Assembly came out with a surplus, the financial balance in 2009 remained positive.



Old Treasurer Pieter van Rijssel and new Treasurer Laura Lazar

Other financial matters

- All intellectual property held by the former Treasurer must be returned to the president to be deposited in the Archives.
- To recognize the former treasurer's work it was agreed to gift to him the computer, printer and other paper office supplies.
- There are a number of outstanding membership fees and some of these may have to be written off. An attempt will be made by the new Treasurer to collect all membership fees for 2009.

- Excess income from Atlanta World Conference is distributed in the following way - 1/6th DIAKAID Fund 5/6ths to the Travel Fund.
- Install a satellite dish for the Lya-mungo Retreat Centre, Tanzania to enable Sr. Elly to join the email communication with the DIAKONIA World Executive Committee.
- A budget for 2011 was drawn up and agreed.

DIAKAID and Emergency Fund

Zambia had a request last year to sponsor small motor bikes. This was agreed in principle at a total cost of 3,750 Euro. Unfortunately the paper work for this has not yet been received and the money has therefore not been distributed. On receipt of the relevant paperwork the money will be transferred.

Malawi received help with education of two sisters in South Africa. A Report has been received and on receipt of the next student costs the sum of 1,500 Euro will be transferred.

Wesley Diaconal Community in the Caribbean have sent their final report and the project is now finished. A new request has been received but more clarification is needed before it can be agreed and so is held off for another year.

A donation from the **Emergency Fund** was made towards the victims of the Haiti earthquake.

DIAKONIA Assembly

The results of the completed survey, and the evaluation sheets, indicates that the Assembly was a positive experience.



Resting at DIAKONIA World Assembly

More than 50% of participants were there for the first time. The trend, that more individuals are coming instead of more leading staff of the members, is continuing. This changes the nature of the assembly from an assembly of delegates – which still has to be done – to a conference of individuals, listening, sharing and worshipping together.

The planning group provided the Executive Committee and the planning group for Berlin with a detailed report of their experiences. The responsibilities between world, region and local planning team are not clear and need to be specified.



At DIAKONIA Assembly

The election process has to be reviewed during the coming 4 years.

Due to confusion in connection with the application for hosting the 2013 Assembly in New Zealand, guidelines and procedures to apply for hosting a world assembly will be developed within the next 2-3 years, to be ready in time for the invitation of the assembly 2017.

A letter of apology regarding the confusion will be written by the President to DANZA in New Zealand.

The Executive Committee thanked the Atlanta Planning Group for the good assembly with a letter which was sent to the convenor, Edi Eickemeyer.

Next World Assembly – Berlin – 1-8th July 2013

A theme has been suggested “Salvation – Healing”, but this still needs to be worked upon.

Ecumenical Contacts

Permanent International Ecumenical Consultation of Religious (PIECR)

The next consultation will be 27-30th April 2010 at the Ecumenical Monastery of Bose, Italy, and the Executive will be represented by Jackie Fowler, President of DRAE.

International Diaconate Centre (IDZ/IDC)

This organization is an association of Roman Catholic Deacons and their wives. DIAKONIA representative is Ulrike Kellner. Like DIAKONIA the IDZ is connecting deacons all over the world, but unlike DIAKONIA they are all within one church and the membership is personal.

The new President of IDZ, Prof. Klaus Kießling attended the DIAKONIA Assembly in Atlanta.



Ulrike Kellner, Klaus Kießling, Louise Williams at the IDZ Conference, Vienna 2009

Since the Atlanta Assembly Ulrike Kellner has had the opportunity to meet twice with her counterpart on IDZ, Deacon Erik Thouet.

More information about IDZ on their Website: <http://idz.drs.de> or by email to the secretary (idz@bo.drs.de).

World Council of Churches (WCC)

DIAKONIA representative at the WCC, Terttu Pohjolainen attended the Central Committee in Geneva in September 2009. Terttu reminded us about the structures of WCC in general and described the possibilities of DIAKONIA being invited to attend the WCC Central Committee meetings.

The next Assembly of WCC will be held in Busan, Republic of Korea, probably in spring 2013

DIAKONIA NEWS

Jane Martin apologized for the lateness of the Newsletter and indicated it would be ready a few weeks after this Executive meeting.

Jane also announced her retirement from being the DIAKONIA News Editor, but is happy to continue until a new person is appointed. The search begins for a replacement.

