



# **DIAKONIA**

## **News**

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

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**No. 98, September 2012**

## From the President

Dear brothers and sisters in DIAKONIA,  
Once again, our Editors have put together a very interesting and informative edition of DIAKONIA News. There are articles from the regions, members and organizations, and from the Executive meeting that took place in Gilleleje, Denmark.

There is also information about the World Assembly 2013 in Berlin, Germany. It will be a place to reconnect, to share and hear about: "*Diakonia – healing and wholeness for the world*" – a very challenging theme! So often we experience hurt, brokenness and conflict and our heart is heavy. But let

us rejoice in the knowledge that Jesus Christ brought healing and wholeness into our world through his love, his service and his suffering. He said, "*Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest*". (Matthew 11:28)

And then we can say, as Francis of Assisi did: *Start by doing what is necessary, then do what is possible and suddenly you are doing the impossible!*

Sharing with you in HIS service

*Sister Doris Horn*

*President DIAKONIA World Federation*

## From Your Editors

This year, Deacons in the Uniting Church in Australia are celebrating the renewal of the diaconate in the UCA and 20 years since the first ordinations. We are 'young' in the diakonia family, but draw on the rich tradition of deaconesses in the Methodist and Presbyterian churches from our past. As well, we look to the future, with a real sense that Uniting Church Deacons are pioneering new expressions of diakonia, with diverse ministry placements in the church and the community.

It is again a privilege to edit this edition of DIAKONIA News and to see the breadth of diaconal ministry in our world diakonia community. May our prayer life be enriched as we learn more about each other, joined together through the DIAKONIA World Federation.

*Sandy Boyce,  
Editor DIAKONIA News*



It has been our aim for many years to have two DIAKONIA News published in the one year. And today, we achieved this goal!

There is a lot happening in the world of DIAKONIA. In this edition, we reflect on the past, the present and the future.

We report on jubilees, looking back on successful years.

We have detailed reports about the present situation in Madagascar and Malawi.

And we contribute to the present discussion about the future shape of diakonia and DIAKONIA. The Executive Committee discussed this question at length. In this issue you will find a detailed essay about the 'special' of a deacon.

And, of course, we are looking forward to DIAKONIA's 21<sup>st</sup> Assembly in 2013 in Berlin, Germany. The registration process is about to start. To whet your appetite, there are 10 post-Assembly tours prepared by the planning committee, which you can read about in this issue. All of the tours combine sightseeing and encounters with local deaconesses and deacons.

We come together from all parts of the world, from all kinds of communities and church traditions. But we are connected by diaconal service, and through sharing information and stories. This is what DIAKONIA is about!

*Ulrike Kellner,  
Editor DIAKONIA Nachrichten*

# DIAKONIA WORLDWIDE

DIAKONIA's main web address: [www.diakonia-world.org](http://www.diakonia-world.org)

## DIAKONIA World Executive

The Executive met for a week at the end of June, 2012 at Refugium Retreat Centre, Gilleleje/Denmark. The meeting was attended by representatives from each of the regions – DAP (Asia-Pacific), DRAE (Africa-Europe) and DOTAC (Americas and Caribbean). The Executive was able to welcome the new webmaster, Diane Kaufmann. We all look forward to seeing a fresh face to the website and new content as it is uploaded.



*DIAKONIA World Executive at Gilleleje/Denmark*

The Executive Committee was invited to the motherhouse Den Danske Diakonissestiftelsen in Copenhagen on the day of their arrival. The Forstanderinne Sister Merete Pelle Poulsen, welcomed them and showed them the various buildings on the site of the motherhouse. Over a meal she talked about the long and interesting history of the Danish motherhouse. In 2013 they can celebrate their 150th anniversary.



*At de Danske Diakonissestiftelsen  
Forstanderinne Merete Pelle Poulsen*



*Lisa Polito, Ristua Sirait, Elly Urio, Emma Cantor  
(from left to right)*

One afternoon the Executive Committee heard a lecture about nursing history in Denmark by the Danish Historian Susanne Malchau Dietz, who is currently working on a detailed history of Den Danske Diakonissestiftelsen. The Executive Committee also had the opportunity to meet with Danish brothers and sisters, who had a retreat in their retreat center Elim, also at Gilleleje. On the last evening, the Executive Committee celebrated a service of Holy Communion at the chapel of Refugium Retreat Centre.



*Chapel at Refugium Retreat Centre*

**Finances:** Treasurer Laura Lazar surely has a challenging role in World DIAKONIA, with responsibility for the budget, and preparing the annual financial report. She has been in contact with member associations in regards to the fees due to World DIAKONIA. The Executive recognizes the different capacities of member associations to pay fees, and encourages members to contact the Treasurer to confirm fees that are due and what they are able to pay. The Treasurer will be greatly helped if

member associations provide the information to her in a timely way, so she may factor in any gaps that can be identified. The Executive agreed that membership fees would not be increased this year, and instead agreed to ask for special donations towards DIAKONIA World on the registration form for the World Assembly. Please consider practical ways to support the work of World DIAKONIA that they do on behalf of member associations.



*Elly Urio, Marianne Uri Øverland, Jan Cherry*

**DIAKAID and Emergency Fund:** The World Executive in June agreed to merge the two funds, recognizing the need to continue to set aside funds for emergency aid.

***DIAKAID completed or ongoing:***

**Zambia** - small motor scooters for deaconesses in rural Zambia

**Nigeria** – funding for the education of two Nigerian deaconesses

**Caribbean** – funding for the Wesley Diac-onal Community of the Methodist Church in the Caribbean program in response to the hurricane damage in Grenada.

**Manila** – funding to support a program to help and enable children in an urban poor community.

***DIAKAID – new projects***

**South Africa** - The Nakekela Sewing Project is enabling women to earn their own money. Their sewing machines need to be serviced and additional funds are required to complete the physical environment as well as to run it (electricity). The Executive Committee has approved funding of 1.000 Euro.

*If you are aware of projects that meet the criteria for DIAKAID or Emergency Aid, please contact the President of your DIA-KONIA region.*

**DRAE representation**

DRAE is the largest region of DIAKONIA in terms of members – associations and people. DRAE has been actively discussing a new structure and new ways for representation for both the DRAE Executive, and representation at the World Executive. The five representatives to the World Executive will be the Regional President; one African (with the other as alternate); three chosen by the DRAE Executive, with all others as alternates.

The current DRAE President, Jackie Fowler, has informed DRAE and the World Executive that she will not be seeking re-election as Regional President.



