



DIAKONIA

News

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

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No. 100, December 2014

From Your Editors

Greetings, an amazing fact about this issue of DIAKONIA News is that it is the 100th edition. I cannot help but be grateful for all those who have worked to compile the material and to do the production work for the News. Such faithful efforts continue to make DIAKONIA News an important means of keeping us connected.



Laura Lazar, English Editor

This 100th issue of DIAKONIA News reports on the work of DIAKONIA's Executive Committee at its July 2014 meeting in Dusseldorf, Germany. The Committee stayed at Hotel MutterHaus (www.hotel-mutterhaus.de/) on the grounds of Kaiserswerther Diakonie (<http://www.kaiserswerther-diakonie.de/de/startseite.html>). We were treated well by the hotel staff and had the opportunity to meet with, worship with, and share a meal with the Kaiserswerther Sisters.

As you will learn by reading the News, our time together was filled not only with the usual organizational business but also with a number of other meaningful and enjoyable activities. Of particular interest to me was our guided tour of the Kaiserswerther grounds where we had the opportunity to visit places where the Fliedners started their important work.

In terms of the Executive Committee's work, I think that our most important decision was where to hold the 2017 World Assembly. As you may already know, we will be meeting at the end of June 2017 at Loyola University (<http://www.luc.edu/>) in Chicago, Illinois,

United States (<http://www.choosechicago.com/>). As one of the people who made a site visit to Loyola, I am excited about our being together in this urban location situated on the shore of Lake Michigan.

I hope you find that reading DIAKONIA News provides you with a better sense of DIAKONIA World Federation and the work of its Executive Committee. If you have comments or suggestions about what we can do to improve the News, please contact me.

I wish all of you the best in both the work that you do and the life that you lead.

*Laura K. Lazar,
English Editor*



Ulrike Kellner, German Editor

As the DIAKONIA German editor, I have little to add to what Laura has written except for one procedural announcement: **This 100th edition of DIAKONIA News/DIAKONIA Nachrichten is the last one to be published on paper.**

We are making this change in response to the fact that, over the past years, requests for paper copies have declined significantly. Also, as is clear from the enclosed reports, our means of communication have changed. Taking into account these developments, beginning with the 101st edition, DIAKONIA News will only be published electronically. You can continue to download it from our website.

*Ulrike Kellner
German Editor*

Reflections from the President

The rhythm of DIAKONIA is of gathering together at the Assembly to share stories - and to be encouraged, resourced and inspired, and then being dispersed to the many places in which diaconal ministry takes place in and through member associations. In our coming together for the Berlin Assembly in July 2013, the welcome and hospitality created a wonderful atmosphere where new friendships could be formed across cultures and countries and language groups. The theme "Dia-konia - Healing and Wholeness for the World", was prophetic and timely. Pro-found thanks go to the Berlin Assembly organizers and their amazing team of vol-unteers for creating such a diverse and vibrant program for the week. As each assembly concludes, we are then dis-persed, to re-connect with others in our diaconal associations, and to weave the bigger picture of who we are as DIA-KONIA into our local context.



Sandy Boyce, DIAKONIA World President

Many diaconal ministry agents may never have the opportunity to attend a DIA-KONIA assembly. But through DIAKONIA, we are able to be connected to each other, and we are also able to see the bigger dimension of God's activity in the world – in rural villages and remote towns as well as in cities - and all the diverse places and ways in which diaconal ministry takes place. We are able to uphold other diaco-nal ministry agents around the world in prayer as they continue their work and to learn from them as we continue our minis-

try. We are connected together through stories, shared experiences, and God's Spirit weaving in, among, and between us. DIAKONIA News serves as one way of sharing news.

Also I do hope that you have been able to access the President's blog, where I upload stories, prayers and reflections related to diaconal ministry and DIAKONIA associations, including ordinations, com-missionings, and celebrations. The blog-site aims to build connections, and to fos-ter prayers for those engaged in diaconal ministry. I look forward to hearing from you about events and activities that happen in your association that I can share more broadly through the blogsite: <http://diakoniapresident.blogspot.com.au/>

I have been privileged to visit two member associations in the last year - the Diakonia Sisterhood in South Korea in November 2013, which has strong con-nections to Kaiserswerth, Germany, and the Methodist Deaconesses in the Meth-odist Church in India (MCI) in August 2014. I look forward to meeting more peo-ple when I attend the DRAE and DOTAC Regional Gatherings in 2015.

In July, the newly appointed 2013-17 DIAKONIA Executive Committee (EC) met at Kaiserswerth, in Dusseldorf, Ger-many. Given the rich history of Kai-serswerth as the 'cradle of diaconia', it was a wonderful location to acknowledge the past with its rich history, to work within the present context, and to envision the future for diaconal ministry: What shape and focus will diaconal ministry have in the future to respond to ongoing and emerging ministry challenges and opportunities? What is happening in each of the DIA-KONIA member associations in respond-ing to the challenges of our times? The EC made significant decisions, including plan-ning for the next assembly that will be held in Chicago in July 2017. We will continue our assembly planning when we meet next year.

As we enter into Advent, and a time of waiting and expectation, it invites us once again to be expectant about what God is doing in the world. In a sermon

about Mary's response to God, Barbara Brown Taylor once said: *"If you decide to say no, you simply drop your eyes and refuse to look up until you know the angel has left the room and you are alone again. Then you smooth your hair and go back to your spinning or your reading or whatever it is that is most familiar to you and pretend that nothing has happened.... Or you can set your book down and listen to a strange creature's strange idea. You can decide to take part in a plan you did not choose, doing things you do not know how to do for reasons you do not entirely understand. You can take part in a thrilling and dangerous scheme with no script and no guarantees. You can agree to smuggle God into the world inside your own body".* What a wonderful image! Diaconal ministry agents, along with the whole people of

God, are those who *embody* Christ's love and compassion for the world, 'smuggling' God into the world inside our own bodies as we minister amongst the poor, the marginalized, the needy, the vulnerable, and those longing for a sign of hope and love, and a community that is open to them.

"The Word descends, embeds, gestates, unfurls as grace upon grace, deep rooted love within love. And so, heaven and earth unite in the Word made flesh, Prince of Peace, dwelling among us. Not then, not now, not once. But evermore." (Suzanne Guthrie)

Blessings to you all in your diaconal ministry,

*Rev Sandy Boyce
President DIAKONIA World*

President visits Diakonia Sisterhood in South Korea

Sandy took the opportunity to visit the Diakonia Sisterhood when she was in South Korea in November 2013 for the World Council of Churches (WCC) meeting in Busan. Sr. Young-Sook Ree is the Director of Diakonia Sisterhood in Korea, which was formed in 1980.



The community is small but very committed. While each of the sisters has an affiliation or membership with an established Protestant denomination, Diakonia Korea itself is not affiliated with a denomination. This can be seen as both a strength and a weakness. The sisters are able to have autonomy over decision-making about their priorities as a community, but they also have the added responsibility to

source funding from partners to continue ministry. The sisters live in community, and have a daily rhythm including shared worship. They have a day off a month to refresh, and a week off a year for recreation. The sisters have two locations for ministry – one in Cheon-An, which offers a spiritual retreat center and is also the motherhouse, and one in Mokpo where the current focus is on care of the aged. Sr Young-Sook Ree reflected, "There are so many old people in Korea who have nobody to care for them. We have decided to take them in so that they can live and die in dignity". Their ministry focus changes in response to new needs. They ask themselves, *"Where are our talents most needed?"*, in order to discern what God might be calling them to next. Sandy reflects, 'The Diakonia Sisterhood is a wonderful group of compassionate and committed women, who give themselves so generously to support the needy in their community. The warmth of their hospitality extends to all those in their care. It was an absolute privilege to spend some time with some of the sisters, and to learn more about their ministry and their community'. Please remember the Diakonia sisterhood in your prayers and their life-giving work to vulnerable and elderly people.