Website

Neil Thomson, Webmaster continues in this position and introduced the DIAKONIA Website. As the work of the webmaster is becoming more and more important to DIAKONIA World Federation the Executive Committee decided to add the Webmaster to the officers.

Interview with former Executive members

This is an ongoing project and new names are continually being added.

Work Groups and Task Groups

These are ongoing groups dealing with such things as how we communicate with each other, our churches and other bodies; the future of World DIAKONIA; DIAKONIA theology; justice, peace and reconciliation, structures and relationship to regions.



New DIAKONIA Executive at Lahti

The next Executive Meeting will be held in Moshi, Tanzania 26th-31st July 2011.

NEWS AROUND THE WORLD

From the Region DIAKONIA ASIA PACIFIC (DAP)

Regional President Sala Naucabalavu on behalf of the deaconesses in **Fiji** had welcomed fellow deacons and deaconesses to the **DAP Conference** held in their country. Louise Williams as DIAKONIA President had been able to attend. Because of the geography of the region the attendance had been low, but those who were there had enjoyed the fellowship and the deaconesses of Fiji had been greatly encouraged. It had been a highlight for them. The political situation in Fiji gives cause for concern and the church had called for a 10 day fast and prayer.

Korea. The sisters report of encouragement given by many people in materials, time and prayer. They continue their work at the House of Spirituality and Peace and offer a place of spiritual peace and rest. Their Household Support Project continues to reach out to the poor of their area offering practical help to those with great needs.



New leading Sister Young Sook Lee

Together with their new leading sister Young-Sook Lee the sisters of the community have loosened the rules for joining them. Women of over 35 years of age can now join and young widows and divorced women are now welcome. The work of the sisters is well respected within the Country



Korean Deaconesses at the Assembly

India: It was hoped that for the first time the three member groups from India would be able to meet together in 2009/10. Communication within the Asia Pacific Region is sometimes very difficult and can be frustrating for those who are trying to keep up contacts.

Philippines: Since its inception Diakonia Philippines has been a Federation of Deaconess Assn and Church Women Workers whose ecumenical spirit is reflected in all its endeavors. Presently, membership comes from the UMC Commission on Deaconess Service, UCCP Church Women workers and Church related Institutions Women Workers, IEMELIF Association of Deaconesses. In October 26-30th 2009 they held their 14th National Biennial Assembly. Using the World Conference theme: *Diakonia –Crossroads of Grace: Revive and Reconcile*, 104 deaconesses, church women workers including some women clergy actively participated in small group discussions, following the keynote address of **Deaconess Emma Cantor-Orate**, newly elected President of DIAKONIA Asia Pacific Region and automatically Vice President of the World DIAKONIA, during the World DIAKONIA Assembly held in Atlanta, Georgia, USA last July 27-31,

Do not forget to send to us your Newsletters, new and stories you want to share with our International Sisters and Brothers – everything is very welcomed!

From the Region DIAKONIA of the Americas and the Caribbean. (DOTAC)

DOTAC are very active in seeking out and communicating with diaconal groups within their Region. Contacts have been made in Honduras, Cuba, Mexico, Brazil and Peru. Their Central Committee has been working on a new Brochure, Member Handbook and Web Page.

They have also been working on hosting the DIAKONIA World Assembly in Atlanta, Georgia in July 2009.

The next DOTAC Conference will be held in Oklahoma 2011

The next DOVE seminar will be held in Brazil in 2012.

DOVE stands for DOTAC Overcoming Violence Experience.

Linda Ervin stands down from the office of President and **Lisa Polito** was elected.

Lisa is Executive Director of the Lutheran Deaconess Association in the U.S. and will become a member of DIAKONIA Executive Committee.



Fees, donations and contributions you may send to the following accounts:

Bank account 38 81 759 DIAKONIA World Federation

1081 KL Amsterdam, Netherlands/Niederlande

IBAN: NL92 INGB 0003 8817 59 BIC: INGBNL2A

Or

Konto Nr. 4002199 Stiftung DIAKONIA

Ev. Kreditgenossenschaft, BLZ 520 604 10

IBAN: DE23 5206 0410 0004 0021 99 BIC: GENODEF1EK1

From the Region Africa-Europe (DRAE)

Cameroon: The buildings for the centre for handicapped people are slowly progressing. Three sisters are being prepared and trained to start the programme for the handicapped. Sr. Judith will retire in 2010

Ruanda: The sad news of Sister Anke Slagmolen passing away last year has left deep scars. The support from Amerongen in the Netherlands has been good. Sister Berthe is now the leading sister. The sisterhood celebrated their 25th Anniversary in December 2009.