*DRAE Regional President Jackie Fowler and DIAKONIA World Secretary Ulrike Kellner*

**DIAKONIA Assembly Berlin 2013**

The planning group for Berlin 2013 has finalized the schedule and different foci each day. The main venue will be in Johannisstift. A highlight will be the open day on Saturday afternoon for all those interested, where they can attend workshops and watch the panel discussion. In the evening, a huge party has been planned. On the last day of the conference, the closing worship will be at the Berlin Cathedral. It is large enough to host everybody who is interested. The conference will include excursions – a mix of project visits and touristic sites, mostly under a common theme. Ten post-conference tours will also be offered to various regions of Germany, again mixing visits to mother-houses and sightseeing.

**Keep a lookout  
for registration information  
on the DIAKONIA website!  
DIAKONIA Assembly Berlin 2013 –  
mark the dates in your diary!**



**Workshops:** Every region is expected to offer two workshops to the Assembly. The organizers would love to hear from anyone willing and able to lead or facilitate a workshop. Contact Sabine Ritter for more information, [Sabine.Ritter@ddh-gruppe.de](mailto:Sabine.Ritter@ddh-gruppe.de)

**Photo display:** featuring the work of Deacons all over the world. All member associations are encouraged to contribute photos. Jan Cherry is the person to contact if you have photos you would like to contribute, [janmcherry@comcast.net](mailto:janmcherry@comcast.net)

## New Webmaster

In the May edition of DIAKONIA News we informed you, that our webmaster, Neil Thomson, had resigned from this position, and that we were looking for a new webmaster. We are very pleased to introduce you to the new webmaster for the DIAKONIA World Federation – **Diane Kaufmann**, Deaconess, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).



Diane recently retired from her position as Companion Synod Coordinator for the NW Synod of Wisconsin, ELCA. She has created and maintained websites in that position and looks forward to working with the members of DIAKONIA World Federation to make the website as useful as possible. Check it out for updates!

### Good to know:

Doris Horn, World DIAKONIA President, prepares a monthly prayer letter, which is published online - on the DIAKONIA website and on Facebook in the DIAKONIA World Federation group.

## Changes in leadership – DIAKONIA World

Our **President**, Sr. Doris Horn, has served us well since her election in 2009 in Atlanta, and also in her previous years serving on the World Executive. She is not eligible to stand for election for a second term as President, and the nomination process for a new President is already underway. Nominations should be received by November 30, 2012 by the Secretary.

Our **Secretary**, Sr. Ulrike Kellner, has indicated she does not wish to seek re-appointment for the role. She has been in the role for 12 years and her valuable contribution to World DIAKONIA will be greatly missed. Nominations are sought for people who may be considered for the role of World DIAKONIA Secretary from 2014 on.

There will be some anticipated **changes in leadership in each of our regions**, with re-elections at the Berlin Assembly, July 2013. Jackie Fowler, DRAE President, has already indicated she will not seek re-election. Please give careful consideration in your regions as to who might offer leadership, 2013-2017, and encourage attendance at the Conference so that those who may be considered for leadership are available for election.

## NEWS AROUND THE WORLD

As you read the news, please pray the news – prayers of thankfulness and praise, as well as petitions for help, encouragement and practical support. Our diaconal ministries are strengthened when we are informed and connected by prayer.

### From the Region DIAKONIA ASIA PACIFIC (DAP)

#### DAP Conference

A DAP Executive Meeting and DAP Conference is scheduled to be held from October 28 – November 2 this year in the Philippines. The theme is, "Called to be healed and to become healers for our wholeness". The DAP Executive will plan the regional conference. For more information, contact the DAP President, Emma Cantor, [women\\_asia@yahoo.com](mailto:women_asia@yahoo.com)

**Australia: Deacons in the Uniting Church celebrate 20 years:** Deaconesses in the Presbyterian and Methodist churches in Australia continued to have their vocation



recognized when the Uniting Church in Australia (UCA) was formed in 1977. But it was not until 1992 when the first

Deacons were ordained in the UCA. This year, 2012, is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first ordinations of Deacons. The Ministry of Deacon was recognized and affirmed at the triennial meeting of the UCA Assembly in July 2012. The Deacons network is supported through regular updates on the website, blogsite, Facebook and an egroup, all of them serving different functions. All documents can be accessed online, and are a valuable resource for Deacons in the UCA.

Rev Dr Alison McRae preached at Pilgrim Uniting Church, Adelaide, on September 9th, using Mark 7: 24-37, developing the theme: "Caught with your compassion down": lessons from the boundaries'. Rev Bev Fabb preached the sermon on Sunday 9th September at the WA Synod morning service. Both can be



downloaded

from

<http://www.diakonia.uniting.com.au>

More information at [www.wa.uca.org.au](http://www.wa.uca.org.au)

#### Connecting with the world of DIAKONIA

Rev Bill Harris, from the Uniting Church in Australia, has written an overview of his introduction to World DIAKONIA when he attended a World Assembly, followed by a DRAE (Africa-Europe) Conference and World Executive.



Deacon Bill Harris

Bill was elected to the World Executive as Vice-President of the DIAKONIA Asia Pacific (DAP) Region at the World Assembly in Friederichroda, East Germany in 1996. These notes recall his first visit to Harnosand, Sweden, and attendance at a DRAE seminar in conjunction with his attendance at a meeting of the World Executive committee of World DIAKONIA. All part of his rich experience of meeting with deacons and deaconesses from the countries which are members of DIAKONIA. You can read his article by going to the DIAKONIA in the Uniting Church in Australia website, <http://www.diakonia.uniting.com.au/> and clicking on the right hand side (Reflections on DIAKONIA gatherings)

**Fiji:** Many of you will know that the Methodist Church in Fiji has been severely limited in their capacity to meet together for their Annual Conference, due to restrictions imposed by the military government. At the Atlanta World Assembly in 2009, we heard news from Fiji when these restrictions were first imposed. Here's a recent update from Fiji.

Bula! I was with Deaconess Sala yesterday, and with two other women reviewing the women's policy in the Methodist Church. We are hoping that the Methodist Conference will be held after four years of the government's decree to ban the meeting. The government has given the green light to meet only for three days. We thank God for his enduring love for us. All the best and God bless.