President visits Methodist Deaconesses in India

Sandy enjoyed time spent with some of the Methodist Deaconesses while she was in Chennai and Bangalore in August, 2014. She was hosted by Shaila John Wesley, Executive Secretary, Council of Deaconesses Work, Methodist Church in India (MCI). The women are assigned ministry roles within the Methodist Church, in a number of areas including women's ministry, children with disabilities, children's ministry, hostels, aged care, hospitals and institutions, as teachers in schools and as lady evangelists, particularly in rural areas. The deaconesses seek opportunities to hold workshops, seminars and training courses for the local women, especially those in rural areas, where they can learn and utilize their learning. The deaconesses may receive remuneration, or not, but continue their ministry with deep commitment and a strong confidence in God's faithfulness. Sandy visited a center for children with disabilities, and also enjoyed an evening with the deaconesses where she heard more about the challenges and joys of ministry. The senior

deaconess, Kasthuri Devaraj, is an inspirational person. Now in her 80's, she continues to mentor and encourage younger deaconesses, and to seek funding partners overseas for projects. Sandy reflects, 'I am grateful to have had the opportunity to meet and listen to some of the deaconesses, and to see first hand some of the ministry in which they are engaged. They have responded to a call of God on their lives to support the poor, the marginalized and the oppressed. They undertake their ministry with such grace and deep compassion and conviction. The confidence and trust in God, despite the troubles and trials they face, weaves through their ministry. Their primary call is unshakeable - to spread the good news of Jesus Christ in and through their lives and service'. Please remember the Methodist Deaconesses in India in your prayers.

More at this link:
<http://diakoniapresident.blogspot.com.au/2014/08/visit-with-deaconesses-methodist-church.html>



Rev Sandy Boyce and her husband with the MCI deaconesses

DIAKONIA EXECUTIVE REPORTS 2014

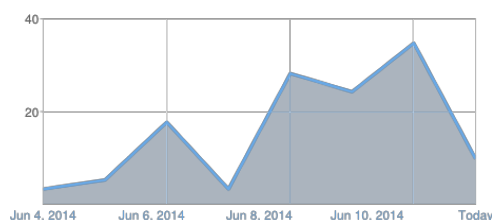
REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS

Report of the President

By President Rev Sandy Boyce

COMMUNICATION: President's Blog, <http://diakoniapresident.blogspot.com.au/>

In view of changes in the DIAKONIA News agreed to in June 2013, I thought it was important to establish a means for regular news feeds and updates from our groups and associations. I set up the blog-site as a simple, accessible, and no-cost means of communication. It includes prayers, reflections, sermons, and news. The chart below is indicative of the daily views. (The statistics on the blog-site show that there have been 2,497 page views). The blog-site is accessible 24/7 to a wide audience, which (according to the blogger stats) includes the USA, Ukraine, Australia, Botswana, South Africa, Fiji, Russia, Germany, Switzerland, and Finland. How might each of our groups and associations promote access to the blog and also make contributions? Finding news and information was always a challenge for compiling DIAKONIA News and remains an issue for how the DWF fosters networking, information sharing, and news. I'd welcome any feedback on the blog. (Note: you can register to be a 'follower' of the blog for regular updates)



Monthly prayer letter

Doris faithfully maintained the monthly prayer letter as part of her ministry before taking on responsibility as President of DIAKONIA. This prayer letter contained a number of prayer points in both English and German. Doris has decided to step away from these regular prayer letters as she feels she is less 'in the loop' for news. I wish to acknowledge her faith-

fulness and her call to prayer for people and places.

Yahoo e-group

Diane set up the e-group as a way of easy communication (i.e., one email address to the common yahoo e-group email address sends emails to everyone who has registered with the e-group). There is storage for files; a means to start conversational threads; a place where all related emails are linked into one another; a place to keep a record of tasks; and a calendar of events, etc. When we are all in July, Diane can show us how we might utilize the capacity of Yahoo e-groups more effectively. All files for the Executive Committee meeting will be made available there in online format prior to the meeting.

DIAKONIA website

I am thankful to Diane Kaufmann for her diligent work on the website and her gentle but persistent follow up on the hosting for the website. The changes in the hosting of the website now makes the process of updating it more manageable and enables Diane to keep it current. Please take a look at the website and also Diane's report so that you can give feedback and suggestions to her.

DIAKONIA Facebook page

Thanks to Lisa for her oversight of the DIAKONIA Facebook group, which enables a wide range of people and member associations to stay connected, extend greetings, and offer prayerful support. Please check it out and join if you have access to the web and Facebook.

2017 DIAKONIA ASSEMBLY

This will be discussed separately during our meeting, but suffice to say that some time was spent in discussion by email and in person with the planning

team for the Philippines (via Emma Cantor as the liaison person). I was personally looking forward to the Assembly in the Philippines and I am very disappointed that the Philippines diaconal associations feel they are no longer able to host the Assembly. However I also accept that the withdrawal was related to matters 'beyond their control'.

As part of supporting the Philippines planning team, I had been working on timelines and resources for planning. A manual, including timelines, guidelines, expectations and resources would be extremely helpful to planning teams for the DIAKONIA World Assembly. This is a work in progress, and will build upon the learning and resources from past Assemblies. Given that each host usually has the opportunity to take on this responsibility once, it is essential that the learning and wisdom and recommendations of previous hosts be documented and implemented.



DIAKONIA World President Sandy Boyce

It has also become clearer that the DIAKONIA Executive must play a significant role in shaping the program for the Assembly. It may be helpful to think about the local liaison planning team of the host association/s as responsible for local logistics, accommodation, catering, transport etc., and then the program itself (including the theme) as a separate task done in cooperation with the local liaison planning team and the Region and DIAKONIA Executive Committee.

Financially, the DIAKONIA Executive Committee has a responsibility to ensure congruence with the finances required to host the Assembly, and the fees for participants, so that the budget is kept in the 'black'. We do not have the financial capacity to underwrite any shortfalls in income from an Assembly, and strategic forward planning is needed in hosting the Assembly in terms of finances.

In a rotational schema (DRAE, DOTAC, DRAE, DAP, etc.) it will be important to discuss the idea that the potential host association lodges the proposal to host the Assembly in collaboration with the Region, rather than independently, and that the hosting is seen as a collaboration of the local host associations, the DIAKONIA Executive Committee, and the Region. This provides shared responsibility and a broader base for planning.



Kasthuri Devaraj and two other deaconesses from the MCI (see Presidents report on her visit)

It will also be great to have Wolfgang Scheidt present for a session at our meeting. He will go through the software prepared by the Berlin planning team for use by future hosts of the DIAKONIA Assembly, which will help standardize our processes for managing the Assembly gatherings and greatly assist the planning team's work. He will be able to share his insights about the planning process and his learning. There will be opportunity within the DIAKONIA Executive Committee agenda for broad discussions as well as specific recommendations for the future.

CORRESPONDENCE

Several letters have been sent as greetings for various gatherings and events, plus letters of thanks, and congratulations. It is one means by which DIAKONIA World connects with member associations and stays aware of their related activities. It would be good for me to be able to generate more letters when appropriate, but it is limited to the information available about various gatherings and events. I have begun posting some events and activities, as well as key dates for associations, on the Yahoo calendar and invite Regional Presidents and other members of DIAKONIA Executive to add dates.

I have received from Deaconess Meresiana Sadrata-Kuricava (Administrator, Deaconess Order in Fiji) the 2014 Handbook for the Methodist Deaconess Training Centre with an overview of their programs plus the Student Manual. These are new resources, and it is excellent that a copy has been made available to DIAKONIA for information.

I am on the mailing list for some member associations and appreciate the opportunity to learn about them, including their key priorities, and activities. I have also joined a number of member associations on Facebook and enjoy learning about their activities.



Sandy Boyce with sisters in South Korea

VISITS

I spent a delightful weekend with the diaconal sisters in **South Korea** (during my visit to South Korea for WCC Assembly). I learned a great deal about their association, their tenacity and quiet determination, their institutions and compassionate service.

Immediately after the Executive Committee concludes, I will be travelling to **South India**, and I am in the process of arrangements to meet with one (and hopefully more) of the diaconal associations.

WCC

It was a privilege to be able to attend the WCC in Busan, South Korea. I did keep a blog on some of my learning and experiences: <http://sandywcc.blogspot.com.au>.



I attended the ecumenical sessions, "*Compelled to serve: Diakonia and development in a rapidly changing world*". The sessions provided a space for theological, ecclesiological, and practical reflection on how paradigmatic change factors affect churches and specialized agencies. The terminology around diakonia seemed to be more closely associated with aid and development groups than church based diaconal ministry.

It was acknowledged that the ecumenical movement now requires new thinking, new approaches, and new patterns of cooperation. Two foundational

documents were made available: "Theological Perspectives on Diakonia in the Twenty-First Century" and "The Changing Development Paradigm: An ACT Alliance Discussion Paper".

