



DIAKONIA

News

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

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No. 102, November 2016

From Your Editors

Here in the United States, those of us in the DOTAC region can feel the tempo picking up as we realize that we have less than a year to the time when we will welcome you to the 2017 DIAKONIA World Federation Assembly at Loyola University on Lake Michigan in Chicago Illinois.



Laura Lazar

We hope that all of you will make an effort to join us at this beautiful lakeside location just north of downtown Chicago. There are many, many people planning and working to ensure that your time here is enjoyable and fruitful. We hope to provide you with opportunities to join together in worship, in learning, in sharing, in eating, in laughing, and in getting to know Chicago.

I particularly want to acknowledge the efforts of Deaconess Diane Marten of Indianapolis, Indiana, who has assumed the important responsibility of coordinating the local arrangements. She has many diaconal people working with her to do all that is necessary to be ready to welcome

you as you start arriving on June 28, 2017. Thank you, Diane.

Finally, I hope that as you read this newsletter, you gain a sense of the ongoing work that the DIAKONIA World Federation Executive Committee does on your behalf plus news of other DIAKONIA-related activities taking place throughout the world.

With best wishes and hope that we greet each other next summer in Chicago.

*Laura Lazar
English Editor*



Ulrike Kellner

With everything that is going on in the world, it is good to know that there are sisters and brothers around the world who care and share our beliefs. DIAKONIA is a unique organization that cares and links people in diaconal work around the world. Let's meet in Chicago next year and celebrate the 70th birthday of this amazing network!

*Ulrike Kellner
German Editor*

Do you want to know what's happening at the Assembly next summer?
Go to <http://www.diakonia-world.org/2017/Chicago2017.shtml>



Do you want to register for the Assembly?
Go to www.regonline.com/diakonia2017

Reflections from the President

This DIAKONIA News aims, among other things, to inform you about discussions and decisions made at the Executive Committee meeting held in July 2016 in Versailles.



*Motherhouse Sisters of Reuilly
Versailles, France*

A major agenda item was the DIAKONIA Assembly to be held in Chicago, June 28 to July 5th, 2017. The Executive Committee has taken on more responsibility for both the oversight and practical details of planning for the Assembly. In many ways, the remaining nine months until the Assembly do feel somewhat like preparation for a birth, with all the organization, logistics, timelines and the lengthy 'to do' list of tasks. It requires consultation and collaboration. There is a fantastic team working on local logistics and many others working on a myriad of small and large tasks. There is an incredible generosity in terms of people making time available to work on making this Assembly a wonderful experience for all. Energetic 'midwives' preparing for the moment of birth! We hope you are able to come to Assembly and be part of it all!

As I meet people in my travels, I value hearing their stories and learning about their experiences and their particular hopes and challenges. I learn so much from them that enlivens my own faith and strengthens me in my journey with Jesus. I can surely see how each person's story is imbued with the presence of God. Indeed, our lives are enriched when there

is an opportunity to share our journey of faith together. I know there will be plenty of time to renew friendships at the Assembly and form many new friendships with people from around the world.

I am mindful of those deacons and deaconesses who have passed away in the last few months. There is a great sense of loss as we remember all that they have meant to their communities and those who have known them. And yet we can be reassured that they are in the embrace of God - where they have always been, in fact. They will be a 'cloud of witnesses' surrounding us as we prepare for Assembly, and during the week we will share together in Chicago. We can draw strength from their example - lives that have been dedicated to sharing the love of God with those whose own lives have been diminished by hardship, poverty, illness, and marginalization.



DIAKONIA World President Sandy Boyce

As DIAKONIA World Federation, we learn and grow together, and through the ministry of prayer and practical care we support each other in times of joy and sorrow. It is wonderful to be part of such a diverse and vibrant global community of diaconal workers.

Grace and peace,

Sandy Boyce

*Rev Sandy Boyce
President, DIAKONIA World Federation*

DIAKONIA EXECUTIVE REPORTS 2016

REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS

Report of the President

By President Rev Sandy Boyce

I visited with DRAE members prior to the 2016 DIAKONIA Executive Committee, which was held in Versailles, France. In Berlin, I attended the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Kaiserswerther Association from June 17-19, 2016. It was also the 175th anniversary of the Evangelisches Diakonissenhaus Berlin Teltow-Lehnhin. I wrote letters on behalf of DIAKONIA acknowledging these celebrations. The letters were read aloud at the gatherings. In London, I met with Deacon Karen McBride of the Methodist Diaconal Order, who is now MDO Warden, and Deacon Richard Clutterbuck, who is now MDO Deputy Warden. In Stuttgart, I was a guest at the Motherhouse and visited diaconal ministries and communities.