The new leading team of Rubengera, Ruanda

Malawi: With the money from DIAKOID Elizabeth and Alice have finished their first year of training with the Order of Deacons in South Africa. They have also started some self help projects for women e.g. poultry management.

Madagascar: The sisters continue to be busy and upbeat despite the difficult political situation. They have had major repairs and alterations to their buildings. They also keep close relationships with the Grandchamp Community in Switzerland where they have had assistance with training. Some of the sisters are studying English. Their work with the prisoners and the local children continues and their farming and gardening project is flourishing. They are also making clerical garments for the Clergy.

South Africa: The Methodist Diaconal Order is growing slowly. At their April 2009 Convocation 5 new candidates for the diaconate were welcomed.

Tanzania: A partnership between the Hospital at Karagwe and Sr. Doris Horn's hospital in Mülheim/Ruhr, Germany has been established and Sr. Doris will co-ordinate this partnership.

The sisterhood in Moshi will host the DRAE Conference in 2011 and plans are underway for that.

Switzerland: There are good memories of our Regional Conference in 2007. Sr. Margrit Muther of the Conference of Swiss Motherhouses was elected as the representative for France/Switzerland/Netherlands on the Executive Committee.

France: Due to falling membership the sisterhood of Neuenberg has cancelled their membership of DIAKONIA.

Netherlands: Up to 2010 there are two member groups which kept good connections and communications 1. The Deaconesses of Amerongen (11 sisters) and 2. The Association of Diaconal Workers (35 members). The second group is ending their existence at the end of 2010.

Nordic Countries (Sweden, Norway, Denmark including Finland)

The work in these countries continues in Education, Social Work, Hospital and Pastoral Care. Many of the Sisterhoods and Diaconal Institutes are working with volunteers in a variety of service to their communities.

In Finland there are about 1400 deacons and deaconesses working in the diaconal work of the Church.



DIAKONIA Executive meets with Teuvo Siivonen, leading deacon of Lahti region

Germany: 70 years celebration of "Verbandsschwesternschaft" (later called diaconal sister). In March 1939 the Foundation of Kaiserswerth Motherhouses (KWV) founded an association of communities of diaconal sisters within the German motherhouses so that they did not have to join the NS nurse association. First leading sister was Auguste Mohrmann, who was already working for the KWV. The found-

ing has been prepared from 1926 by the motherhouses of Neuendettelsau, Bremen, Bethel and Rotenburg/Wümme. When the pressure from the NS state increased the president of KWV Siegfried Graf von Lüttichau acted quickly and invested Auguste Mohrmann as leading sister. All free nurses were included into the new association. They could be recognized by the special uniform, a special cap and the brooch of the Kaiserswerth Association.

The new president of the Kaiserswerth Association (KWV), Oberin Sr. Esther Selle, has given her vision for the association: During the past 30 years when she was belonging to the Motherhouse Dresden, she learned to value and to love the KWV as a network of diaconal institutions and Communities. Therefore she wants to continue to offer the chance to meet, to listen to each other, to learn from each other, to support each other, strengthen each other's faith and celebrate together, not only the members of the diaconal communities but also employees of those institutions. This will be done by offering meetings on grass root level as a high priority. Beside that, she wants to advance networking among the different houses by theological and diaconal education. She wants to encourage new growing communities and assist sisterhoods that are decreasing. The constitution shall be reviewed so that management and executive are separated better.

The Association of German Diaconal Institutions within the German Evan-

gelical Church is demanding that caring for a relative is not leading into an overburden of those who care. Therefore projects which help caring relatives have to be extended and caring relatives shall get their own claim of preventing and rehabilitating activities. Security in older age shall be extended, a consultation network for caring relatives has to be built and more projects for helping them in their local environment is demanded.

Stuttgart, Germany: What does it mean to be a Christian based diaconal hospital to students? How do they connect with the idea of a diaconal community and what expectation do they have? These questions nursing students of the Diaconal Hospital in Stuttgart could reflect upon during a diaconal weekend in June 2009. This project received a very positive response from the students.