At a personal level, I enjoyed the experience, and made the most of the opportunity to network. I would like to affirm the ongoing relationship between DIAKONIA and WCC, though perhaps priority needs to be given to ecumenical discussion specific to diakonia, rather than participation in the WCC Assembly when thousands of people attend and diakonia has a minor role to play in the overall proceedings, and DIAKONIA specifically is marginal.

PUBLICATION



Craig Nesson and Sister Roswitha Buff

I have received an invitation to write for a issue of the publication, *Currents in Theology and Mission*, a theology and ministry journal published 6 times per year in partnership between the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, Wartburg Theological Seminary, and Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary. The August 2015 issue will have the theme, "The Future of Diaconal Ministry." The editors believe this is a *kairos* for the church to gain greater theological clarity about and ecclesial appreciation for diakonia in the contemporary world. The contribution is about 3000 words, casting a vision for the future of diaconal ministry in relationship to its historical origins, theological significance, and ministerial practice. There will be four to five questions for group discussion at the end of the article, so that the issue

might also be used for study groups. I'd welcome any input you may wish to give!

ECUMENICAL

I have had contact with Dr. Klaus Kießling, the President of the **International Diaconate Centre (IDC/IDZ)**, the Catholic sister of DIAKONIA, whom I met in Berlin at the DIAKONIA Assembly 2013. The IDC/IDZ is in the process of preparing a research project "Pro Diakonia worldwide" and is seeking different conceptions of the Catholic diaconate all over the world. Klaus was looking for an Australian Catholic deacon who could join this project and reflect on his role as a Deacon in a social or a prophetic way. I was able to refer him to a Catholic Deacon based in Adelaide, Nick Kerr, and Nick was able to travel to an IDZ meeting in South Africa.

NEW ORGANISATION – ReDi, www.diaconiaresearch.org

Tony Addy, Chairperson of the new International Society for the Research and Study of Diaconia and Christian Social Practice (ReDi) has invited DIAKONIA to participate and collaborate in a new initiative. Tony has indicated that ReDi would like to strengthen links with DIAKONIA World Federation. ReDi already has a good relationship with Eurodiaconia, where the secretariat is located, and looks forward to hearing from us in the future.

THANKS

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to Ulrike, who I value as friend and wise sage. She has a great deal of wisdom and knowledge that is such an asset to the work of DIAKONIA and I have personally valued her support and wisdom. I will miss Ulrike in the role of Secretary but also very much look forward to working with Traude. Thank you, Ulrike, for all you have offered. We are blessed to have you continue to work with the DIAKONIA Executive Committee. Thank you also to Laura, who offers wisdom, critique and affirmation, and enduring commitment to the work of DIAKONIA. Laura is available at the other end of an email – distance need be no barrier in communication! Thank you also to both Ulrike and Laura for their patient work at assembling the

DIAKONIA News following our June meeting.

WORK 'in between'

We will have opportunity to discuss our work 'in between' and following our face-to-face meetings and how that might best work. I welcome your input and suggestions.

GENERAL

I am very much looking forward to our time together as the DIAKONIA Executive Committee in July in Kaiserswerth to build a sense of connection together and work on our core business. Part of the agenda will also be reflecting on the past, the present and the future, and the particular focus for DIAKONIA as we move forward into the future. I look forward to the discussions in the meeting and to building a sense of community together.

I conclude with these 'big picture' words from the WCC General Secretary the Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit at the DIAKONIA 21st World Assembly in Berlin, Germany addressing the theme "Diaconia – Healing and Wholeness for the World":



Rev Dr Olav Fykse Tveit at the DIAKONIA World Assembly Berlin 2013

"the *diakonia* of the Christian church that offers healing and wholeness for the world is not merely resistance or confrontation. *Diakonia* proposes specific "alternatives to the ways in which human beings relate with one another and with nature." Empowered by the Holy Spirit, the church of this generation is called to resist the powers of destruction and injustices, conflicts and violence, by proposing alternative values and visions of the world. By embodying the values and vision of God's Kingdom in its witness through service, the *diakonia* of the Christian church should heal, restore and reconcile this world with its Creator who is the ultimate foundation for fullness of life in health and wholeness".

Preview



DRAE Regional Assembly
July 1-5, 2015
Kongshaug, Norway



DOTAC Regional Assembly
October 22 – 26, 2015
Porto Alegre, Brazil

First Report of the Secretary

By Deaconess Ulrike Kellner, Secretary until April 30, 2014

The remaining months of my duties as Secretary after the DIAKONIA World Assembly in Berlin, Germany, were occupied by four tasks:

1. Follow-up work of the Assembly:

- All minutes of the Executive Committee meetings held before, during and after the Assembly had to be written and accepted by two different Executive Committees. Therefore it took some time to get everything settled, but all minutes – English and German – went to the members in October 2013.
- The member list and Executive list was updated and distributed.
- Unfortunately, the responses to the survey of participants in the Assembly were mainly from people in North America. Therefore they are not representative of all Assembly attendees. Results will be presented in a separate report.

2. Sending out membership fee letters

- Together with DIAKONIA Treasurer Laura Lazar, I prepared the membership fee letters for 2014 and sent them out again.
- From the responses to these letters we gained some data from our members, and I could update the membership list.

3. Preparing the meeting of the Executive Committee in Kaiserswerth:

- The invitation for the Executive Meeting was sent in October 2013.
- As 2014 Executive Committee meeting was taking place at my own community, I made the reservations and did primary arrangements according to the wishes of the president.



4. Passing on the office of Secretary to my successor:

- At the Assembly in Berlin we presented a new DIAKONIA Secretary to the audience. After we met at the assembly, I transferred the files to my designated successor in Berlin. Unfortunately, shortly after she received the files, she resigned from this office. So I had to act as an interim Secretary into the year 2014.
- Fortunately we were able to find a new candidate and after an email-decision among the DIAKONIA World Executive Committee members Sister Traude Leitenberger was appointed as new DIAKONIA Secretary. I met with Traude in April, and she assumed office on May 1, 2014.

Now I wish for the new Executive Committee and especially my successor, Sister Traude Leitenberger, a good and fruitful Executive Committee meeting and our Lord's guidance for the future.

Second Report of the Secretary

By Sister Traude Leitenberger, Secretary beginning May 1, 2014

Before I start my report, I want to thank the members of the Executive Committee for the confidence you have in me. I was surprised and, at the same time, very happy to be chosen for this appointment. With all my knowledge and experience I hope to support the work of DIAKONIA.



On April 24, 2014, Ulrike Kellner and I met in Stuttgart, and she handed over 12 folders of material related to the secretarial position. On May 1, 2014, I officially started my work. At this point I do not have much to report.

For the Executive Committee meeting in Kaiserswerth, Ulrike Kellner had done most of the organizational work through the end of April 2014. What was left were the invitation letters for the entry visas; some communication with the Hotel MutterHaus in Kaiserswerth and papers to be prepared for the meeting.

I thank Ulrike Kellner very much for the support she has given me up to now and for her offer to answer my future questions.

Report of the Webmanager

By Diane Kaufman, Webmanager

The big accomplishment for the past year has been obtaining control of the domain name and moving our DIAKONIA website to the web hosting company GoDaddy. This was finalized in March, and things have been running smoothly since then.



At the Berlin Assembly, Sandy asked me to feature on the web site monthly a picture and a short profile of an Executive Committee member, both to keep the website looking active and to introduce Committee members to the larger membership. I have been working my way through the profiles that I have been sent to me – thank you for doing that! Hopefully I will get the last profiles at our July meeting - another gentle reminder if you haven't sent me one yet ☺.

The website continues to get visitors. I am encouraged that each week the website statistics show that people are visiting the site. We need fresh content to continue enticing people to come back.

Report of the Treasurer

By Laura Lazar, Treasurer

Presented below are the actual and budgeted statements of income and expenditures for the year 2013. As you can see, although our expenditures exceeded our income by almost 2.000 Euros, that amount was much less than what we had budgeted. Further information about DIAKONIA's financial situation can be found in the summary of the July 2014 Executive Committee meeting minutes.