At Versailles(left to right): DIAKONIA World Secretary Traude Leitenberger, DIAKONIA World President Sandy Boyce, Soeur Gabrielle, Prioress Mireille

I continue to write a blog <http://diakoniapresident.blogspot.com>, providing updates about the activities of member associations, prayers, and other reflections.

I was able to reestablish relationships with the deacons in the Methodist Church of New Zealand. The co-leaders of the Diaconate Task Group Edna Evans and Margaret Birtles are pleased to be re-affiliated with DIAKONIA and DAP. They hope that one or more deacons can attend

the 2017 Assembly. I have been asked to make a presentation during the time allocated to the Diaconate Task Group at the New Zealand Methodist annual conference.

There has been irregular contact with the Deaconess Order in Fiji. The main contact is through the administrator, Deaconess Meresiana Kuricava. She reports that they will hold an annual retreat in December 2016 and will celebrate their Golden Jubilee in August 2017.



Deaconess Meresiana, Fiji

This DIAKONIA Executive Committee is overseeing the 2017 Assembly and working with a local team. This is a new level of responsibility for the Executive Committee, and we are building on what has happened previously in terms of program and process and not trying 're-invent the wheel'. We invite member groups and regions to help underwrite refreshment breaks at the Assembly to show support and to help keep registration fees as low as possible. We are also beginning to think about the process for appointing a host for 2021 Assembly.



In conclusion I want to thank my congregation, Pilgrim Uniting Church in Adelaide, Australia, for considering my attendance at the DIAKONIA Executive Committee meeting as part of my ministry

work and therefore releasing me from ministry responsibilities so that I can participate in DIAKONIA meetings and in other DIAKONIA-related activities.

Report of the Secretary

By Sister Traude Leitenberger

Our last Executive Committee meeting was held in November 2015, in Chicago. I prepared the minutes of the meeting and sent them to the Executive Committee members to confirm. In December 2015, the editors prepared the issue of DIAKONIA News, and I sent it by email to Executive Committee members including alternatives; all member organizations; and News subscribers.

In cooperation with the DIAKONIA World Federation (DWF) and DRAE treasurers, I updated the membership data, and in February, 2016, invoices for 2016 membership fees for DOTAC and DAP member groups were sent. (The DRAE treasurer collects the DRAE member groups DIAKONIA fees and forwards them to the DIAKONIA treasurer.)

During the 2017 Assembly in Chicago, delegates will elect a president. On March 18, 2016, I sent an information letter to all member groups about the election process and indicated the willingness of the current president Sandy Boyce to stand for a second term. Nominations of other candidates including information about them, their experiences in diaconal ministry, and their experiences with DIAKONIA were to be sent to Secretary Traude Leitenberger by November 30, 2016.

I organized the Executive Committee meeting held in Versailles, France in July 2016.



DIAKONIA World Secretary Traude Leitenberger

A task group of DIAKONIA treasurer Laura Lazar, DRAE treasurer Martin Vogler, and I sent a letter to Dr. Elmar Müller requesting information asking what would be required to register DIAKONIA in Germany. Important information we need to determine includes whether, If it is possible for the Foundation to move to Germany, what the cost would be, and what would be the best way to do it?

I started sending the DIAKONIA prayer letter at the beginning of each month. That change has received favorable response and will continue.

I received DIAKONIA membership inquiries from groups in Benin, Madagascar, in the Congo, and in Great Britain. I responded to them with information letters. I then notified the regional presidents and sent them application forms to forward.

Report of the Treasurer

By Laura Lazar, Treasurer

Presented below are the statements of operating income and expenditures (both actual and budgeted) for the year 2015. In 2015, DIAKONIA's actual operating income and expenditures were close to the budgeted amounts. We continue to find it challenging to pay for yearly operating expenditures from the current year's income and therefore continue to need to draw on the General Fund.

In Euros	2015	2015
	Actual	Budget
Income		
Member fees	32.860	31.000
Interest	387	750
Donations	815	500
Draw on General Fund	7.067	6.650
Total	41.129	38.900
Expenditures		
Executive Committee	16.375	16.000
Office expenses	272	500
Communication	0	400
Professional services	7.422	4.500
Honorariums	15.000	15.000
President's Discretionary Fund	1.000	1.000
Ecumenical contacts	1.060	1.000
Miscellaneous	0	500
Total	41.129	38.900

Member fees and donations and can be sent 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

Report on DIAKONIA World Federation Facebook Page

By Lisa Polito, Administrator

We currently have 549 members on the DIAKONIA World Federation Facebook page, an increase from 467 in November 2015. Posts include pictures from Loyola (new ones posted monthly); questions; the President's blog; the prayer letter; and the occasional picture. The Loyola pictures have between 53 and 70 *Likes* with comments and *Shares* as well. Please encourage people we know to join and not worry about posting in their first language. We need all of you to advertise our Facebook group to others in your member groups.