Neuendettelsau/Germany: "You shall be a blessing" was the theme of the 3rd Christian Nursing Congress 2009 which took place in Neuendettelsau from 29.10. – 1.11.2009. The question, how patients and relatives can be included into the nursing process was discussed under ethical and practical questions. Key speaker was the famous nursing scientist Sr. Liliane Juchli. Spirituality within nursing practice Juchli compared to a Lighthouse – one the one hand it gives orientation, is concentrated on others – on the other hand the light must be taken care of, that means nursing people have to watch their own light.



The Sarepta Sisters in Bethel/Germany are mourning the death of Sr. Ingrid von Hacht, who died on February 26, 2010 at the age of 87 years. When the

DIAKONIA World Assembly was held in Bethel 1975, Sr. Ingrid was mainly organizing this event.

No one who waits on You will be ashamed (Ps 25.3)

Sister Traute Kruse

* 15.08.1962 – consecrated 01.05.1980 - + 01.07.2009
Sister Traute Kruse was alternate to Sr. Doris Horn at the DIAKONIA World Executive for a short period on behalf of the Deutscher Gemeinschafts Diakonieverband. She belonged to the motherhouse of Altvandsburg, where she was manager and public relation officer from 2002-2005. Sr. Traute died after a long illness and we all are mourning her death but believe that she now sees what she believed all her life.

DIAKONIA – Yesterday and Today Member in the Family of Diaconia

At the World DIAKONIA Assembly in Atlanta 2009 **Diakonieschwester Doris Horn**, leading sister at the Evangelical Hospital in Mühlheim, Ruhr/Germany was elected as World President of DIAKONIA. Doris Horn is the first German President of DIAKONIA, the federation of diaconal associations and communities. In 1947 it was founded after World War II in the Netherlands without Germans present.

Germany had started the Second World War, which brought unspeakable misery over the whole of Europe and most of the world really. Who wonders that the Germans who had caused this unspeakable misery were not welcomed – even in church and diaconia.

Therefore it was quite remarkable that already in 1949 all 5 German associations of female diaconia were invited to attend the conference in Zollikerberg/Zürich, Switzerland as guests. It must have been quite a moving conference. At its beginning the German guests confessed their guilt and in the end they were invited to join DIAKONIA! 1951, at the delegate meeting in Utrecht/Den Haag, Netherlands four of the German associations were accepted as full members.

Until 1975, every three years there was an assembly, after that every four years. At the first conference outside Europe, 1972 in New York, Betsy Ewing was elected as World President. She was the first woman in this office. Before that presidents or directors of various diaconal associations held that office. 70 years after the unholy Second World War we now have a German DIAKONIA World president.

Certainly, several delegates had difficulties to elect her and had to jump over their shadows, because even after seven decades the abhorrence of this time and the endless sorrow are still present in many families around the world.

Another step on the stony way towards reconciliation has been done by this election. We Germans can thankfully acknowledge: we now fully belong to the family of diaconia. Reconciliation in the name of Jesus Christ is possible – whatever happened – and so we wish the new DIAKONIA President blessing in all her doing!

*Oberin Margret Gramzow
and Oberin Helga Heß*

from "Die Diakonieschwester" 10/2009 (gekürzt)

DEACONESS' NURSING DREAMS TAKE HER SKY HIGH

By Deaconess Jeanette Rebeck

When Paula Mickan decided to become a nurse, she never imagined her dream occupation would take her to the skies. A consecrated deaconess for five years, today she serves the Cleveland, Ohio Health Medical Center Metro Life Flight (MLF) medical team as a Flight Nurse Specialist.

The MLF team offers hospital-to-hospital critical care transport services. Aboard an emergency response helicopter, Paula is joined by two pilots and a physician. This team is trained to provide any pre-hospital critical care skills that are needed at accident scene. Those on the scene know that when MLF lands that team can be the dif-

ference between life and death for accident victims.

Paula says she wakes up each day excited about going to work and thinks to herself, "Maybe I'll save a life today." Whether she is clearing a patient's airway, inserting a chest tube or administering an emergency blood transfusion, she is treating that patient's individualized need during transport. It is like having a portable emergency room in flight.

When asked, "What is the best part of your work?" she answers: "Being able to actively help direct the patient care. It is a humbling experience to know that I make

a difference and that I can possibly change that persons' life."

Deaconess Paula joins a great company of deaconesses in ministry who, moved by Christ's love, seek to use their God-given gifts and abilities to shape ministry in response to the needs of those around her. Paula says that her life mission is to serve her Lord with all her skills, heart and soul. Born in Papua New Guinea to Nancy (then a missionary deaconess-nurse) and Doug Mickan she was raised in Cleveland and is a member of Messiah Lutheran Church in

Fairview Park, Ohio. Her deaconess mother serves as Messiah's Parish Nurse.