	2013 Ac- tual	2013 Budget
Income (in		
Member fees	37,404	35,000
Interest	297	250
Gifts	808	100
Total	38,509	35,350
Expenditures		
Executive Committee	16,481	27,000
Office expenses	567	750
Communications	1,074	750
Professional services	2,250	2,500
Honorarium, Treasurer	7,500	7,500
Honorarium, Secretary	7,500	7,500
President's Discretionary Fund	1,000	1,000
Region Support	0	0
Ecumenical relations	4,071	4,000
Miscellaneous	0	100
Total	40,443	51,100
Reduction in General Fund	1,934	15,750

Fees, donations and contributions you may send to the following account
Bank account No 4002199 Stiftung DIAKONIA
Evangelische Bank (former Ev. Kreditgenossenschaft), BLZ 520 604 10
IBAN: DE23 5206 0410 0004 0021 99 BIC: GENODEF1EK1

DIAKONIA EXECUTIVE REPORTS 2014

DIAKONIA Executive Committee July 2014 – Summary Minutes

The DIAKONIA World Federation Executive Committee met from June 24 - 29, 2014, at the MutterHaus Hotel in Düsseldorf, Germany.

Attendees:

Members: Sandy Boyce, President; Emma Cantor (DAP Regional President); Marianne Uri Øverland, (DRAE Regional President); Lisa Polito (DOTAC Regional President); Alison McRae (DAP); Sabine Ritter (DRAE); Gillian Wilson (DOTAC); Elly Urio

(DRAE); Ulrike Kellner (DRAE); Ann Wren (DRAE)

Officers: Diane Kaufmann, Web Manager; Laura Lazar, Treasurer; Traude Leitenberger, Secretary

Guests: Louise Williams, DIAKONIA President (2001-2009), full-time; Doris Horn, DIAKONIA President (2009-2013), part-time; Deacon Wolfgang Scheidt, part-time.



*DIAKONIA World Executive Committee
Meeting in Kaiserswerth/Germany, July 2014*

From left to right: Gillian Wilson, Laura Lazar, Alison McRae, Emma Cantor, Marianne Uri Øverland, Elly Urio, Lisa Polito, Sandy Boyce, Sabine Ritter, Ann Wren, Ulrike Kellner, Traude Leitenberger, Diane Kaufmann

Business Meeting:

President Sandy Boyce began the meeting with a welcome, introductions, an opening devotion, and an orientation to the manner in which the Executive Committee conducts business. She acknowledged and welcomed Traude Leitenberger as the new DIAKONIA Secretary and then acknowledged and thanked Ulrike Kellner, former DIAKONIA Secretary, for her many

years of service. She also welcomed to the Board the new members Ann Wren (DRAE), Gillian Wilson (DOTAC), and Alison McRae (DAP).

After approving the minutes from the 2013 Executive Committee meetings and making committee appointments, the Committee received reports from the three regional presidents, the secretaries, the treasurer, the web manager, and ecumen-

ical representatives. These reports are available in edited form within this newsletter.



Motherhouse in Kaiserswerth

The following agenda items were discussed:

1. Request that current DIAKONIA logo be replaced by the logo used at the Berlin Assembly. The decision was made to retain the current logo.
2. 2013 Assembly review. More information about this topic can be found in the reports section of this newsletter. Deacon Wolfgang Scheidt reviewed the registration software developed for the 2013 Assembly and presented it to the Executive Committee.
3. 2017 Assembly planning:-The following decisions were made:
 - 3.1 To determine whether Loyola University in Chicago, Illinois, can serve as the venue for the Assembly in late June 2017.
 - 3.2 To have the Executive Committee assume responsibility for the Assembly programming and have the local planning committee work with the venue and do onsite planning.
 - 3.3 To use as an Assembly theme *Shaken by the Wind* . . .
 - 3.4 To shorten the length of the Assembly by one day.
4. Monthly prayer letter. The Executive Committee will assume responsibility for the DIAKONIA monthly prayer letter which is published on DIAKONIA's page on Facebook.
5. 2015 Executive Committee meeting. The decision was made to schedule the 2015 Executive Committee in Chicago, Illinois in November 2015.
6. Finance Committee proposals:

6.1 The 2015 budget was proposed and accepted.

6.2 The Berlin Assembly surplus was allocated between the General Fund and the Endowment Fund. An Assembly Planning Committee Loan Fund was created.

6.3 The Treasurer was directed to pursue the registration of DIAKONIA as a foundation in Germany.

6.4 The Treasurer was directed to seek counsel to improve internal control procedures and to send the monthly bank statements to the President.

Other Activities:

In addition to conducting business, the Executive Committee had a rich menu of activities. Highlights follow:

a) We ate breakfast and lunch at the Hotel MutterHaus. We ate dinner prepared by one of the Kaiserswerth sisters at their living quarters.

b) One evening former DIAKONIA Presidents Louise Williams and Doris Horn talked together and with us about their experiences with DIAKONIA and their hopes for the organization.



*Three DIAKONIA World Presidents:
Louise Williams, Sandy Boyce, Doris Horn (from left to right)*

c) We were given a guided tour of Kaiserswerth and saw many sights connected with the Fliedners and the founding of the Kaiserswerth Institution.

d) We held devotions each day and also were invited to attend daily worship with the Kaiserswerth sisters. On Sunday we worshipped together with the Kaiserswerth Sisters and members of the local community, and Sandy celebrated communion. We then share lunch with the Sisters and local community members.

DIAKONIA EXECUTIVE REPORTS 2014

REPORT of the REGIONAL PRESIDENTS

Report DIAKONIA-Asia-Pacific (DAP)

By Emma Cantor, Regional President

DAP member groups:

Australia	Australian Anglican Diaconal Association
Australia	Diakonia Uniting Church in Australia
Fiji	Fiji Methodist Deaconess Order
India	Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church
India	Deaconesses of Methodist Church of India
India	Order of Women in the Church of South India
Indonesia	Ikatan Diakoni Wanita Huria Kristen Batak Protestan
Japan	Deaconess House Bethesda
Japan	Fellowship Deacony, Motherhouse Bethel
New Zealand	Diakonia Aotearoa New Zealand Association
South Korea	Diakonia Sisterhood in South Korea
Philippines	Commission on Deaconess Service of the United Methodist Church
Philippines	Deaconess Association of Iglesia Evangelica En Las Islas Filipinas
Philippines	Deaconess Association of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines



News about DAP member countries:

Indonesia

I met Imelda in one of the clergywomen seminars in Indonesia. She has three children. Her church appointment was in 3 different areas, which were four to six kilometers away from each point. Her salary is \$70.00 dollars per month depending on the church offering every Sunday. She used a motorcycle to reach out to people. She gets another \$7.00 support from her headquarters, but her moderator only gives her half, which she does not understand. The majority of the members of IKADIWA live at the poverty line. Many of them are appointed to far away palm and rubber plantations. The women clergy are the least likely to get good places for ap-

pointments. There is a big gap in the appointment process, and women workers are always at the edge. Riani is a single woman who is appointed in one of the remotest village. She was soliciting some help in one of our encounters to make a window in her small parsonage and to build a toilet. Two young women were appointed in a Muslim area where mining is a big thing. They help the Muslim community in raising consciousness to defend their people from exploitations. They met by accident in their work. I visited one of them in the hospital. Thank God they are back in their assignment. Just recently, two IKADIWA members died.

Philippines

Several clergywomen and deaconesses are migrant workers in Hong Kong - at least almost one hundred deaconesses and clergywomen I know, excluding other members of UCCP and IEMELIF. Due to the low salary from their work and because their families are growing, they opted to be part of the brain drain economic scheme of our government. Ofelia stayed in Hong Kong for 23 years and at present, she is in Dubai. Nati is now in Canada. Priscila is now in the US. We have more

India

While India is now rising economically second only to China, as a silicon country, it does not necessarily follow that women live well economically. Many of our members are suffering from poverty, gender discrimination, lack of access to life-enhancing opportunities, and many of them

Korea and Japan

Japan is a highly closed society and culturally women are highly domesticated and are challenged every day for their identity as people in seeking equal access to life-enhancing opportunities and capacities. Likewise, Korean women in general

Fiji and Australia

Fiji, as we all know, has been suffering from issues of peace, militarization, and

deaconesses who are transferred to the US, not to mention the 12-15 million Filipino migrant workers, not many of them ending a up with a beautiful life. The migrants are in a nonstop movement of dancing with the waves of migration leaving the country in search of life. About 5,000 Filipinos leave the country every day in search of hope and good life. The Philippines and Indonesia are migrant-sending countries. Human trafficking is another issue to contend with.

hancing opportunities, and many of them live at the edge while doing their ministries. Affordable comforts are not provided for them. They serve the poorest in their communities with little recognition of their own needs by the Church where they belong.

have to break the glass ceiling culture to rise up. Patriarchal culture is highly embedded in both Japan and Korea, which limits women's opportunities to become fully human. They belong to the poorest sector of their society. We have few members in Korea and Japan.

instability as a country. I speak not of Australia the same way as with the other members.