*Deaconess Filiji, Senior Deaconess*  
**Please pray for the work of the Methodist church in Fiji and for the deaconesses.**

**Indonesia:** The new leader of Ikadiwa is Sr. Solide Siahaan who works in the hospital as a nurse and also leads the nursing department. The new secretary is Sr. Rosmauli Hutahaeen, a lecturer in the nursing academy.



*Sr. Rosmauli Hutahaeen and Sr. Solide Siahaan*



### 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"

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[drae.treasurer@diakonia-world.org](mailto:drae.treasurer@diakonia-world.org)

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

<b>Bank account No 4002199</b>	<b>Stiftung DIAKONIA</b>
<b>Ev. Kreditgenossenschaft, BLZ 520 604 10</b>	
<b>IBAN: DE23 5206 0410 0004 0021 99</b>	<b>BIC: GENODEF1EK1</b>
<b>Or</b>	
<b>Bank account 38 81 759</b>	<b>DIAKONIA World Federation</b>
<b>1081 KL Amsterdam, Netherlands/Niederlande</b>	
<b>IBAN: NL92 INGB 0003 8817 59</b>	<b>BIC: INGBNL2A</b>



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

**DOTAC:** The next DOTAC Executive meeting is planned for the second half of 2012. At the meeting, the critical foci of DOTAC will be discussed: spirituality and worship, prophetic voice and church together, encourage and support diaconal work in areas and new development, prophetic voice for social justice.

**Brasil:** The sisters of Casa Matriz decided on their annual meeting that they would welcome into their community pastors, catechists and home missionaries. Since then there are already 5 candidates.



*Braslian Sisters and guest  
at a workshop in São Leopoldo*

**Canada: Diakonia of the United Church of Canada (DUCC)** presented their new pin and logo banner at the DOTAC conference in Oklahoma 2011.



*Linda Ervin and Sharilynn Upsdell*

### **USA: Lutheran Deaconess Association (LDA)**

The LDA has started accepting male deacons. As the LDA Assembly did not agree to include men in their community, there will be a second brotherhood within the LDA. This may have an impact on the representation at the church.

### **Changes on campus.....**



*Deaconess Huegli Hall*

The training centre for Lutheran Deaconesses has been demolished to make way for a new development on the Valparaíso University campus. There is always a keen sense of loss when buildings are taken down, but also the anticipation of what is yet to be. Some of those who have spent time in formation for diaconal ministry commented on the photos of the work being undertaken, recalling the joys of community:

*It's hard to believe that Deaconess Hall is gone, three years of great memories (Barbara Hilt Schmidt)*

*Kinda sad to see the old "home away from home" destroyed...many wonderful memories in that kitchen, dining room, and chapel! (Gloria Klawiter)*

*It is like part of my history and legacy is coming tumbling down (Sally Franz)*





## **A Glimpse into Prison Ministry**

I participate in Kairos Prison Ministry in the women's prison in Oklahoma. This is my 12th year in Kairos and my 3rd year as a Diaconal minister. Kairos seeks to introduce living examples of God's agape love and forgiveness.

On Saturday of the weekend we talk about forgiveness, forgiveness of self and of others. The culmination of the day is a forgiveness ceremony. They are given a tiny square of rice paper on which to write the names of all those they need to forgive and be forgiven by. Then one-by-one all, team and participants, come forward and drop the papers into a bowl of water.

The paper dissolves quickly, but the letters will remain briefly floating on the surface.

Then the letters begin to disappear, one-by-one. It is as though God is taking all that pain and guilt away, one letter at a time.

In the course of 12 years of prison ministry I have often felt the presence of the Holy Spirit in very tangible ways. I often think I have the very best ministry of all even if it is a difficult one.

Pray for those who are incarcerated, they are just people who made bad decisions and need to know that God loves them as much as everyone else.

*Sue Way, Diaconal Minister, Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod (printed in DiacoNews)*

## **Living Diaconally – on the web**

*(<http://livingdiaconally.blogspot.com.au>)*

Jan Cherry has begun a blogsite with the aim of blogging 'thoughts and musings from a Lutheran Diaconal Minister serving on a Jesuit campus seeking to live out a faithful, ecumenical life'. An interesting read. Are there other Deacons or Deaconesses who have a blogsite with a focus on diaconal ministry? We'd love to connect with you!

## **Reflections During Worship**

*by Shirley Talbot*

In the last row I saw a picture of incarnation.

Young son maybe 18 months in daddy's arms. Youngster was looking deeply into daddy's eyes, grabbing daddy's cheeks, squealing with delight, eyes dancing with joy. Everyone around was grinning, drawn into this picture of love.

Surrounded by the quiet of the church service, this daddy was lost in the adoration of his child and did not squelch this outpouring of delight. Back and forth they swayed, daddy following youngster's movement, lost in a private moment of joy between father and son.

The words of the sermon still echoing: "Good News meant to be shared." Here was the Good News portrayed right in the last pew. The Good News is that the ALMIGHTY ALL-WISE ALL-KNOWING GOD is delighted with us and follows our movements enrapt with love and joy.

*(printed in DiacoNews, a quarterly publication for Diaconal Ministers in the ELCA. Volume 8, Issue 2, March 2012 [www.elca.org/diaconalministry/](http://www.elca.org/diaconalministry/))*

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## From the Region Africa-Europe (DRAE)

**France:** The Executive of the *Communauté des Diaconesses de Reuilly* has elected a new prioress during their meeting April 25-29, 2012. Soeur Mireille Gollez will follow Prioress Soeur Evangéline Vié. The inauguration service will take place on Sunday, October 28, 2012 at 15.00 hours in the presence of Claude Baty, President of the Fédération Protestante de France (FPF) at the chapel of the community in Versailles, 10 rue Porte de Buc, Statffinden.

**Hungary:** The Hungarian Community Febè has a new Oberin. Hajnalka Görög was elected by the Assembly on March 30, 2012 and was initiated into the new role on Easter Sunday, April 8, 2012 by Bishop Prof. Dr. Fabiny at the mother-house church.



Hajnalka Görög

**Germany, Evangelischer Diakonieverein Berlin Zehlendorf:** The Evangelischer Diakonieverein in Berlin has taken over responsibility for a diaconal institution in Berlin, "Neue Treberhilfe". The main focus is working with under age but intensive criminals, projects for homeless people and support for mothers with small children.