Report of the Webmaster

By Diane Kaufmann, Webmaster
www.diakonia-world.org

I have noticed two trends since January 2016: Web site visits have declined from a high of 262 in January to 102 in May. And we have an increase in visits at the beginning of the month, I think, because of the



presence of the new prayer letter. It would be a good idea to coordinate other news, especially news about the Assembly, to coincide with this trend.

I am amazed at the many countries where someone has found us: 36 countries! How do we capitalize on this?

DIAKONIA EXECUTIVE REPORTS 2016

DIAKONIA Executive Committee July 2016 – Summary Minutes

The DIAKONIA World Federation Executive Committee met in Versailles, France, at the Communauté des Diaconesses de Reuilly from July 2 to 7, 2016.



DIAKONIA World Executive at Versailles, France

The Committee received reports on the Federation's activities. Summaries of a number of those reports are included in this newsletter.

The Committee discussed a number of issues related to the 2017 Assembly: the Assembly schedule; registration fees; the choice of speakers and Bible study leader; the possibility of a young persons' program; Assembly publicity; and ways by which we could celebrate DIAKONIA's 70th anniversary. (Readers are invited to find the most current information about the Assembly on the DIAKONIA web site.)

The Committee took the following actions:

1) Three DIAKAID project applications were approved:

- Deaconess Order Methodist Church in Nigeria to fund attendance by two deaconesses each year at 1) a management course for women in leadership training; and 2) training in gender and development; 1.500 Euros per year for three years grant.
- Deaconess Association of Church-Related Women Workers in the Philippines to fund continuing professional development for Christian educators: 1.000 Euros per year for three years grant; and
- Methodist Deaconess Order in Fiji to fund the library and facility resources for deaconess training; 1.500 Euros per year for three years grant.

2) Three applications for membership in DIAKONIA were received; however, none were approved pending the receipt of additional information.

3) A motion was approved directing the organization DIAKONIA World Federation or its representatives to take all necessary and appropriate actions to register the Foundation in the country of Germany and then, when the Foundation is registered in Germany, to take all necessary and appropriate actions to deregister the Foundation in the country of the Netherlands.

4) The next Executive Committee meeting was scheduled to meet from June 23 to 27, 2017, in Valparaiso, Indiana.

DIAKONIA EXECUTIVE REPORTS 2016 REPORT of the REGIONAL PRESIDENTS

Report DIAKONIA-Asia-Pacific (DAP)

By Emma Cantor, Regional President and Alison McRae, Vice-President

News about the DAP region

A meeting of the DAP Executive Committee along with other participants was held in Adelaide, Australia from October 12 to 16, 2016.

Our goal in meeting was to develop a process for holding regular gatherings of the DAP region; to work on our constitution and bylaws in order to align them with those of the other regions; and to determine the process for the DAP region election at the 2017 Assembly.



We had representatives from the Philippines, Indonesia, Fiji, the New Zealand Anglicans, the New Zealand Methodists, the Uniting Church in Australia, and the Anglican Church in Australia. Local

Catholic deacons joined us. See the photo below:



Back row: Deacon Tony Aspinall (Catholic Deacon, Australia), Rev Gay Nye (Anglican Deacon - Australia), Rev Anne Russell-Brightly (New Zealand Anglican Deacon), Deacon Brenda Fawcner (Methodist Deacon New Zealand), Deaconess Emma Cantor (Philippines) DAP President, Deacon Nick Kerr (Australian Catholic Deacon).

Front row: Rev Sandy Boyce (Uniting Church in Australia Deacon), Deaconess Meresiana Kuricava, Methodist Deaconess, Fiji), Sr Ristua Sirait (Indonesian Deaconess) and Alternate President DAP, Rev Dr Alison McRae (Uniting Church in Australia Deacon) and Vice-President DAP.



News from DAP member groups

DIAKONIA Uniting Church in Australia had seven ordinations, and more deacon candidates are available for training in the synods. Plans are underway for the Deacon Intensive and DUCA Conference

to be held in Melbourne, Victoria in January 2017. A number of deacons look forward to attending the 2017 DIAKONIA Assembly.