Over the past 12 years, DIAKONIA ASIA PACIFIC usually meets during DIAKONIA

WORLD Assemblies. A lack of financial resources is a major factor in organizing the region regularly.



Emma Cantor, DAP Regional President

With this landscape of DAP, there is a vast capacity for creativity in the way ministries are done. DAP leadership and member association can be more encouraged and become deeply inspired to create opportunity models. DAP leadership can respond to the uniqueness of the region for its mission towards social transformation where their ministries are located. This we commit.

Information from DAP member groups:

India: Deaconesses of the Methodist Church in India is the official name of the Deaconess Association in India. Total Active deaconesses: 80; Enrolled to DIAKONIA as member 39; retired deaconesses 20. Shaila John Wesley is the present Executive Secretary of the Deaconess and Women's Work Council. She was the representative to the DIAKONIA World Assembly 2013. She is elected as one of the Vice Presidents of DIAKONIA Asia Pacific region. Deaconess and Women's Work Week is held every year with varied theme in shaping the Deaconesses Ministry in Today's Context.

Indonesia – Ikatan Diakoni Wanita Huria Kristen Batak Protestant

With the new leadership of IKADIWA HKBP, communication is easier. Two schools in Balige graduated and consecrated: 19 deaconesses, 15 bible women and 19 teachers/preachers.

Diakonia Sisterhood in South Korea

I had the chance to meet them at the WCC Assembly last year and talked and walked with them. They are celebrating

Philippines – Commission on Deaconess Service of the United Methodist Church: The United Methodist Church Commission on Deaconess Service held its annual meeting last September 13-14, 2013 at Decker Memorial Home in Quezon City, and the chairperson represents their Annual Conferences. Shared reports focused on ministries, situations at assignment sites, continuing professional needs, mentoring, and community engagements. The deaconesses were assigned to 24 annual conferences doing different church ministries with ministries with women, youth, and children.

For this conference year, there are about 250 deaconesses under appointment in three Episcopal Areas (Davao, Manila, Baguio). Harris Memorial College graduated and consecrated in 2014: 34 Christian Education and Early Childhood

Schedule 2014: A seminar-workshop on Leadership training will be held for 35 deaconesses on October 21-25, 2014, in partnership with the United Methodist Women Regional Missionary Initiatives, in cooperation with the India Methodist Church. The National Assembly of Deaconesses will be held in January 2015.

The Methodist Deaconesses are also planning to have a DIAKONIA-INDIA where the three associations will meet and forge a unity of their common ministries.

The DIAKONIA PHILS, Harris Memorial College, and UMW Regional Missionary Office continue the commitment to create initiatives for staff and student exchange and to enable capacities through seminars started in 2013 with the Balige School for Deaconesses.

the 33rd anniversary of Diakonia Sisterhood in Korea and the 10th anniversary of Diakonia Family Community.

Educators. Southern Philippines Christian College consecrated: 3.
I work as BOT member to Harris and co-partner for programs at SPMC.

Deaconess Association of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines: Enrolled members to DIAKONIA: 25 active members

Deaconess Association of Iglesia Evangelica En Las Filipinas: There are 75 deaconesses. New officers were elected at their 2014 National assembly June 2-4, 2014.

Programming: Strengthening their membership and organization by continuing education, spiritual retreat, spirituality, and effective relationships with church members. They update their professional

education. They recently held their annual gathering in June this year.

DIAKONIA PHILS is central in the organizational life of the 3 member associations. Board members come from the three member associations.

Activities: DIAKONIA PHILS expresses their appreciation and thanks for all your prayers and support to the victims of the *Haiyan typhoon*. With your help we were able to provide programs aimed to debrief Yolanda survivors, specifically women, youth, and children from their traumatic experience during the super typhoon. The activities consist of telling their stories, creating visions, livelihood skills, and sowing seeds of hope.

Diakonia Farm -- 6015 SQ m of land donated to DIAKONIA PHILS was planted with fruit trees and medicinal plants

Diakonal House -- a vision of having a DIAKONIA Center to help the rural folks in

their initiative for life: spirituality, livelihood programs, education, community organization and training.

DIAKONIA PHILS Biennial Assembly October 2013 Palawan, Philippines

150 delegates with the theme: Healing and Wholeness

DIAKONIA PHILS Biennial Assembly, October 2015 The theme will focus on healing through reaching out to our indigenous sisters and brothers learning about life with them.

Two associations awaiting requirements for their membership: Ang Iglesia Metodista sa Philipinas and the Deacons/Priests of the Episcopal Church in the Philippines.

2017 DIAKONIA World Assembly

Due to factors beyond its control, DIAKONIA PHILS regretted that it had to withdraw its invitation to host the 2017 DIAKONIA World Assembly.

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>

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

Fees, donations and contributions you may send to the following account

Bank account No 4002199 Stiftung DIAKONIA

Evanglische Bank (former: Ev. Kreditgenossenschaft), BLZ 520 604 10

IBAN: DE23 5206 0410 0004 0021 99 BIC: GENODEF1EK1

Report DIAKONIA of the Americas and Caribbean (DOTAC)

By Lisa Polito, Regional President

DOTAC member organizations

Association of Anglican Deacons in Canada/ Association Anglicane des Diacres au Canada	89 members
Association for Episcopal Deacons	350 members
Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	72 members
Deacons and Diaconal Ministers, Division of Ordained Ministry, The United Methodist Church	1,000 members
Diaconal Minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	150 members
Diaconal Ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada	31 members
Diaconia da Igreja Evangélica de Confissão Luterana no Brasil	160 members
Diakonia, United Church of Canada (Seven graduates in the past year)	287 members
Lutheran Deaconess Association/Conference/ Conference of Lutheran Deacons (Seven consecrations in the past year)	201 members
Office of Deaconess, Home Missioner and Home Missionary, United Methodist Church, (27 consecrations in the past year)	349 members
Order of Diaconal Ministries, Presbyterian Church in Canada	55 members
Wesley Diaconal Community of the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas	31 members



DOTAC Executive Committee

Events and celebrations

The next DOTAC Regional Assembly will be held October 22 – 26, 2015 in Porto Alegre, Brazil!

A general meeting of the **Diaconal Fellowship of the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil (IECLB)** takes place every year. Every three years the IECLB's Diaconal Fellowship (Comunhão de Obreiros Diaconais – COD) and its partner organization of Berlin, the Schwestern- und Bruderschaft des Evangelischen Johannesstifts (SBES), hold a seminar with eight representatives from each fellowship in order to strengthen their partnership. This year the meeting was in Brazil. The group of Germans stayed in Brazil from January 7 - 27, 2014. During this period they visited diaconal

institutions located close to São Leopoldo, interacted with host families in Southern Brazil and in the state of Espírito Santo and also got to know, to a certain extent, the reality of Rio de Janeiro, accompanied by diaconal worker Vilma. The seminar took place January 13 - 15 at the deaconesses' house (Casa Matriz de Diaconisas) in São Leopoldo. Its theme was *The Reformation Church and Its Diaconal Responsibility Today* (Als Kirche der Reformation heute diakonisch tätig sein). The general meeting under the theme *Thinking about the Future* was held after the seminar. At this meeting the fellowship's strategic plan was discussed and goals to be met after the General Assembly were established.

Evangelical Lutheran Sisterhood - 75 years of diaconal life and witness

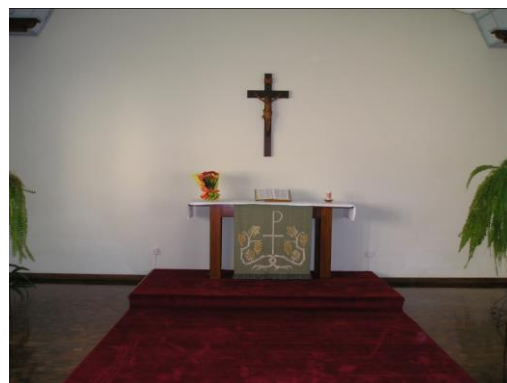
Gratitude is what we feel when we look back and realize how God has taken care of the Sisterhood throughout its 75 years of existence. But, it also is time to look forward with faith and hope and dare to make new changes.