**Diaconal Sister Emmi Reif,** from the sister and brotherhood Neuendettelsau, has a real heart for DIAKONIA. She has combined this passion with her other passion: selling home made shawls at flea markets. For some time, she has been severely ill, and it seems that her lifespan is coming to an end. So she went through her belongings and came across her selection of collectable tea cups. What to do with them? Selling on the flea market! Together with the Elisabeth community Darmstadt, she offered her tea cups for sale at the annual festival of the Neuendettelsau Diaconal Institution. Sister Emmi earned 800 Euros and donated them graciously to DIAKONIA!

Websites: <http://www.ev-diakonieverein.de/>;  
[http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treberhilfe\\_Berlin](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treberhilfe_Berlin)

**VEDD:** A strategic internal reform process is being undertaken in the communities of VEDD (Verband evangelischer Diakonen und Diakoninnen in Deutschland). They have committed themselves to develop and reform their self-understanding and core issues, their structures and economic situation, in response to changing circumstances within the church and in the wider community. The Church itself is in a process of reform and re-organisation, which includes reflecting on diaconal ministries of the Church. Financial and structural reforms have a significant impact on diaconal ministry, since there seems to be a close connection between financial circumstances and how some view the viability of funding diaconal ministry. Diaconal communities and umbrella organization are reacting to the fact that diaconal ministry is seen mostly in the light of the actual financial situation, while at the same time these same churches ask the deacons to build the diaconal profile of parishes and institutions. They do not realize that many problems that occur as a result of the reform process have their origin in the unsolved question of the diaconate in general. The discussion within VEDD has led to the so called "Rummelsberg Statement", which the general assembly of the VEDD accepted at their meeting in March 2012. ([www.vedd.de/cms/2](http://www.vedd.de/cms/2)).

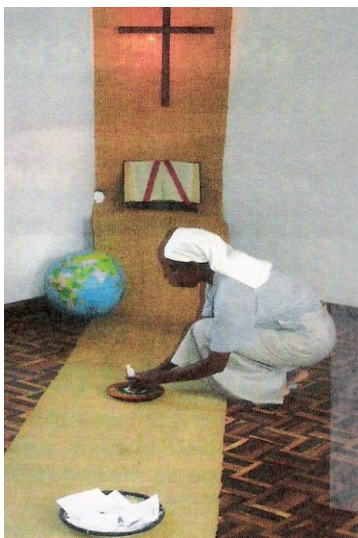
=> How are other churches responding to the changing financial circumstances in relation to diaconal ministry? We'd love to hear from DIAKONIA member associations.



## Information from Madagascar

The F.J.K.M. (*Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar*) is the largest Christian denomination in Madagascar. It was founded in 1968 as a Reformed Protestant denomination and has 3.5 million adherents in almost 6,000 congregations. Madagascar ranks among the world's poorest countries, and has experienced political instability since early 2009, which have negatively affected economic growth and development efforts.

It is difficult, to describe the national situation in Madagascar. The dreadful damage from this continuing crisis is evident, with poverty growing in every area, rising unemployment, and uncertainty. The political situation remains difficult.



A visit from the diaconal community in Mamre has been a highlight. It was organized by some of the F.J.K.M. parishes. The sisters from Mamre were given opportunity to introduce their community, to preach and to attend services. Sr. Danie

and Sr. Soa were able to attend the regional Synod of Vonizongo Vavolombelona. They organized a camp, but they could not get to sleep because the young people were so happy! They asked many questions after the camp and wanted to talk to the sisters.

Sr. Lanto and Sr. Angéline were asked to prepare a devotion presented on national radio.

A seminar was held on the theme 'non-violent communication', which required much work from each person, and from the whole group. Four seminars were held on the theme 'prayer', led by Pastor Ammi.

The former prioress Eleri Edwards visited Mamre for 14 days. It was a big joy, a big recognition and a big blessing for every one of us and for the community in general. She was able to meet all the groups within the various houses, and to talk to many single persons too. Each talk included an informative Bible Study and some history lesson from the book she has written about the history of Mamre in her time as responsible prioress.

**Please continue to pray for Madagascar, this country needs your prayers!**

## WOMEN'S MINISTRY IN MALAWI

Women's roles in the church in Malawi include participation in a broad range of activities - meetings, worship, annual Church conferences, as well as undertaking much of the ongoing care of church facilities (sweeping, general cleaning and decorating). They actively participate in funeral ceremonies, including preaching and singing. Women assist the sick and elderly, and support the orphans in and beyond the Church. Women may serve as deaconesses, Church Elders, Session

clerks, evangelists and on the women's council.

The report to DRAE (DIAKONIA Region Africa and Europe) from the Women's Committee in the Gowa and Namiwawa Synods of the Churches of Christ in Malawi provides more specific details of women's ministry at Synod which includes developing projects and sourcing funding to assist women, vulnerable children, orphans, elderly people, disabled children and women in and outside the church. The



Women's ministry in the Gowa Synod is led by Mrs Annie Sanudi, taking over from Mrs Nellie Mipando. In the Namiwawa Synod, Mrs Nellie Bulla provides the leadership, taking over from Mrs Alice Kamkwamba.

The following provides an overview of projects and activities in the Gowa and Namiwawa Synods.

## PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES IN THE GOWA AND NAMIWAWA SYNODS

**Animal husbandry:** A dairy project based at Gowa Mission, and a poultry management course attended by 32 women (with support provided by DIAKONIA).

### **Leadership training (2010)**



*A woman who attended a leadership course is teaching at Zam'mimba Church*

Women attended leadership training, supported by funds from Mersey Synod. The outcome of the training is that women are able to preach in the church and to intermingle with men in most activities without fear or shyness. The trained women also provide leadership training for other women.

### **Women – financial contributions:**

Women from different churches make contributions, mostly on Paper Sunday. This is a response to the call for assistance from Churches of Christ women to other churches. Women of different churches work together and share experiences in other development work.

**Schools support:** Some of the orphan and nursery schools are in very remote areas, and pupils are accommodated in dilapidated rooms, which do not create a good environment for learning. Women have completed renovation work (painting) in the Namiwawa Orphan and Nursery School rooms. Five areas have been identified as suitable to open Nursery Schools within the Namiwawa Synod. These centres will provide more opportunity for children in rural areas to access education while they are young.

**Assisting vulnerable individuals in a society:** Women participate in the designing, planning, implementation and evaluation of activities that are related to the assistance of vulnerable groups. The women require capacity building in order to carry out their activities effectively and efficiently. Training required is focussed on home-based care skills, entrepreneurship, education, and good health practices.