Extracted from LDA Today – winter 2009

From the Editors

If you have a story of work that others would like to know about or be interested in why not send it to us. We are always looking for stories that would influence and encourage others in the work they do.

The Contrite Heart

You will never guess where I was! Imagine, if you can, a dark confined space, swelteringly hot, I could scarcely breathe and when I did, the stench was overpowering, with whiffs of evil gases, I could hear great horrible gurglings and bubblings and overall the loud, steady beat of an enormous engine. Moreover, I was being tossed up and down and round about. I knew very well I was within a living, moving body.

I also knew how I came to be there, I am a prophet and I had disobeyed the Lord. What a fool I was!

He told me to go to Nineveh, a city oozing with sinners and preach to the people so that they would repent. But I had a abhorrence of this idea. I would certainly not go to those terrible people who would probably tear me into little pieces. I would run away and preach somewhere else, maybe Tarshish. Had I forgotten the all seeing eye of the Lord?

So I went to Jaffa and embarked on a boat. But before long there was a terrible storm. The skies were Black, the waves were mountainous, the sailors were all panic stricken and crazy with fear, seeking madly for someone to blame and finding me.

They demanded to know who I was running away from. I muttered "The Lord of Hosts". That was enough. They were appalled and before I knew what was happening I was tossed overboard.

I swam a few strokes and then a great grey mass reared out of the water and vast jaws engulfed me. I fainted and for a time I knew no more. When I came round, there I was, believe it or not, in the belly of a whale.

I did not think the Lord would leave me there for ever. He intended me to obey him, and, you must admit, I really had no choice. After three days and nights being stewed alive in a mass of partially digested fish, worms and reptiles, I had had enough. Sullenly, reluctantly, I said "I will go!"

Instantly there was a great convulsion within the whale and I was projected upwards, like a missile, through the gullet, closing my eyes tight as I passed (praise heaven!) between the terrible jaws and soared high up into glorious sunshine and wonderful sea air, which I drew gratefully into my lungs and landed at last, gently, on a golden shore, with people rushing to me in wonderment. Behind me a great grey shape was diving below the surface of the sea.

"I need a boat for Nineveh" I said, "but first of all I need a bath and fresh clothing." I knew myself to be slimy and sticky and I smelt, I knew, very evilly of fish.

So at last I came to Nineveh, the great city, rife with all manner of dreadful vices and there nightly, I preached to huge crowds and they repented in hordes, with much wailing and beating of breasts. I went to bed a glad, proud man, and then busied myself with the appointment of priests who would doubtless assist the Lord when the heavy hand of justice fell upon his people, as indeed it must. They must assuredly undergo severe punishment for their dreadful misdoings.

I waited long and the punishment never came. Instead, I discovered to my horror that every priest was dispensing forgiveness, a free, bountiful forgiveness. It was outrageous!

I did not know what to do with myself. I took myself off to a high hillside overlooking Nineveh, so beautiful a city, and wept tears of disappointment and rage. Truly, I wanted to die.

A cool, calm voice spoke to me. "Are you right to be angry?" I was only angered the more and fiercely defended myself. "Those evil people should not be allowed to get off scot free. You should call down fire on the city and burn the lot of them!"

"Jonah, Jonah" he said. "I see you are too hot there in the scorching noonday sun with no head covering. I am going to bless you with coolness."

Almost at once a plant began to grow beside me. It grew fast, became leafy, luxuri-

ant and tall, arching over me, giving me the blessed promise of coolness and shade. The relief was immense. I was happy and a little beside myself with excitement. I stroked the leaves and breathed in their fragrance and talked to it, telling it how grateful I was.

Something strange seemed to be happening inside me, a melting, thawing, a softening, the beginnings of a real affection for the plant. It seemed a living friend, the only one I had. I went to sleep a truly happy man.

But in the morning all I found was a pile of withered, brown leaves. My anguish was real and acute; tears arose from my eyes. No friends for me!

A voice of great warmth and tenderness spoke. "Jonah, Jonah, how is it you have tears for a plant and none for my beloved people of Nineveh who need you so badly? I will pour my life into your heart and you will pour it out on them." I yielded utterly. "Yes, my Lord, Yes, Yes, Yes!"