Motherhouse Sao Leopoldo

Beginning in 1913, we have had Lutheran sisters working in Brazil. German immigrants felt the lack of persons who had knowledge in the area of nursing and pedagogy. That is why they requested that Germany send sisters with training in these areas. Soon Brazilian women desired to work as sisters. At the Women's

Congress in 1938, the foundation of a Deaconess Mother House in Brazil was approved. Each year on May 17, we have a convention to which all the sisters are invited. This year a majority of the sisters participated, and the convention ended with a celebration of 75 years of the Deaconess Mother House. The theme of this convention was *Strengthening Diakonia - Experiencing Communion in the Sisterhood*.



Chapel Motherhouse

Diaconal and pastoral ministers officiated at the worship service celebrating the 75-year jubilee. The sermon was preached by P. Sílvia Genz, second vice-president of the IECLB. She spoke on the Biblical text

of John 20, which tells of the encounter of the resurrected Jesus with Mary Magdalene.

After the festive worship service, all were able to have a noon meal at the Deaconess Mother House and then in the afternoon, coffee and tea with cake. God granted us a beautiful day without a hot sun, or cold, or rain. A small museum was set up in a room showing the historical aspects of the Sisterhood. We had a cultural program and visitors were able to visit and get to know the Lar Moriá [Moriá Home] where over seventy elderly people live.

We know that life is constituted by changes, and that is what the Evangelical Lutheran Sisterhood has experienced and dared to do throughout its 75 years of existence. Currently, we also include women in the Sisterhood who feel themselves

called to it, but who have concluded a professional secular program without theological formation and do not wish to work as ministers in congregations. These women are called diaconal sisters. Likewise we accept into the Sisterhood pastors and catechists. We are grateful to God that we had two women join the Sisterhood in 2013, and two women pastors already have a date marked for joining this year. God continues calling workers and we invite women, young and adults, to come get to know the Evangelical Lutheran Sisterhood. We invite you to be part of this family, which wishes to live in communion and serve those who are in need, motivated by the love of God. In 1939 this desire was fulfilled, and the Deaconess Mother House was born.

Diak. Gisela Beulke
Director of Deaconess Mother House.

“The Seven” Young Adult Mentoring is a 10-month hands-on spiritual and education exploration program for young adults by the **Association for Episcopal Deacons**. These persons spend a year engaged in meaningful work and reflection in their communities while discerning their own vocational calls in mentored relationships with Episcopal deacons. Participants

served where they live and deacon mentors helped them select meaningful work and guided them in spiritual growth. Online and other interactive communication tools connected participants and their mentors for group learning and conversation. This is a three-year program, and they are now recruiting for the final program year.

Deacon Lori Mills-Curran (**Association of Episcopal Deacons**) was presented with the St. George Award, the highest award

the Episcopal Church gives for people who support youth ministry.

The **Association for Episcopal Deacons** held their annual Archdeacon and Deacon Director's conference in Baltimore from March 27 - 30. This is an opportunity for diaconal leaders in each diocese to meet and share ideas and mutual support. Speakers gave talks on the PICO model of community organizing and had a panel discussion on the usefulness of deacons' councils in dioceses. The main part of the ADDD conference uses the open space model, in which people offer topics that they want to talk about. There were about

15 open space meetings. The open space model is very useful, particularly for a group in which some have been coming annually for years and others are present for the first time. It gets people to think about what they want to take away from the meeting and gets them to ask for it. It results in very productive conversations. One of the most useful open space meetings was with a representative of Episcopal Divinity School, the seminary in New Haven, about relationships between deacons and seminaries.

Highlights of DOTAC Activities

We are currently planning for our conference in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in October 2015.

We are currently planning a DOVE event – DIAKONIA Overcoming Violence Experience in Canada for 2017.



*Lisa Polito
DOTAC Regional President*



Issues, Concerns, Impediments, and Challenges

In the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, there is a movement to recommend to the Churchwide Assembly the joining together into one roster of the three ELCA groups (ELCA Deaconess Community, Diaconal Ministers of the ELCA, and Associates in Ministry) and then using for the members of that roster the title Deacon and a rite of Ordination. This change would affect three of our member groups.

A number of individuals related to several of our member groups are ready

to begin their work but need a *called* position from their church body before they are able to be consecrated (set apart) and to join their respective diaconal group.

There is a great deal of work for our groups to do to raise awareness of the value of being called to the diaconal ministry. We try to look for ways to support one another.

Publicity

We are updating our website. Most of our member groups now have a website.

We have 296 members in our Facebook group. Many member groups have a Facebook page. Lisa, the president

of DOTAC, is a member of most of these groups; however, some groups are private. They range in size from the United Methodist Deacons with 937 members to the ELCIC group with 11 members.

Each of our member groups works to have some publicity. The ELCIC Diaconal Ministers had Diaconal Focus Sunday with resources available via the national church.

Deaconess Becky Louter (United Methodist Church) has agreed to submit an article for consideration for the August

2015 issue themed 'The Future of Diaconal Ministry' in the journal Currents in Theology and Mission. She and Victoria Rebeck (United Methodist Church Deacons) are writing an article for The UMC explaining the two expressions (clergy and lay/deacon and Deaconesses Home Missioners) of the diaconate.

The role and future of diaconal ministry

There are three types of diaconal service identified by The Presbyterian Church in Canada: Christian Education, Pastoral Care and Social Services.

Several member groups have individuals who struggle with getting *calls*.

Most groups struggle with our church bodies, which encourage individuals toward the pastoral office instead of the diaconal. Several groups are growing, and a couple of them are shrinking.

Conferences

A conference titled *A Study of the Understanding of the Office of Deaconess and Home Missioner – Is it considered a Lay Order in The UMC?* will be held from September 26 - 28, 2014. Louise Williams is one of the discussants.

Because the premise of violence prevention is that *Hurt people, hurt people*, Deaconess Rachel Patman, a participant in the first DOVE event in New York City,

was supported to receive training at Eastern Mennonite University on Strategies for dealing with Trauma And building Resilience (STAR). We can now provide this STAR training not only for ourselves but also for groups within churches or communities that deal with people affected by trauma but contend with limited mental health resources.



Report DIAKONIA-Region-Africa-Europe (DRAE)

By Marianne Uri Øverland, Regional President

DRAE – Africa and Europe is the largest of our three regions and is divided into nine sub regions:

- 1: United Kingdom and Northern Ireland
- 2: Finland and Sweden
- 3: Denmark and Norway
- 4: Germany (Kaiserswerther Verband), France, Austria and Hungary and)
- 5: Germany (DGDV), Switzerland and the Netherlands
- 6: Malawi, South Africa, Madagascar, Tanzania and Zambia
- 7: Cameroon, Ethiopia, Egypt, Rwanda, Kenya and Nigeria
- 8: Germany (VEDD, only members of the region)
- 9: Germany (Zehlendorfer Verband)



News of individuals

Ibironke Owuro from Nigeria was elected as Regional Vice President for DIAKONIA-DRAE.

Forstanderinne *Edy Kjærsgaard* at Diakonissehuset St. Lukas Stiftelsen in Copenhagen died November 15, 2013. Caring for her during her illness took much effort on behalf of the whole organization during the last half-year. Sister *Marie Oved*, Vice-Forstanderinne is, for the interim, in charge of the sisterhood/fellowship and the church. St. Lukas is changing their organization and has decided to have a director.

At Diakonova in Oslo, diaconal leader *Åse Snøtun* has left her office. *Kirsti Eide* is the new diaconal leader in a part-time position (40%).

Marianne Uri Øverland is leaving her position as Forstanderinne at Diakonissehuset Lovisenberg in Oslo. There is at this time no new appointment.

In October 2013, Sister *Greet Verhoeven* assumed leadership for the Zendings-Diaconissenhuis Amerongen from Sister *Dorien Peet*, who had been the leading sister for 12 years.

The Zehlendorfer Verband had a conference in October 2013 in Berlin. At this meeting Dr *Martin Zentgraf* was confirmed as the Chief Executive Officer.

The leader of the Diakoniewerk Gallneukirchen/Austria, Mag. *Christa Schrauf* was elected as President of the Kaiserswerth General Conference.

After the death of three sisters, there are now only 7 sisters left at Fébé Evangélikus Diakonissza Egyesület Anyaháza (Hungary). They are all between 83 - 97 years old. They are still living in the old mother-house although it is now part of Sarepta, a home for the aged.

Events and celebrations

Diakonissestiftelsen in Copenhagen celebrated their 150th anniversary in May, and in November, Forstanderinde *Merete Pelle Poulsen* celebrated 25 years in office.