**Tree seedlings nursery - for reforestation program in degraded areas:** Humans are part of the ecosystem, and people have a responsibility to take care of the environment in which they live. The Church, in cooperation with Government, has a duty to work to ensure environmental protection and sustainable utilization of natural resources. One way of achieving this is by planting trees in fragile areas, such as along riverbanks or corridors, and in water catchment areas, which will benefit both the present and future generations. The Churches of Christ continue to encourage the community to share in this



## INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES FOR WOMEN BY NAMIWAWA SYNOD

**Farming:** Agricultural activities provide an effective means for fundraising. Farming activities are funded by contribution from individuals of the church members. Pastors in respective churches are responsible for the security of crops and animals. Women cultivate the garden: Balaka women planted groundnuts, Phalombe women planted pigeon peas and Beans, Likangala Zone women planted Rice and Namiwawa Zone women planted sweet potatoes.

**Pig farming:** The women received a grant from DIAKONIA to enable them to develop a revolving fund at Namiwawa. This is one way to generate funds for different zones and other churches. Women

have started pig farming, and have also constructed houses for dairy farming.



*Pig farming at Namiwawa synod in Zomba district*

**Tailoring:** The Namiwawa Synod has established a tailoring project in various locations.

**Pastors' wives loans:** DIAKONIA provided funding to both Synods, to be administered by the Pastors' wives. The loans attract 20% interest over a 6 month period.

**CHALLENGES:** There is a serious lack of capacity in a number of areas. For example, there is a lack of skills in home-based care for the sick, elderly, lame, orphans and vulnerable people and children. Sometimes carers become sick themselves due to lack of proper prevention measures. Sometimes carers fail to provide nutritious meals for the sick, and to source nutritious food available locally. Training in health and food management would enable caregivers to discharge their responsibilities effectively and efficiently.

**Lack of entrepreneurship:** While women may be able to secure financial support, they may not know what type of business to pursue and how to manage funds. Lack of entrepreneurship means that women usually replicate the same kind of business ventures. Training assists women to be creative, to come up with different viable business opportunities, and to sustain their families financially.

**Lack of capital and market:** Livestock and crop farming require reasonable financial resources, equipment, and proper market infrastructures. Women have failed to fully realise the potential, due to insufficient capital and markets to sell their produce or products. Vendors from town often buy pigs at a low price from farmers. Climate change requires knowledge of the most suitable dairy breed to rear.

**High illiteracy rates:** Most people in the villages do not know how to read and write, and have a lack of life skills. This makes it difficult for them to understand things, and to accept new things that can be helpful to them. There are a large number of people who are HIV positive and taking ARVs. There is a need to provide orphanages when the parents pass away. Carers, including children, may themselves fall sick, and fail to participate in livelihood activities. They may be required to take care of the sick, and sometimes they may use all their material possessions to take care of them. Their situation often means they fail to participate in schooling that will develop their literacy and life skills.

### **A RESPONSE TO THE CHALLENGES**

The consequence of these challenges negatively impacts development work, and poverty increases. Children left without parent support may resort to thieving and other means to survive. The following actions are recommended to enable proactive intervention:

- Develop a cooperative that will help in farming, especially in dairy farming and production of pigs. The main priority would be to construct a house to be used as the market outlet, with refrigeration and meat processing equipment;
- Provide practical support and skills base for farming initiatives;
- Establish a capacity to process food and feed from farm crops like pigeon peas and maize so that they are sold at high price, and as value added products such as animal feeds and nutrition supplements for undernourished children;
- Develop and support training initiatives - in entrepreneurship, life skills, home-based care, and conflict resolution;
- Provide financial support for needy children in the church and community through a bursary, and identify financial supporters. This will improve the welfare of vulnerable people in and outside the church;
- Seek opportunities to sensitize men to the importance of women's participation in any development work, and to recognize women's contri-

bution to the ministry and mission of God's church;

- Provide adult literacy classes for those who are not able to read and write, and also for girls who have dropped out from school;
- Establish a voluntary position to offer training for a micro finance officer in the Synods, and to assist the General Synod Secretariat on women's matters within the Malawi Churches of Christ;
- Identify co-coordinators within the congregations to assist with training, and micro finance officers to train women within the congregations.
- Review farming projects in light of climate change, to ensure success with changing conditions.

New proposed and ongoing projects, some requiring funding, include:

- loans for vulnerable women including those affected by HIV/AIDS;
- improving the Nursery Schools;
- promoting 'pass on' program (this has been started by giving the communities goats so that the kids may be given to friends after birth).

### CONCLUSION

Churches in Malawi have an important role in assisting government to improve welfare of the people. Churches of Christ women play a great role in achieving the objective by assisting vulnerable groups by providing loans, comforting affected families; participating in environmental protection, and civic education. Limited financial resources presents a challenge that prevents further work being undertaken.

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## Study Trip to Kaliningrad/Russia

Formerly the northern part of East Prussia, based on the city of Königsberg (now Kaliningrad) this region was annexed to the USSR at the end of World War II. With Baltic independence, it is now detached from Russia proper, sandwiched between Poland and Lithuania. During the Soviet period, agriculture was a key industry, but the market for Kaliningrad's produce was largely dismantled with the collapse of the USSR, causing the economy to nosedive in the early 1990s. Unemployment soared and poverty became very widespread, particularly in rural areas. Organised crime and drugs became increasingly problematic. The region was granted special economic status and tax advantages to attract investors, and the region's economy benefitted substantially. However, the global financial crisis of 2008-9 affected the region badly, and by the beginning of 2010 unemployment had climbed to over 10% - considerably higher than the Russian average.

A diaconal study tour to the Kaliningrad Region, initiated by the international Kaiserswerth General Conference (KGK), took place in June 2012. There were 44 participants from Germany and Canada. The group visited the current regional hospital, the former Deaconess Hospital of Mercy in Königsberg (until 1945), and heard the story of the hospital. The presentation was supplemented by Henriette Piper from the Königsberg Diakonie in Wetzlar, travelling along as a participant.

Afterwards, the group gathered on the site of the Jablonka Street Children's Centre, where the director, Sergei Kivenko, spoke about his work and the difficult financial situation of the center. More gratifying was the official announcement from

Sr. Monica Denk, KGK Presidium member, that the Deaconess Community of the ELCA would be supporting the project. The center offers sleeping space for ten children, as well as food, clothing and assistance for another ten to 15 children, some homeless and orphaned. The center has been operating for eleven years.



