

## **President's Report DIAKONIA Executive Committee (EC) November 2019**

### **Regional Conferences**

This year each of the Regions held an Assembly/Conference, which will be reported on separately in the Regional reports. A special edition of DIAKONIA News was produced featuring reports from the three Regional events.

### **Financial**

Since the registration of DIAKONIA World Federation in July 2018, finances have been managed by Neuendettelsau. As we meet together, we will need to identify protocols about regular financial reporting to the EC, and expectations of the responsibilities of the EC. A broader discussion of finances - trends, issues, and planning into the future - needs to be a priority.

### **Meeting Dates**

Dates have been set for the 2020 Executive Committee in Frankfurt. The 2021 meeting will precede the DIAKONIA World Assembly. Suggested dates are 25th (travel day) - 29th June 2021, with the Assembly starting on 30th June at the Tropical Resort venue. Dates to be confirmed by the Executive.

### **DIAKONIA World Assembly, Darwin 2021**

Regular meetings to plan for the Assembly are taking place with a small planning committee. Further reporting will be presented at the meeting by Christa and Judy on behalf of the DAP Executive. There were promotion opportunities at each of the Regional gatherings.

### **Communication - Social media and internet**

Dianne Kaufmann and I have begun work on setting up a DAP website consistent with the other regions. Also regular updating of the DIAKONIA World Federation Facebook page, and the President's blog site.

Who else is willing to add information from their Regions on DIAKONIA World Facebook page? As we meet, it will be a good opportunity to discuss best promotional avenue for the DIAKONIA Assembly including whether a specific website can be set up and maintained by the planning team, linked from the front page of the DIAKONIA website.

### **Storage of files**

Currently transferring files to Dropbox. It is free to use Dropbox to a certain capacity. Suggest the Executive Committee accesses current files, and Secretary/President keep files from previous years in an archived location.

### **Justice foci**

There are multiple possible justice foci. The question is, should the Exec Committee have its own justice foci (and be prepared to resource it with information, prayers, action points, etc) and/or collate what diaconal associations are doing in particular areas to honour local justice issues in regions and associations and/or 'piggy back' on issues identified by WCC and/or....

We need to be clear about the role of DIAKONIA World Federation in identifying justice issues and/or 'taking a position' on justice issues, especially in relation to the work of member associations in their local context. A point for further discussion.

### **Resourcing**

What is our (collective) role in resourcing member associations - a collation of diaconal orientated resources for music, prayers, liturgies etc that can be used by member associations; a collation of diaconal resources (new books, websites, papers, journals etc) so the DIAKONIA World website becomes a 'go to' portal for member associations and others.

How do we balance our administrative responsibilities with resourcing opportunities, and who else might contribute if resourcing is a role that DWF can offer to member associations, and visa versa. Ted Dodd has begun posting an article on the DOTAC Facebook page once a month for people to read as a catalyst for discussion about diaconal ministry, encouraging people to make comments around the 26th of each month (DIAKONIA prayer day). 'It will look like a book club that operates online, internationally and ecumenically, for diaconal people who are interested in exchanging ideas and wisdom'.

Ted's postings about diaconal courses have also been helpful in discussing formation for Deacon candidates in the UCA. Is resourcing for ministry formation across the diaconal associations worth an intentional discussion together?

### **Gratitude**

As always, I am very grateful for the faithful work of our DIAKONIA Secretary Traude Leitenberger. We have had several skype calls and many emails since we last met. Thank you Traude, good and faithful service for DIAKONIA.

### **Appreciative Inquiry (AI)**

Some of the fundamental principles of AI may help shape our conversations together and our forward planning. (See below).

As we meet, we will hear reports, talk, discuss, plan, learn from and with each other, and will:

- \* take time to build community and connection - recognising relationships are fundamental to an effective organisational framework, prioritising and planning;
- \* explore further the logistics of DWF financial management;
- \* identify trends, as well as opportunities, possibilities and key directions and priorities;
- \* recognise and celebrate our capacities, as well as name our limitations;
- \* do theological reflection as we consider how we join in with what God is doing in the world;
- \* work out what we (EC & DWF) start doing/stop doing/keep doing/do differently;
- \* work on strategies for effective communication and connection with associations;
- \* consider the planning for Assembly 2021;

I look forward to meeting with you all. May God richly bless our time together.

Rev Sandy Boyce 2019

## Appreciative inquiry (AI)

Put simply, AI is about understanding **strengths and the positive core** of a human organisational system. AI works on the idea that organizations are created, maintained and changed by conversations, and methods of organizing are only limited by people's imaginations and the agreements among them. AI "advocates collective inquiry into the best of what is, in order to imagine what could be, followed by collective design of a desired future state that is compelling. The model is based on the assumption that the questions we ask will tend to focus our attention in a particular direction, that organizations evolve in the direction of the questions they most persistently and passionately ask. (What are those questions for DIAKONIA?)

We are used to 'problem solving' models - assessing and evaluating a situation and then proposing solutions were based on a *deficiency* model, predominantly asking questions such as "What are the problems?", "What's wrong?" or "What needs to be fixed?". Instead of asking "What's the problem?", others couched the question in terms of "challenges", which still focused on deficiency, on what needs to be fixed or solved. What if the questions themselves were influencing a negative dynamic? AI aims to refocus attention on what works, the positive core, and on what people really care about. AI is concerned with using strengths to grow, change, adapt, and improve. There are no right or wrong answers - our organizational realities are made up of the stories we tell ourselves and each other.

Problem Solving	Appreciative inquiry
1. "Felt Need," identification of Problem	1. Appreciating & Valuing the Best of "What Is"
2. Analysis of Causes	2. Envisioning "What Might Be"
3. Analysis & Possible Solutions	3. Dialoguing "What Should Be"
4. Action Planning (Treatment)	
<b>Basic Assumption:</b> An Organization is a Problem to be Solved	<b>Basic Assumption:</b> An Organization is a Mystery to be Embraced



The most common AI model utilizes a cycle of four processes, which focus on what it calls:

DISCOVER: The identification of organizational processes that work well.

The overarching question in the 'discovery stage' is: **"What gives life?"**

DREAM: The envisioning of processes that would work well in the future.

The overarching question of the Dream stage, is: **"What might be?"**

DESIGN: Planning and prioritizing processes that would work well.

The Design stage is about building the visions and ideas with the greatest potential, together. In co-constructing 'the ideal', therefore, the questions become slightly more specific and focused on clarifying. The overarching question of this stage is: **"What should be?"**

DESTINY (or DEPLOY): The implementation (execution) of the proposed design.

The aim is to build - or rebuild - organizations around what works, rather than trying to fix what doesn't. In this final stage, we ideally have images of a shared, positive future that leverages our organizational strengths. The Destiny stage is about encouraging shared commitment and discussing how teams and individuals will help bring provocative propositions to life. This can be seen as distinct from traditional approaches in its focus on collective meaningfulness and purpose. The overarching question here, is: **"How to empower, learn, and improvise?"**