In *Germany* four motherhouses celebrate impressive anniversaries in 2014: Bad Kreuznach, 125 years; Guben, 130 years; Neuendettelsau, 160 years; and Zehlen-

dorf, 120 years. They will celebrate with general meetings where all the sisters and brothers are welcomed.

In 2016, both Kaiserswerth General Conference and Zehlendorfer Konferenz will celebrate the 100-year anniversaries of their founding.



*Rev Marianne Uri Øverland
DRAE Regional President*



*Schwester Sabine Ritter
Secretary DRAE*

Highlights

The Executive Board of DIAKONIA-DRAE held their meeting in Blackpool, UK. The meeting was organized by Board member Ann Wren. It was a fruitful meeting combining normal business duties with infor-

mation about and exposure to the region. The mayor of Blackpool invited the Board to a gathering in the Town Hall and donated funds for the arrangements of our meeting, especially a very nice dinner.



DRAE Executive Committee

New members in the region

The EC unanimously accepted the application of Highveld Deacons from South Africa. This new-founded community with 9 members complies with all requirements

for DRAE membership. The application included the request of membership in DIAKONIA World Federation.

Issues/Concerns/Impediments/Challenges

There have been some problems collecting DRAE membership fees for some years. The problems occur mainly be-

cause of confusion and misunderstandings.

The role and future of diaconal ministry

The next DRAE conference will be in Norway on July 1-5, 2015. The theme is *The Eye of the Storm. Diaconia - The Biblical Challenge for the Whole Church in the World we live in.* The conference will focus on challenges that di-

aconia meets in the world; what it means to be a deacon in different countries; the relationship between the church and these communities; and current transformations in churches and society.

Conferences

Under the theme of *Spiritual Care*, the *Conference of EVFD*, was held in Vienna in September 2013. In different presentations, the need for spiritual care for both patients and residents in care units and also for staff in Christian institutions was made very clear.

In September 2013, the opening symposium of "*TANGES*" took place at the "Evangelische Hochschule Tabor" in Marburg. This is a new Institute for cultural hermeneutics and research on living environment. (Institut für Kulturhermeneutik und Lebensweltforschung).

The students in the *Zehlendorfer Association* had seminar in March in Berlin to the theme *Arise and eat; because the journey*

is too great for you.

The sisters at *Communauté des Diaconesses de Reuilly (France)* had their annual retreat on October 30 - November 3, 2013 with the theme *Holy Spirit – Grace and Challenge*. Professor Gérard Siegwalt, Strasbourg, gave the main speech. At this assembly, three new novices were introduced into the third order, and two deaconesses celebrated their 70th anniversaries. Novice Soeur Caroline was accepted into a profess temporaire (time-limited membership) in the community. She is the first person in the new novitiate form, which developed in response to the needs of today.

Ecumenical relations

Eurodiaconia: DRAE needs to seek further cooperation with Eurodiaconia. In this way DRAE can participate, network, and share in their knowledge and public relations (EU funding). The Regional President participated in their AGM in Praha on

June 11-13, 2014, and had good discussions with GS Heather Roy.

KAIRE: DIAKONIA was a founding organization of KAIRE. Therefore it is very important to maintain this contact, to participate in the KAIRE meetings, and to involve them in our assemblies. Elisabeth

Meier attended their meeting from May 14 - 19, 2014, in England.

PORVO: This organization promotes the communication between the Anglican and Lutheran Churches in northern Europe and holds meetings in different parts of Europe. Ann Wren is DRAE's contact person.

CEC: At the moment there is no direct contact to the Conference of European Churches. But they also attend the AGM of Eurodiaconia so that event can be a valuable meeting point between DRAE and CEC.

DIAKONIA EXECUTIVE REPORTS 2014 ECUMENICAL RELATIONSHIPS

Report World Council of Churches

See President's Report

International Centre for the Diaconate (IDC)

By DIAKONIA Representative to the IDC, Deaconess Ulrike Kellner

The IDC is the association of Roman Catholic Deacons and their wives. It has its roots in the "Internationaler Diakonatskreis" which was founded in Freiburg, Germany in 1959, and led to the "International Information Center for Questions in Connection with the Diaconate" in 1965. Beginning in 1966, they began publishing their newspaper *Diaconia Christi*. In 1969, they changed their name to IDC, and in 1992, they moved their headquarters to Rottenburg, a small town in southern Germany. Since then, they have been associated with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Rottenburg but are becoming more and more international.

In 2002 the Bishop of the Rottenburg Diocese, Dr. Gebhard Fürst, founded the *Foundation Diaconia Christi Internationalis*. This organization is collecting funds to prepare for the possibility that the Roman Catholic Church will stop their funding. Although Germans still dominate the organization by number due to the

longer existence of IDC, deacons from other parts of the world such as Latin America and India are gaining influence. Latin America and India. The current president is Professor Klaus Kießling, who attended the DIAKONIA World Assembly in Berlin 2013.

At their Executive Meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa in February 2014, they decided on a project called "Pro Diaconia Christi". It is a research project on the current state of the diaconate within the Roman Catholic Church. It will be initiated in Germany at the Catholic seminary, Sankt Georgen Graduate School of Philosophy and Theology, which is where Klaus Kießling teaches. After research is completed in the German dioceses, it will be expanded to an international level.

Next year in October, the IDC will celebrate its 50th anniversary in Rome, Italy.



Report DIAKONIA World Assembly Berlin 2013

By Deaconess Ulrike Kellner

We can look back to a very successful 2013 DIAKONIA World Assembly in Berlin.

Hosting Associations: At the end of the 2009 DIAKONIA World Assembly in Atlanta, the three major German associations (Kaiserswerther Verband, VEDD, and Zehlendorfer Verband) invited the DIAKONIA World Federation to Berlin for its 2013 Assembly. They formed a legal organization to sign contracts, collect money, and conduct business within German laws. This organization will be dissolved in 2015, when all liabilities have been paid. Together with two other German diaconal associations (Deutscher Gemeinschafts-Diakonieverband and Johanniter-Schwesternschaft) they formed a planning committee. Sabine Ritter and Ulrike Kellner served as liaisons between the planning committee and the DIAKONIA Executive Committee.

Immediately after the Assembly in Atlanta, the planning committee began their work to make the Berlin Assembly a success. It was a stroke of luck that the leader of the diaconal community of the hosting venue, Deacon Wolfgang Scheidt had resigned from his duties and agreed to act as the convener and organizer of the Assembly.

Finances: From the start, it was clear that the hosting associations would need sponsors to help finance the Assembly. It was decided that the registration fee should not be higher than 800 Euros - this amount was already more than what some members could pay. They wanted to attend but could not afford to do so. Therefore significant effort was put into advertising the Assembly and collecting money. In

total, the nearly 150 German diaconal communities collected more than 93,500 Euros for the assembly. Other sponsors donated more than 200,000 Euros. The total cost of the assembly was nearly 549,000 Euros.

After paying all expenses, the planning committee was able not only to repay the DIAKONIA loan but also to pay some DIAKONIA expenses and then to waive registration fees and pay travel costs for DIAKONIA (including all grants from the Travel Fund). Given the state of DIAKONIA's finances, this was a wonderful gift.

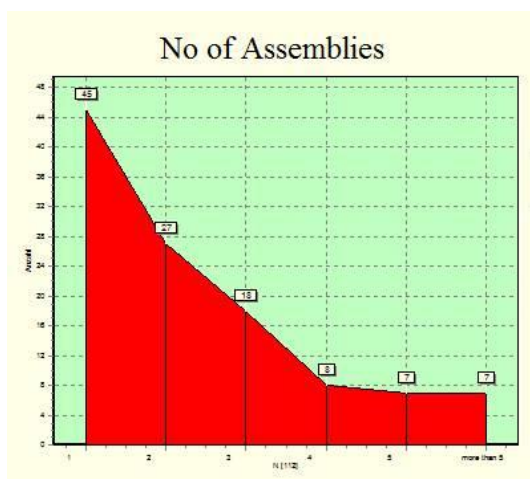
A decision of the DIAKONIA Executive Committee was that participants who did not belong to a DIAKONIA member group would pay a significantly higher fee (1,000 €). Only very few people chose to do this. Some exceptions were made for groups from Tanzania and Poland as a welcoming gesture towards.

Participants: Two hundred ninety (290) people attended the assembly full time. For obvious reasons, the largest group came from Germany (84), but was followed closely by participants from US (77).