Quelle: KVV-News 4/2012





Quelle: KWV-News 4/2012

A visit was organized to the Diakonia Center and Church in Gusew (Gumbinnen). The director, Alexander Michel, reported on his current work and the history of the center. Since 1998, it has been helping the congregation and others in need through a home care service, and the distribution of donations such as a noon lunch at no charge for up to 50 school children. In addition, a summer camp for the disabled and mother-child camps have been organized. Like Jablonka, the Diakonia Center's work is funded mostly by donations.

Following a short stop in the centre of Gusew, the group continued on to the only

Lutheran Seniors Home in Russia - Carl Blum House in Sadoroshje (Mallenuppen). The Seniors' Home offers facilities for 24 residents, of which 10 are currently bed-ridden patients. For nearly six years, the home has been caring for residents from all areas of the region. The group were able to share in a bilingual festive worship service on Sunday in the rebuilt church, Turgenjewo (Groß Legitten). On Sunday, along with a trip to see the city of Sovietsk (Tilsit) the group met with Pastors Semenyukov (a clergy couple) and additional representatives from the congregation in Chernyachovsk (Insterburg).

There was a discussion about the expectations of the Russian project leaders regarding the possibilities for cooperation with the international General Conference, along with German diaconal agencies. The desire for support for the projects and congregational diakonia is great. All are aware that there is still a long way to go until things are stable.

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## WHY DEACONATE WHEN ALL CHRISTIANS ARE DEACONS?

*By Direktor Pfarrer Frieder Grau, Karlshöhe Ludwigsburg*

"Our church is convincing us that she needs us as deacons. But really, she does not know what she wants to do with us" (a student comment, after a discussion with someone from the Church). All churches in the Evangelical Church of Germany (EKD) are struggling with the profile of the diaconate. This ambiguity is done on the back of deacons. But, something is happening: workgroups and committees are working on training standards, competence profiles, structure plans and more.

### 1. A doubled question: why deacons?

Every Christian is called by their baptism and initiated to the "ministry" - to bear witness in word and deed towards the gospel of God, who loves all people. You can only be a Christian by being diaconal. This is why you have to talk about the diaconate of all faithful Christians – like you do of the priesthood of all faithful. But why deacons, if we have so many qualified and even confessing Christians as specialists?

### 2. ... and a simple answer: deacons are necessary!

As a first answer: diaconal challenges of our churches have become so big, so subtle, so complex, that we need men and women who are specially qualified and – this is very important to me – specially assigned by the church.

According to Protestant understanding, to fulfill the requirements of a special assignment or a special ministry the following is necessary:

- It has to be an essential statement of church. That is, if it is missing, church would not be church of Jesus Christ any more.
- Without this ministry, the appropriate and right ("recte") use of this essential statement would be in danger.
- This essential statement has to be voiced openly and clear ("rite vocatus").

- To act according to this essential statement, you have to be professional and qualified in a special way.
- The ministry is growing out of the mandate for the whole community.
- The ministry is orientated towards functions, assignments and demands and does not have a special “consecration”.

In a long and historical process, from the first Christians until today, ministries were developed and some of them regressed again. Luther considered deacons useful, important and good, but not indispensable in the end - contrary to the Lutheran Wichern, 300 years later! To lose sight of people is to question the mission of the gospel in a very basic way. This is a call to action - and not just alongside but from the heart of the community. And it calls for a special assignment. The word “diaconate” means definitely more than the ministry of the deacon: diaconate means the way church is shaping her diaconal assignment. Deacons are representing Gods passion for the poor through their ministry. They are personifying the diaconal dimension of church and for the “sharp eye of love” (Wichern).

Let's put together again the points for a Protestant meaning of ministry:

- Diaconal assignment is an essential statement of the gospel and of being the church of Jesus Christ.
- In practice, this essential statement is continuously in danger. It is threatened by the self-secularization of diaconal ministry, and needs constant reminding of the prophetic voice of the diaconate. Young people from poor families are more than clients or recipients of social welfare - they are good creations. Diaconal ministry is more than social provision of services with a cover of religious cream - it is part of the *missio dei*. It is a ministry on a mission. On the other hand, diaconal ministry is threatened by a church that is looking too much into herself, threatened by the diaconal regression within the communities (mostly unwanted!), or by a reduction of faith towards spirituality and internal religiosity, by turning the gospel into a religion of the comfortable and well situated.
- Diaconal assignment needs a qualified and structured responsibility and representation both, inwards and outwards towards the public. Deacons are standing for such a qualified public representation.
- To be able to do so, it needs special qualification.
- Professionalism in this sense means not only qualifications received by a special training, but also an identity and a habit that includes the whole personality.
- To be a deacon comes out of the diaconal vocation of the whole community.
- There is a big demand for diaconal ministry, and will be so in the future. Diaconal challenges for our church will be even greater in ten years time! To say “yes” to deacons means an investment towards the future of church.

### **3. Deacons are promoters for a diaconal church**

Nobody is questioning that church has to be diaconal and that diaconal ministry has to be recognized. I never heard anybody saying that. But I recognize a big helplessness when it comes to the question, how to do it, how to be diaconal. This is why deacons are working in various fields – inside and outside of the church. Diaconal ministry has to be fixed within the self-conception of Christians and of the church, which is a central duty in terms of education and didactic. This is why religious education is part of the diaconate as well.

Didactic promotion has a dimension towards the inside: it strengthens the diaconal structure of the community in local churches and fosters the diaconal corporate identity of diaconal institutions. And it has a dimension towards the outside: towards those at the margins and even outside the normal church structures, who struggle with all sorts of pain.

### **4. Diaconal ministry and pastorate: two ministries of the same calling**

When you have reached the point of arguing the relationship between these two ministries, a fundamental discussion erupts that only concludes when the people involved have to see the next appointment or want to leave for home. Therefore, just this much: if I am correct, at the moment the emphasis lays more on what this two assignments connects rather than what drives them apart, makes them unique and non-interchangeable. This is a good development. More so, with regards to content, both ministries belong to each other like the two

sides of a coin (of the gospel). Both assignments focus on the “communication of the gospel” (Ernst Lange).