The **Methodist Deacons in New Zealand** report there are six active deacons though

many deacons in retirement continue to be involved in ministry. Some have received New Year's Honors or Queen's Birthday Honors for services to their communities. Membership includes Pacific Island members who acknowledge a call to ministry as deacons. The work of deacons is continuing with the ordination of three new deacons in the last three years, and they appreciate the support of Trinity Theological College.

The **Methodist Deaconess Order** (Fiji) will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2017.

Nine deaconesses from the **Commission on Deaconess Services of the United Methodist Church in the Philippines** were elected to serve on the Philippine Central Conference, the highest decision-making body of the United Methodist Church in the Philippines, at the United Methodist Church General Conference held in May 2016, in Portland, Oregon. They join eight deaconesses already serving. There are 400 active deaconesses in the Philippines plus 22 newly consecrated deaconesses.

The **Deaconess Association of IEMELIF** (Philippines) held its annual assembly: *Strengthening My Ministry, My Family and Myself*. There are 52 active members.

The **AIMP** deaconesses (Philippines) have 42 members and work to strengthen the foundation of their organization and expand their membership territories.

The **Council of Deaconess Work, Methodist Church in India** held their quadrennial assembly attended by 100 active and retired deaconesses in October 2015. Following the Assembly there was an annual seminar and retreat for the 12 regional conferences.

IKADIWA (Indonesia) held their General Assembly in May 2016, and met in September 2016, to choose representatives to the HKBB Great Synod. Deaconess Ristua Sirait is their representative to the group the General Synod of the Church Synod Workers.

*From the Christmas Letter of the **Diakonia Sisterhood in Korea***

In 2015, the Diakonia Sisterhood had in Korea moved our motherhouse from Cheonan (the central part of Korea) to Muan (the southern part of Korea) in late June. We had lived in Cheonan for 17 years, and now we are back to the place where Sisterhood first started to begin a new phase of our growth. The new building still needs more work both inside and outside. The yard was completed by mid-December, and we look forward to finishing preparation of the garden in the coming year.



Abbess Sister Ree Youngsook and Sister Ahn Kyusook attended the 42nd General Assembly of the Kaiserswerth General Conference, which was held in the

Ev. Diakoniewerk Gallneukirchen, in Austria, from September 24 to 27. This year, about 400 attendees came to participate in lectures, Bible studies, and group discussions. The attendees shared their stories with others serving in similar fields. In addition, they encouraged each other and shared a feeling of solidarity through a time of festival and friendship. Our sisters also had a chance to visit several communities in Germany before they returned to Korea.



Continuing from the Secular Diakonia meeting, which started five years ago, another

spiritual prayer meeting started in January 2015 with three families who had been attending Sunday service in Cheonan. Every month, they share their experiences with Jesus and share topics for prayer to continue to support each other every day at a specified time. A spiritual prayer meeting is a group of families living with a diakonia spirit in life so as to discern the will of God and to follow God's voice in daily lives.



The Danbi Diakonia Family Community in Cheonan held a worship service on December 19 to thank God for the completion of the Dorandoran Seniors Welfare Center. It was built on the premise of Danbi Church in cooperation with Danbi Church and local community members as a social cooperative. A space for the elderly and members of the community has been established by the continued prayers and efforts of Danbi family community. Seven students from the village played a huge role in running a vibrant Danbi School program again this year.



Jupyeong Diakonia Family Community farming in the mountain of Jeonbuk Jinan welcomes guests who come to escape the city and provides them with a new energy. In addition, through prayers and meditation, they transformed a corner of the earth into a zone full of the atmosphere of heaven. They also made Kimchi with cabbage which they had grown themselves and shared it among ten families that have disabled members.

The Korean Council for the Christian community church, which dreams of reforming churches and recovering the essence of church in Korea, held a feast at the Korea

Theological Seminary in Cheonan last August 10 to 12 with the theme: 'Communities of the Kingdom of God, Why and How? – Their History and Hope'. Around 50 communities working for the Kingdom of God in South Korea gathered. Abbess Sister Ree Youngsook participated in a community fair program and explained the activities of Diakonia Sisterhood in Korea. She facilitated a morning prayer and had fellowship with community members participants.

In domiciliary care services, we listen to the difficulties of grandparent-grandchild families, single-parent families, defectors from North Korea, and multicultural families, in cooperation with various partner organizations and volunteers. We offered the family members of chronic patients' homes a variety of services and programs to support them psychologically and emotionally so that they can carry on living in comfortable and healthy conditions. Through various works, we also encourage them to find joy and meaning in life. Wherever they touch gets cleaned; trees and flowers thrive under their hands; and they provide great joy and encouragement to anyone who visits them. We supported living costs and medical expenses.