For the first time, weekend participation was possible. Seventy-three (73) people took advantage of this option, most coming from Germany, but six persons came from the U.S. and one from Australia. The closing worship was held in the Berlin Cathedral. Around 500 people attended and almost filled the huge central area of the church.

Sixty-eight (68) voting delegates attended the assembly; twenty-eight (28) were funded out of DIAKONIA's Assembly Delegate Travel Fund.

After the Assembly, participants were asked to respond to a survey about their experiences. One hundred thirteen (113) persons sent in a completed survey. As the survey shows, many participants were attending a DIAKONIA World Assembly for the first time (times attended from left to right: 1 – more than 5)



Venue, food, communication, translation, and hospitality: Most of the participants were happy with their accommodations and with the food. They felt well informed before and during the assembly. Ninety percent (90%) were happy with the translation provided.

The computer program that used for registration and organizing the Assembly will be donated to DIAKONIA. In that way, future assemblies will be able to benefit from the experiences of the last assembly.

The participants were overwhelmed by the hospitality they experienced during their stay.

Programming: The overall response to the assembly was positive (6 on a 10 point scale). Most of the participants found the balance of programming and free time adequate (81 agree; 36 disagree) and thought that they had enough time to socialize with the other participants.

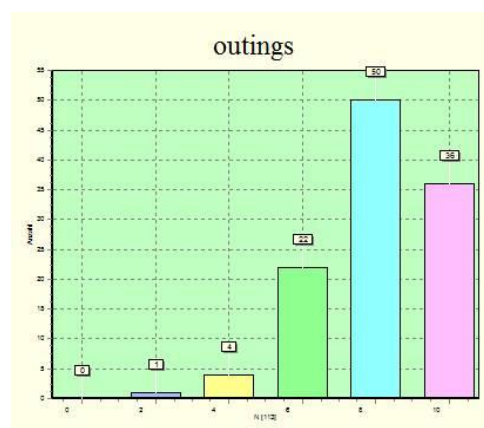
We all were very glad and proud that the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, Dr. Olav Fykse Tveit, could attend part of the Assembly and bring greetings. All keynote speakers were received well.

Nearly all participants were enthusiastic about the musician Fritz Baltruweit and his companion on the harp.

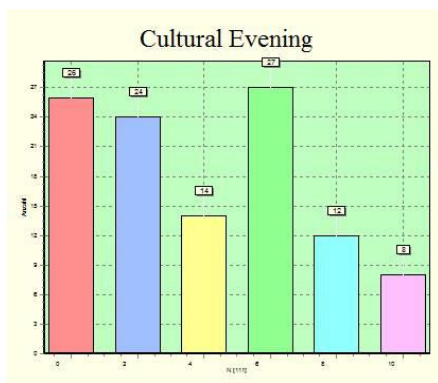
Only a few participants gave feedback about specific workshops. People indicated that they wanted more creative workshops than ones with power points. For the future, it is recommended that there should be more workshops held by DIAKONIA people themselves and preferably without any need of technical equipment. Overall the acceptance of workshops was good.

Small groups were well received also. The only recommendations are to organize them as early as possible and to make sure that translation is definitively available.

All seven outings were rated highly. About 25% of the participants joined a post-assembly tour. These post-assembly tours were designed not only as sightseeing trips around Germany but also included visits to diaconal groups and communities. In that way, the DIAKONIA idea of meeting on a grass root level was fostered even more. People that had no opportunity to come to Berlin could still meet diaconal people from around the world, and our guests learned more about diaconal life in Germany. The ranking went from low = 0 points (left) to fantastic = 10 points (right):

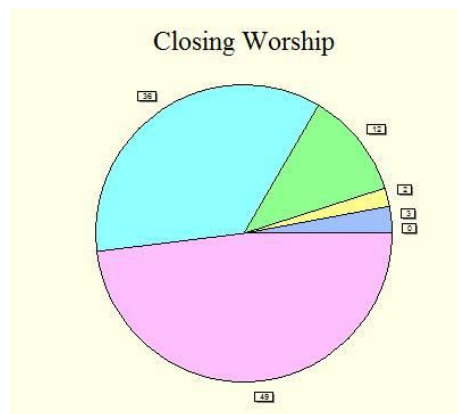
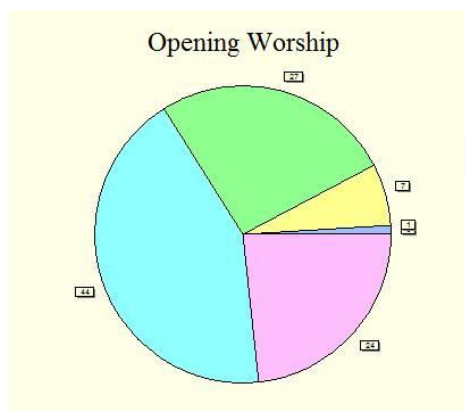


The only event that had mixed reviews was the cultural night (same ranking than before):



Former DIAKONIA Executive Committee member Lieselotte Lindner led a liturgy-planning group. The worship experiences - opening worship, daily morning and evening prayers, and closing worship at the Berlin Cathedral - highlighted both the theme of the program and the spiritual richness of the German diaconal communities. Sermons at the two worship services were preached by top officials of the German Protestant church: Dr. Nikolaus Schneider, President of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany, preached at the opening worship and Johannes Stockmeier, President of Diakonie Germany, at the closing worship.

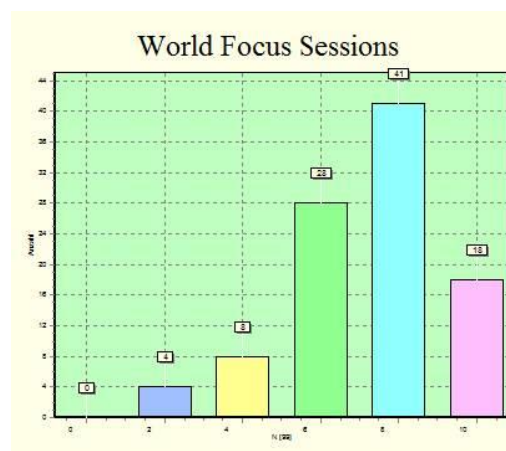
All worship services were well received, and over 93% of attendees thought that the worship services were relevant to their lives. On a scale of 0-10, participants rated as follows (dark blue = 2; yellow = 4; green = 6; light blue = 8; purple = 10)



Representatives from each of the five diaconal associations, that had planned the Assembly, led morning worship. Thereby worship participants could experience the various kinds of spirituality existing within diaconal life in Germany.

The evening prayers, during which the church was bathed daily in a different lights, were received well. They closed the day with meditative music and prayer.

Most participants liked the World Focus sessions (ranking left to right = 0 – 10):



Ninety-five percent (95%) of participants were satisfied that the price of the Assembly was fair for the experiences that they had, and 75% want to attend another DIAKONIA assembly.

This is a result we all can be proud of!

Sad News at the End

During the past year we learned of the deaths of *three deaconesses*: *Edy Kjaersgaard, Deborah Nebel, Ellen Abraham*. You can find information about the lives of these faithful servants at the links below:



Edy Kjaersgaard

<http://www.kristeligt-dagblad.dk/mennesker/den-moderne-diakonisise>



Deborah Nebel

<http://www.leapinfo.org/news/news-and-media/2014/07/08/leap-mourns-the-loss-of-deborah-nebel>

Rev Ellen Abraham, Deacon, died 12 March 2014.

Ellen was ordained at Eastwood, in Sydney, in 1993, when she was aged in her 60s. She served as a Deacon in one placement, as Chaplain to Georgian Village (an aged care facility) in North Sydney. It was only late in life that Ellen was able to undertake higher education, including study of theology. This led to her experiencing a call to serve as a Deacon. At the time of her ordination she wrote in her journal this prayer:

Lord, I give you thanks for bringing me this far - and wait for the next step to be opened up - I give thanks that I was born with sufficient strength to withstand many hardships that this earthly life insists on pouring on us in

many different ways - These moments of joy and widening our scope of understanding make it all worthwhile. That I came across those people who encouraged and showed me how to find my way out of my confusion and pursue my great love of learning and raising my conscience that will broaden my sense of understanding where others are in their earthly journey or their spiritual journey. I do not expect to be able to fix things for them the way they would like - all I ask is that I will be able to bring your presence to them when I am ministering to them.

Her prayer was answered as she brought the presence of God to the elderly when she ministered to them.