But there are also differences between those two assignments: the pastorate is a functional ministry and (mostly) a ministry of leadership (this is different in free churches!). The diaconal ministry on the other side is rather a ministry of functions. This difference has fundamental consequences towards the public appearance and towards the cooperation of these two ministries. Probably, there is no way around recognizing the precedence of the pastorate, grown over the terms of history and deeply incorporated into the public recognition, rather than to annihilate yourself with this question. The precedence has little to do with the New Testament or with theology, but is rather explained by religious psychology and historically. To communicate the good news you need several functions. You need the ministry of the church musicians, of the singers in the choir, the sacristan and all people helping to make the service function, the secretaries and and .... If you will, the deaconate is representing all the various assignments against the monopoly of the pastorate. According to the needs of the *missio dei*, I am pleading for a Low Church understanding of ministry, with clearly defined understanding in terms of function, duties and responsibilities. On the other hand I am pleading as well for a special, lifelong assignment, for an ordination of deacons as well as of ministers. There is some dynamite in this position: to plead for a Low Church understanding and function orientation of ministry is causing trouble for the ecumenical dialogue with catholic and orthodox churches, for whom ordination as consecration is one of the sacraments. And to plead for a special lifelong assignment is a stumbling block for the dialogue within the EKD.

#### **5. Diaconal Ministry: a missionary ministry**

Deacons are an active part of the “*missio dei*” (see church and mission statement of the World Council of Churches). Via ministry, they are standing for the mandate, to bring the good news of God’s love towards all people to those who are most in need of this love – especially into their daily life. The gospel is made to strengthen those people in their everyday struggle, in their inside and outside states of emergency and to give them comfort, orientation and hope.

#### **6. Diaconal ministry: a spiritual ministry in worldly appearance**

By their ministry, deacons are representing the connection between altar and street, between spiritual life and social work. In contrast to ministers they are doing their work outside the church walls and post signs of God’s history of hope with this world. This orientation towards the outward world makes them bridges between church and people’s reality of life. As much as deacons are leaning out of the window of the church into the world, the more important is their hold within the assignment of the gospel. To come to the point: deacons need their spiritual calling and assignment by the church much more than ministers, who are working per definition more inside the sheltered room of the church.

#### **7. The core: to speak of faith in everyday words**

One of the missionary callings of deacons is to implicitly and explicitly express the gospel in everyday words and in the form of social work, nursing etc. But beside that, deacons have a special ear for spiritual longings of people, who are voicing this longing usually in very unreligious words. My experience after ten years of diaconal ministry has shown me that all people – even those I never would have thought so – have deep spiritual longings, needs and relationships. Deacons are more than others designed to hear these longings, to take them seriously and to set the word of the gospel in connection to these needs.

#### **8. The ministry: between self-esteem and “have as if we have not”**

Deacons are doing their work with self-esteem – no: with function-esteem! Deacons convince by the quality of their action, their personality and their passion for the diaconal assignment, not through their ordination.

Different to this outside perspective is the personal inside perspective. A church assignment for a deacon authorizes, strengthens and commits – and is doing so is lifelong. The objective assignment helps to even out personal ups and downs and give a clear orientation for all action and self-conception. When the aged Bishop of Crete, Ireneus - a through and through diaconal bishop – was asked where his strength for doing all his social political activities was coming from, he answered simply: “I am ordained”.



### **9. The “core” and “doing this and that” by deacons in their daily work**

Until now we have talked about the basic assignment of the diaconal ministry and that this basic assignment is taking shape in various business and action fields. Therefore, there is a difference between a basic calling by the church to be a deacon (calling/ordination) and the ignition into certain business and action fields (introduction/inauguration).

Action fields are in all kind of areas. This is a chance for the deacon, but makes diaconal ministry blurred at the same time. A deacon in leadership is doing this and that like any other person in management, like strategy planning etc. These actions absorb probably most of the time, but the core of their actions will not be this but the diaconal-spiritual guidance of a diaconal institution. A big challenge for the next few years will be to focus the job descriptions of deacons in the various fields on diaconal and missionary things, to bring out the diaconal core into the light and make it seen by everybody. If we fail to describe and embed into the job description what is the diaconal core of this special action – like showing the diaconal passion of God for those in need by this particular ministry – the process of eroding of diaconal jobs will continue dramatically.

### **10. Structural consequences**

Job conditions in church and diaconal institutions are not clear at the moment. It could be useful to employ deacons via a central agency. Important are:

1. Strong ties to the local parishes and communities (everything else will corrode the links to the grass roots!)
2. A distinct job description focused on diaconal and missionary contents
3. A job description that leaves room to develop but is not too complicated

In connection to this job description, the deacon in their position within the team of the parish has to focus the work of the community on diaconal aspects. The assignment is the most important, not the place within the job hierarchy. You can be a deacon as a social worker, at the communal youth department or voluntarily (eg after retirement, within the parish).

### **11. Education and training**

The various entrances into the diaconal ministry should be continued. Common standards are desirable. Important is a general basic qualification, as wide and profound as possible (college or alongside working). Later on, individual professional training can be added, according to the special action field. Part of the education – on top of the technical and vocationally skills and of development of the personality – is the development of a spiritual identity. You cannot overestimate the importance of this development of a spiritual identity. It does not stop with the end of the training, but is a lifelong process and it has to be monitored closely during training and afterwards alongside work.

*Excerpt from Impuls VU-2011. Full article available (in German) at the offices of ViD.*

## **Articles of interest**

The CSS (Centre for Christian Studies) has a number of online articles on diaconal ministry that can be downloaded from their website, <http://www.ccsonline.ca/Resources/ideas/ideas.html>

**Learning about Servant Ministry** (exploring the formation of communities for *diakonia*), by Walter Deller

**Love spent in the service of others** ( an excerpt from the thesis 'No Menial Tasks: An Historical Examination of Accompaniment Ministries in the Early Christian Church") by Deborah Deavu,

**History of Diaconal Ministry** – a chapter by Mary Anne MacFarlane, Carol Stevenson Seller, and Dawn Wood.

**History of Diaconal Ministry 82-89** - a recounting of a critical decade for diaconal ministers in United Church of Canada, by the Committee on Diaconal Ministry.

**WCC** – has published a very interesting paper on the topic of diakonia. Downloadable via [www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/unity-mission-evangelism-and-spirituality/just-and-inklusive-communities/theological-perspectives-on-diakonia-in-21st-century.html](http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/unity-mission-evangelism-and-spirituality/just-and-inklusive-communities/theological-perspectives-on-diakonia-in-21st-century.html)

**Occasional Papers** – a special edition for the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the diaconate in the Uniting Church in Australia, with articles reflecting on the brief history, reflecting on current experiences and looking forward to future directions and initiatives. Downloadable from <http://www.diakonia.uniting.com.au/>

*If you know of articles of interest relevant to diaconal ministry in publications, presented at seminars and workshops, or presented as student assignments, please contact the DIAKONIA News editors. Our webmaster will also be able to make links.*



## Post-Assembly tours

All tours start in Berlin and last from Monday, July 8th until Saturday, July 13th, 2013. All have the same price, which is 495 EURO p. person (in double room) and 550 EURO p. person (in single room). More information together with the registration form.