During the last Thanksgiving holiday, we visited 51 families and gave them many gifts such as rice and daily necessities. In particular, children's toys, shoes, and 20 blankets were distributed to North Korean defectors who needed these items desperately. In the Diakonia Scholarship program we helped the children of a low-income group, defectors from North Korea, and multicultural families so that they could be self-reliant and continue to study in school. Scholarships were given to 29 students every quarter this year. We were glad that they didn't give up their studies halfway through but continued to finish.

*Sr. Ree Young-Sook,
Abbess of Diakonia Sisterhood in South Korea*

Report DIAKONIA of the Americas and Caribbean (DOTAC)

By Lisa Polito, Regional President

News about the DOTAC region

DOTAC is preparing for the third DIAKONIA Overcoming Violence Experience event to be held this fall near Toronto, Canada. DOVE brings together participants from around the

region, ideally three each from Canada, USA, the Caribbean, and Brazil to participate in a multicultural, hands-on, action-reflection experience to learn ways in which diaconal work addresses violence in the world.



News from DOTAC member groups

The **United Methodist Deaconesses and Home Missioners** (United States) celebrated the consecration of 24 deaconesses and home missionaries at the General Conference in May 2016. In 2016, the United Methodist Deacons and Diaconal Ministers participated in the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the clergy order of deacon in the United Methodist Church.

The **Association of Episcopal Deacons** (United States) held their triennial assembly in Chaska, Minnesota in June 2016, with the theme *Diakonia: Engaging God's Mission*. Taking place during the event was the recognition of excellence in diaconal ministry, which is called the St. Stephen's Recognition and is based on the first deacon described in the Book of Acts.

The **Association of Anglican Deacons in Canada/Association des diacones Anglicans au Canada** has 325 members.

The **Diaconal Ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada** has 30 members, and five candidates are in training. They recently gathered in

Winnipeg, Manitoba for the fifth biannual meeting.



The **Lutheran Deaconess Association (LDC) and Deacons (CLD)** (United States) celebrated five consecrations this year. They are planning a self-care retreat on a cruise ship with another DOTAC member group the United Methodist Deaconesses and Home Missioners. The LDC met in July 2016 in Valparaiso, Indiana, and the CLD met in July 2016 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The **Deaconess Community of the ELCA** (United States) has 67 sisters (retired and active) with several students in process. In April 2016, Sister Pat Mokler, Pastoral Care Chaplain at CHI Health Immanuel in Omaha, Nebraska, received the Award of Hope in honor of the deaconesses who founded the hospital in 1887, and those who worked there. The 2016 assembly was held in August 2016, in New Orleans, Louisiana with the theme

Radical Hospitality: for the Glory of God based on Romans 15:7.

The Order of Diaconal Ministers/ Presbyterians in Canada has 55 members, twenty-seven of whom are ordained to Word and Sacrament ministry but who still retain their designation as members of the Order of Diaconal Ministries.

The **Diaconal Communion of IECLB** (Brazil) has 80 diaconal workers. We have had losses with the death of the diaconal workers Sadi Moreira and Mirian Hertel. The Evangelical Lutheran Sisterhood has 56 members although many are officially retired. They had their 36th General Gathering in January of 2016 in the Campinas, Sao Paulo with the theme *Katharina von Bora and her Theological-Diaconal Audacity*. In 2015, five aspirants were admitted to the sisterhood.



Diakonia of the United Church of Canada has made the DUCC banner available in both official languages and has ensured that the DUCC pin design is protected. We have been preparing for our two-day event at Loyola University immediately following the DIAKONIA World Assembly and are hoping to have 20 people attend DUCC and the World Assembly.

Do you want to know what's happening at the Assembly next summer?

Go to <http://www.diakonia-world.org/2017/Chicago2017.shtml>



Do you want to register for the Assembly?

Go to www.regonline.com/diakonia2017

Important Internet and Email Addresses

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Report DIAKONIA-Region-Africa-Europe (DRAE)

By Marianne Uri Øverland, Regional President

News about the DRAE region

The Regional Executive Committee meeting: The 2016 meeting of the Executive Committee took place at the Motherhouse of Bethesda Sisterhood in Basel, Switzerland in January 2016. We met with the sisters at Bethesda, the Basel Reformed Church's diaconal work "Mitenand" and the Spiritual-Diaconal Centre of the Community House of Deaconesses, Riehen.