So I went joyfully to the great city. No more preaching damnation, never any more. I visited the people, went in and out among them, and ministered to them, always praising and thanking the Lord. I spent much time with the children telling them stories of the goodness of God. Their favourite story was always the one that began with our chanting the rhyme together. "Oh, I have been inside a whale and I have lived to tell the tale!" Thanks be to the Lord.

*Kay Ramsay, Scotland
A former editor of DIAKONIA News*

Fees, donations and contributions you may send to the following accounts:

**Bank account 38 81 759 Stichting DIAKONIA
Amsterdam, Netherlands/Niederlande
IBAN: NL44 PSTB 0003881759 BIC: PSTBNL2**

Or

**Konto Nr. 4002199 Stiftung DIAKONIA
Ev. Kreditgenossenschaft, BLZ 520 604 10
IBAN: DE23 5206 0410 0004 0021 99 BIC: GENODEF1EK1**

A DEVOTIONAL PAGE

A bowl and towel were presented to a deacon at her recent Service of Ordination. It is a well known familiar symbol of service – that we be servants to one another and to the poor and vulnerable.

However, let's look again briefly at the context of the bowl, the water, the washing, the towel, and the outrage in John's Gospel, Chapter 13! For Peter to have his tired, swollen, dirty feet washed by his Rabbi and Lord was an affront – hence his words, "No, You shall *never* wash my feet!"

I remember my dear Mum in the last phase of her life. She could no longer reach down to dry her toes after a shower. The person who had dried my sandy feet after a dip in the sea, now needed me to dry hers. It was a humbling and moving reversal of roles.

In the striking painting of this by Sieger Koder, one of Peter's hands is held up in a gesture of protest at Jesus performing the task of a common slave. But the other hand is intimately resting over Jesus' kneeling body. The artist portrays in Peter the dilemma of every one of us. Peter wrestles with the conflicting emotions of control, pride and astonished gratitude.

The hymn writer puts it beautifully, '*We strain to glimpse Your mercy seat, and find you kneeling at our feet*'

Then Jesus' words, "If I do not wash you, you have no part in Me." Friends, Jesus' death on the alter at Pesach/Easter cleansed us from top to toe. Our sacrificial Lamb continues to wash us clean with His love and tears for this broken world.

And it's often so hard for us, isn't it, to let someone else serve us? (We're good at the other way round!) Maybe in letting others serve us, we allow the Living Lord to touch us afresh.

Christine Claydon, in her prayer handbook,* writes these words,

'I think, dear Lord, that you are showing me

the softening of the water from the bowl, the need for me to drop into the depths, the fears, and all the things that I desire to control.

It's a softening, just like Peter's feet'

(**Come with me by yourselves to a Quiet Place* – published by Quiet Garden Movement)

Dot Getliffe, Scotland

Important Internet and E-mail Addresses

WEBSITES

DIAKONIA World Federation
DAP
DRAE
DOTAC

<http://www.diakonia-world.org>
<http://www.dap.info>
<http://www.drae.info>
<http://www.dotac.info>

WORLD "OFFICERS"

president@diakonia-world.org
secretary@diakonia-world.org
treasurer@diakonia-world.org
deutsch.editor@diakonia-world.org
english.editor@diakonia-world.org
webmaster@diakonia-world.org

REGIONAL

dap.president@diakonia-world.org
dotac.president@diakonia-world.org
drae.president@diakonia-world.org
drae.secretary@diakonia-world.org
drae.treasurer@diakonia-world.org

Some words for those who like to sew

with threads and materials and who find some peace and satisfaction in that.

In the pattern of God's purpose
We are stitched together in caring and communion.
Scrap of the lingering past,
Fragments broken from future's dearest hopes;
Textures of disappointment and dreams,
Prints of pain and promise:
Calico and corduroy,
Stripes, silks and satin –
All the colours of emotion and experience
Are sewn
Into a crazy quilt
Of life,
Patched together and transformed
Into a blanket
Of love...
Writer unknown

A Prayer for Healing

Lord We thank you for your gift of healing.

Healing not only of our bodies,
although that is precious too.

Healing our spirits
helping us to realize that by your grace there is forgiveness
and taking from us the guilt that eats away inside us.

Healing of our minds
helping us to realize that you have created each one of us
that each one is special, with something to give.

Healing of our relationship
So that old hurts are made well again
Barriers broken down
and new bonds made strong.

Healing that makes us new again
new and whole
A person at peace in body, mind and spirit.
A person at peace with self, with others and with God.
Writer unknown