**Tour 1: Ports in Northern Germany.** This tour centers on Hamburg, Germany's biggest port, where you will stay the whole week in comfortable rooms at the seaman's mission. You will discover the tourist highlights of Hamburg (Harbor-City, a tour around the harbor), and meet members of the local diaconal communities (Rauhes Haus, Deaconess-Motherhouse Alten Eichen). You will also visit the Flensburg Förde (part of the Baltic Sea) and the Hanseatic city of Bremen. Besides sight-seeing, you will also meet with local deacons and deaconesses (Bremen, Falkenburg, Flensburg).

**Tour 2: Medieval towns near Harz Mountains.** On our way to Harz Mountains you will visit Luther's town Wittenberg and continue to the guest house of Neinstedt Institution, where you will stay for the whole week. You will visit Quedlinburg with its famous churches. The medieval court and the old town are set on the UNESCO world heritage list. In Halberstadt, the "gate to Harz Mountains", you have the opportunity to see the famous treasures of St Stephen cathedral built in the 13th century. On a trip through the Harz Mountains, the highest mountain range in northern Germany, you will discover the romantic valley of river Bode. The deaconesses of the motherhouses in Elbingerode and Halberstadt and the deacons of Neinstedt

Institution are looking forward to meeting you.

**Tour 3: Recovery at the sea.** You will stay at the retreat center "Haus Wartburg", belonging to the Dresden motherhouse. It is located in a town called Graal-Müritz, a seaside health resort bordering the Baltic Sea. Here you can recover from the wonderful week at DIAKONIA Assembly. If you like you can make trips to Warnemünde or Rostock. For this tour, the return trip to Berlin is included in the price.

**Tour 4: On traces of Luther, Bach and Goethe.** From Berlin you will travel first to the deaconess motherhouse in Halle in the former eastern part of Germany. After meeting deaconesses there you will continue to Erfurt, near the geographical centre of Germany. There you will stay the whole week at the Augustiner monastery, where Luther lived as a monk. After exploring Erfurt, you will visit other towns in the region: Eisenach and the famous Wartburg castle; Weimar, the focal point of the German Enlightenment and home of the writers Goethe and Schiller; and Bad Frankenhausen, with its well known Panorama museum. The diaconal communities of Weimar and Eisenach look forward to hosting you, and sharing the treasures of this historical region.

**Tour 5: Dresden and the county of Lausitz.** You will travel from Berlin to the guest house of the Moravian community, where you will stay for 2 nights. You will meet with members of the diaconal communities of Niesky and Rotenburg and will get to know the county of Lausitz and the famous town Görlitz, the eastern most town in

Germany. On the third day, you will travel to Dresden near the Czech border. Here you will stay at the guest house of the motherhouse, directly at the river Elbe. After sightseeing in Dresden (Frauenkirche, Semperoper, Zwinger etc), the deacons of Moritzburg will take you to Moritzburg castle via the romantic train, "Losnitzbahn".

**Tour 6: Diakonia and more in Western Germany.** On the first day, you will travel from Berlin to Europe's largest diaconal institution at Bethel/Bielefeld, founded by Friedrich v. Bodelschwingh. Here you will meet members of the diaconal communities Sarepta (deaconesses) and Nazareth (deacons). On the second day, you will continue to Witten, where you will stay at the guesthouse of the Witten motherhouse. You will explore interesting cultural highlights in the former coal-mining area. After exploring Witten, you will continue to the famous Kaiserswerth/Düsseldorf on the Rhine, where the motherhouse system was founded. There you will visit Germany's first nursing museum, experience a boat trip on the river Rhine and visit the Cologne cathedral.

**Tour 7: Industrial culture in the Ruhr-area and diaconal encounters.** From Berlin you will go directly to the city of Hattingen in the Ruhr region (north of Cologne), where you will stay at the guesthouse "Haus Friede". From this starting point you will explore the area around Hattingen, Essen, Oberhausen, Velbert, Hagen, and Wuppertal. Local communities (deaconess motherhouse Bleibergquelle Velbert and deaconess motherhouse Bethesda Wuppertal) will be your hosts. They are looking forward to meeting their international guests. A special highlight will be the visit to the musical "Starlight Express" in the city of Bochum.

**Tour 8: On tour in Swabian.** From Berlin you will travel to the city of Stuttgart in southern Germany, where you will stay at

the guesthouse of the Stuttgart deaconess motherhouse. There will be opportunities for sightseeing in Stuttgart, and to meet with members of the local communities (Community of diaconal sisters and brothers Stuttgart, deacons of Karlshöhe). A trip to the wine region of Beutelsbach is planned, as well as a trip to Lake Constance, and a visit to the flower-island Mainau. This tour will be accompanied by sisters from Großheppach and Herrenberg.

**Tour 9: Augsburg and the Royal Castles.** From Berlin you will travel to Augsburg in south west Bavaria, town of the Fugger family. You will stay at the hotel of the motherhouse Augsburg "Am Alten Park" for the first three nights. After sightseeing in Augsburg and meeting deaconesses from the motherhouse, you will continue to Munich. You will explore the Bavarian capital on a city tour. Then you will continue to Alterschrofen in the Allgäu-Mountains, where you will stay for the remaining days of the tour. Your accommodation looks out on the famous royal castles from King Ludwig II. As well as visiting the castles Neuschwanstein and Hohenschwangau, a boat trip on Lake Forggensee is planned.

**Tour 10: Lake Chiemsee and Berchtesgaden county.** The tour will take you from Berlin to Lake Chiemsee in Bavaria, where you will stay at the guesthouse of the nuns of Benedikt on the island of Frauenchiemsee. From here, you will explore the neighboring island of Herrenchiemsee, where the royal castle is located. In the second part of the tour, you will visit the world famous Berchtesgaden county. You will travel far into the earth in a salt mine, and travel high up the alpine mountains to Kersteinhaus, Hochschwarzeck. Back at Berchtesgaden, you will have free time, and the final day will conclude at the Protestant Church before you return to your CVJM-hotel.