DRAE Treasurer Martin Vogler with Sr. Eli Urio, Tanzania

Celebrations, conferences and change in personnel: For 2016, there were ordinations and installations in Tanzania, Nigeria, South Africa, Great Britain, and Germany. In Germany, there were a number of anniversary celebrations of the founding of sisterhoods ranging from 125 to 165 years. In the Netherlands, Zendings Diaconessenhuis Amerongen celebrated the 80th anniversary of its founding.

Challenges in the region: During the 2015 DRAE regional conference in Norway, the African diaconal groups agreed that a common challenge is getting the support of the Church management for projects run by their groups. Most help comes from external sources rather than internal. Therefore the groups are aware that they need to work to obtain the support of the Bishops and to encourage each other to improve themselves through seminars and workshops because they know that knowledge is power. A common challenge for all of DRAE member groups is a decrease in the number of individuals who choose to join. The reason for this is that

changes in their educational requirements have eliminated the direct links between training to serve and membership in the diaconal groups.



Role and future of diaconal ministry: In order to address its role and future, there must be ongoing theological work to explore the understanding and definition of *diakonia* and to consider the nature, role, and function of different types of ministries and how they can work together. The diaconal challenges are shifting; hence is it of great importance to be alert to how to involve us in new tasks like the refugee situation and in social projects of all kind.

Relationships with other organizations: DRAE has relationships with a number of organizations: Kaire, the Porvoo Communion, the Conference for European Churches, and Eurodiaconia. Maintaining contact with these groups is shared among the Executive Committee members.



DRAE President Marianne Uri Øverland with Eurodiaconia General Secretary Heather Roy

Upcoming meetings: The 2017 Executive Committee meeting is January 31 - February 5 in Neuendettelsau, Germany. The Scotland deaconesses anticipate hosting the 2019 DRAE regional conference. A working group is looking at venues and pricing.

For a more detailed report about individual DRAE member groups, please go to <http://drae.diakonia-world.org>.

DIAKONIA EXECUTIVE REPORTS 2016

ECUMENICAL RELATIONSHIPS

Report World Council of Churches

By Marianne Uri Øverland, DRAE Regional President

The Central Committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC) met in Trondheim, Norway in June 2016, with the theme *Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace*. DRAE president Marianne Uri Øverland attended the opening sessions and heard reports from the Moderator and from the General Secretary.



The Moderator Dr. Agnes Abuom described the world situation and its challenges for the church. The General Secretary the Rev. Dr. Olav Fykse

Tveit spoke of the church as a *fellowship of Living Hope*. He addressed the role of *diakonia* and mentioned that the WCC had initiated short-term courses to build capacities for individuals to become agents of hope. And he noted that *diakonia* was a word we should use more and be more proud of. It is the service of the church, and it is something we are now engaged with afresh with many partners, expressed in our advocacy for justice and peace, our ministry to the needy, as well as in our daily witness. DIAKONIA has been invited to be part of the Thursdays in Black Campaign, which addresses the reality of violence against women and children and also to be part of a global community of women's networks



Come to the DIAKONIA World Assembly 2017!

"to draw the world closer" (Sister Elly, Tanzania)

Discover the diversity of diaconal work
Worship with brothers and sisters from DAP, DOTAC, and DRAE
Gather inspiration and hope from each other

Make friends and have a great time
Engage in theological and biblical reflection
Learn what is new in diaconal ministry
Experience the greatness of God and the smallness of our world
Celebrate DIAKONIA's 70th anniversary
Do so much more



Report International Diaconate Center

By Deacon Nick Kerr, Australia

Last year, at the 50th jubilee of the IDC, the audience with the Pope was cancelled due to the Synod of Bishops on the Family. This year, a small group had the chance to meet the Pope instead. Because no one from the DIAKONIA Executive was present, we are publishing a report from Deacon Nick Kerr.

Pope Francis really listened, listened intently. He leaned forward and gave the impression that he didn't want to miss a word of the introductory speeches. Then, when he met us one by one, it seemed that, for a moment, nothing else mattered to him.

On 4 June, Pope Francis met 35 of us – deacons from around the world and leaders of the International Diaconate Centre (IDC).

Pope Francis had arranged to meet about 600 of us – deacons and their wives – during a study conference in Rome last October. The conference was to mark the IDC's 50th anniversary. We had planned the conference so it would be the week after the Synod of Bishops on the family. But the Synod extended its meeting dates by a week. Pope Francis couldn't get away from the Synod. He sent a message saying he had been "full of anticipation to receive" us and would "look forward to another opportunity".



IDC President Klaus Kießling together with Deaconess Terttu Pohjolainen at the Pope audience

Early this year he sent a message to the IDC saying he would be pleased to receive a small delegation from the IDC. That's how we came to be received in a Papal audience on 4 June.

Before Pope Francis addressed us, IDC president, Rev Professor Klaus Kießling, spoke. Klaus is a deacon from Germany. He said Pope

Francis is animated by a vision of a diaconal universal church. What place, he asked, would Pope Francis assign to us permanent deacons within this church?

Pope Francis didn't respond to the question directly. He spoke from a prepared text. He immediately pointed to the importance of mercy in our lives and in our ministry. "The Lord Jesus entrusted the Apostles with a new commandment: 'love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another'." he said. "Jesus Himself is this 'newness'." Jesus gave us an example for us to follow. "That commandment of love is the last will of Jesus, given to the disciples in the upper room after the washing of the disciples' feet," he said. "By loving one another, the disciples continue the mission for which the Son of God came into the world. They understand, with the help of the Holy Spirit, that this commandment involves service to our brothers and sisters."

Pope Francis said the Apostles chose several "deacons", "servants," to provide for the concrete care of people and their necessities. "Deacons," he said. "manifest the commandment of Jesus in a particular way: imitating God in the service of others; imitating God who is love and desires to serve us."

"The manner of God's acting – that is, His acting with patience, goodness, compassion, and willingness to make us better persons – these must also characterize all ministers: Bishops as successors of the Apostles, priests – their collaborators – and deacons in the concrete 'serving at table'."

"It is especially deacons who are the face of the Church in the daily life of a community, which lives and journeys in the midst of the people and in which the greatest is not the one who commands, but the one who serves."

Member fees 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

2017 DIAKONIA World Assembly

Invitation to 2017 DIAKONIA World Assembly

By President Sandy Boyce

Dear partners and friends in DIAKONIA,

It is with great pleasure that I invite you to the 22nd Assembly of DIAKONIA World Federation of Diaconal Associations and Diaconal Communities to be held from June 28th to July 5th, 2017, on the campus of Loyola University, Chicago, on the shores of Lake Michigan.

We look forward to offering a warm welcome and hospitality, and a lively program. We will also have an opportunity to celebrate the 70th anniversary of DIAKONIA World Federation. The 22nd Assembly will gather us around the theme:



Chicago, the 'windy city', will focus our attention on the activity of God's Spirit, weaving in and through our lives. The daily themes will explore dynamic aspects of God's Spirit in gathering us together, cherishing what is life-giving, challenging us as co-workers with God, encouraging us to cradle hope in the midst of uncertainty, and to have a new perspective as we move forward with God in service to our communities.

A rich cultural program, as well as diverse learning opportunities, is being prepared for delegates with the support of the DIAKONIA Executive Committee. Through input of keynote speakers, Bible Studies, workshops, small groups, music and worship, and contextual learning, the Assembly theme will be deepened and explored.

The setting of the Loyola University campus, which will provide both accommodation and the venues for the Assembly sessions, will enable a strong community to be built amongst delegates and across cultures and traditions. We hope that relationships will be renewed and new relationships formed. Information about the campus is here, <http://www.diakonia-world.org/2017/Chicago2017.shtml>

We encourage diaconal associations to consider ways they can support the attendance of their younger members at Assembly. A special program is being arranged for them to be able to connect, share their ministry joys and challenges, and enjoy fun and fellowship together.

The World Focus sessions will provide an overview of the work of DIAKONIA over the past four years since the 21st Assembly in Berlin. We will also hear about the most recent of DIAKAID grants, which have a focus on education. There will also be an opportunity to welcome and hear from new member associations.

Your ideas, proposals, insight and perspective are vital to the future of DIAKONIA – there will be space for that, too, during the world focus times.

A small task group has been established to manage the election of the World President and voting delegates will be informed about the process.

A visa may be required for entry into the United States of America. Some delegates will be able to apply online through the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) which is part of the Visa Waiver Program. Please check with your travel agent to determine what visa is required for your travel and allow adequate time for the processing and issuing of a visa. Please inform us at the earliest opportunity if you require assistance. A personal invitation will be required for everyone who needs a visa and will be sent to you by Sr. Traude Leitenberger (Secretary, DIAKONIA World Federation) upon request.

[Email: secretary@diakonia-world.org](mailto:secretary@diakonia-world.org)

If assistance is need in the form of financial support for your voting delegate/s to attend the Assembly you may apply for it through the DIAKONIA travel fund. Information as well as the application form is attached.

As always, we do depend on your support. Only together are we able to work on and reach the goals and objectives of DIAKONIA, which is 'called to the service of reconciliation in the world by means of the word of faith and the action of love' (Constitution Article 2). We are able to realize this through prayer, interaction, mutual exchange, community, and financial support.

In your giving, please remember:

- DIAKONIA World Federation
- Assembly DelegateTravel funds
- DIAKAID/ Emergency funds

Please distribute this invitation and attachments among your member organizations and among your members.

We are thrilled to announce that online registration is now open. You are encouraged to use the internet to register for the Assembly. If you require a paper registration form, please request one from the DIAKONIA secretary or your regional president.

Together with the DIAKONIA Executive Committee, the planning team and those who will host us in Chicago, we look forward to this great chance of community and sharing across all borders! Please pray for the many people involved in planning for the Assembly and the many logistics involved. A great event like the Assembly requires a team of motivated people who can work together on a myriad of tasks. We are thankful for their commitment.

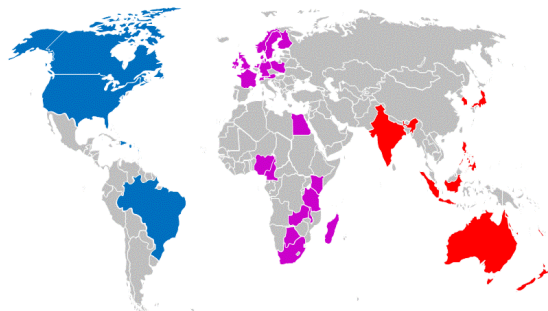
May God bless you in your service as together we follow the example of Jesus who called us to serve others, empowered and energized by the Holy Spirit.

I do hope to meet with many of you in Chicago.

Sandy Boyce

*Rev. Sandy Boyce
President, DIAKONIA World Federation*

**DIAKONIA World Federation
has members on six continents!**



Join us in Making Music at the DIAKONIA World Assembly!

Call for lyrics and songs

You are invited to write lyrics and/or compose a song for the Assembly.
Songs and lyrics should relate to the Assembly theme.

Send lyrics and/or songs to
Deaconess Dawn Riske, 8514 Rosemary Avenue, Saint Louis, MO 63123
or to musicdeac@gmail.com
by January 15, 2017.

If chosen, lyrics and songs will be used in worship and during meeting times.

Call for singers

Assembly attendees are invited to be a part of the Festival Choir.
The choir will rehearse during elective times
and will sing at the Americana Hymn Festival on July 4.

Call for instrumental musicians

Musicians can participate in various ensembles during the Assembly.
Bring instruments and your best handbell-ringing form.
Musicians are needed for Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, the Festival worship, and for the
Assembly gathering music.

Contact Dawn Riske at musicdeac@gmail.com if you wish to participate in making music.



Sad News

It is with deep sadness that the diaconal community has learned of the passing of **Becky Louter** on September 16th, 2016, after a courageous battle with breast cancer she had lived with for several years.



Like her mother, Becky was a Deaconess in the United Methodist Church. Consecrated as a Deaconess in 2001, she served as Executive Secretary of the Deaconess Home Missioner Order of the United Methodist Church, which oversees the lay order of the church dedicated to workers in vocations that alleviate suffering.

The United Methodist Women's website reports, 'Ms Louter was a tireless advocate for the lay office, and the community grew. During her tenure, laymen were added as home missionaries by the 2004 General Conference, and the 2016 General Conference recognised the deaconess/home missionary community as a lay order of the church'.

Harriet Jane Olson, chief executive officer of the United Methodist Women says, 'I am profoundly grateful for Becky's life, for her commitment to following Jesus and for her

leadership. She was a model of committed lay leadership focussed on love, justice and service'.

Becky's mission was to help share God's love through service and social justice. In a 2006 interview she said, 'I had always felt a sense of calling. I thought I was looking for a job but I discovered I was called to be in ministry. As a deaconess, I may have 30 jobs in my life, but one calling, one relationship...God does the calling'.

Becky is survived by her husband, Michael, and their four precious children, John, Andrew, Hanna and Elizabeth. Our thoughts and prayers are with Becky's family.



Becky's gentle and deeply rooted faith and confidence in Jesus, her strength, courage and love, and her tireless advocacy for diaconal ministry will continue to inspire those who knew and loved her, and those whose lives were touched by her presence. While there is deep sorrow at Becky's passing, we can all affirm together: well done, good and faithful servant. And we can have confidence Becky is indeed held in the embrace of God, as she has given testimony to all her life.

Revd Constance Oosthuizen, Methodist, South Africa, former member of DIAKONIA Executive, died 4 July 2016, very peacefully. Please find her obituary at <http://www.methodist.org.za/news/07102016-1401>