



DIAKONIA

News

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

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No. 103, November 2017

From Your Editors

It is difficult to believe but the 2017 Assembly, for which many had been planning since 2014, is in the past. I remember a trip to Loyola University in Chicago that a few of us made in August 2014 to look at the campus as a possible venue for the Assembly. We easily agreed that Loyola could serve us well as a meeting place.



Personally, I think that it was the fact that the location on Lake Michigan is what sold me. What a pleasure it was during the Assembly to be able walk out of a meeting and be greeted by that mag-

nificent lake. As someone who spent a number of years living near Lake Michigan, I considered it a body of water that one looked at. I learned however that during the Assembly some of our European attendees actually went swimming in it!

I hope that everyone who attended the Assembly enjoyed it as much as I did. It was a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with friends met at earlier gatherings, to share meals together. For those of you able to attend, I hope that what you read in this edition of the Newsletter will remind you of a good time. For those of you unable to attend, I hope that what you read will give you a sense of what happened there.

Laura Lazar, English Editor



Over the past few years, whenever Executive Committee members talk about what makes DIAKONIA World so special, we find ourselves focusing on the World Assemblies. The Assemblies are gatherings in which all of the following repeatedly occur: We meet with people from around the world; we reconnect and make new friends; we engage in serious discussions and, at the same time, laugh and dance; we gain deep insights into the *diakonia* of different countries and learn about the joys and difficulties of being a deacon in other lands; we struggle with different languages and cultures yet, at the same time, feel deep connections across denominational boundaries and church traditions; we worship together and experience different ways of doing liturgy; we sing

songs just vaguely known or completely new; and we pray the Lord's Prayer in different languages but always together. These experiences create an atmos-



phere that infects all who attend with a spirit of DIAKONIA, one they carry with them back to their places of home and work. The Chicago Assembly was my fourth, but I was as engrossed in and enthralled by it as much as I was by my first Assembly in Durham, England, twelve years ago.

In this issue of the DIAKONIA Newsletter, in addition to bringing you information from the Assembly, we include reports from the pre-Assembly Executive Committee meeting along with other material we hope that you find interesting.

Have a good time reading, remembering, enjoying!

*Ulrike Kellner
German Editor*

Reflections from the President

This year has been a significant year for DIAKONIA World Federation.

The 22nd DIAKONIA World Assembly, held in Chicago, welcomed delegates from member associations in Africa, Europe, Australia, Asia, the Pacific, and North and South America. What a blessing it was to be together and to share stories from our regions; to learn and grow together; and to rejoice in being together as one people in the body of Christ. Every time we prayed together the Lord's Prayer each in our individual languages, we attended to the rhythm of the prayer, pacing our words to stay connected with each other and delighting in unity in diversity. The memory of it lingers on and brings joy to my heart.



DIAKONIA World President Sandy Boyce

The team that brought the Assembly to fruition worked very hard. We are so grateful for the gracious way they offered their time, energy and commitment to make the Assembly so memorable to all who attended: specifically, Jan Cherry and Dawn Riske and their team, who prepared liturgy and music; Diane Marten, who gathered a huge team of volunteers; Louise Williams and others, who worked on sponsorships; Lisa Polito, Noreen Stevens and Ted Dodd, who coordinated logistics and emceed the Assembly; and the many, many others who made this such a wonderful event. The Executive Committee also devoted time to planning for the Assembly and supported

the local team in prayerful and practical ways.



The original SLN-Team

The Assembly celebrated the 70th anniversary of the founding of DIAKONIA World Federation. In 1946, an international conference of representatives of European deaconess houses met in Utrecht, Netherlands, and decided to found a new association. It was anticipated deaconess associations as well as other diaconal groups would be part of this new organization. In 1947, the DIAKONIA World Federation was established. It has continued to expand with new member associations from around the world and new expressions of diaconal ministry. One of the highlights of the Assembly is meeting people from other countries and learn about their ministries and their particular contexts. A number of people who have retired from ministry continue to attend the Assembly, and we celebrate and learn from their wisdom.



The Assembly heard from those who received DIAKAID grants in 2016 to assist them in their ministry. It is also a reminder to us of the many challenges

faced by member associations where ministry is exercised in difficult and challenging contexts. You can read more about DIAKAID on the website. Please uphold our member associations in your prayers.



Auditorium at the Assembly in Mundelein Hall

The Executive Committee brought to the Assembly a proposal that the registration for DIAKONIA World Federation would be moved from the Netherlands to Germany. This will enable good support to be provided in terms of meeting our legal obligations regarding registration.

This year was the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, and we were able to acknowledge at the Assembly. The work of 'reforming' continues as we respond faithfully to Christ's call on our lives - individually and within our churches.

It was wonderful that Gerald DuPont (USA) was able to participate in our Assembly as a representative from IDC (International Diaconate Centre). Gerald has since been appointed President of IDC, and we offer hearty congratulations. Terttu Pohjolainen (Finland), a former member of the DIAKONIA Executive Committee, has been appointed to the IDC Delegates' Assembly.

The DIAKONIA Executive Committee is appointed to four-year terms to work between Assemblies. This year, we bid farewell to a number of people from the

Executive Committee including two regional Presidents: Deaconess Emma Cantor (DAP - DIAKONIA Asia Pacific) and Deaconess Lisa Polito (DOTAC - DIAKONIA of the Americas and Caribbean). Lisa worked incredibly hard on planning for the Assembly as doing well her work for the DOTAC region and her work with her association. Thank you so much Lisa!

We also bid farewell to Rev Dr Alison McRae (DAP), Sr. Elly Urio (DRAE), Dc Ann Wren (DRAE), Dc. Ulrike Kellner (DRAE), and Sr Sabine Ritter (DRAE). We are so grateful to these people for the work they have done in their regions and their contribution to the work of the Executive Committee.



New DIAKONIA World Executive Committee

The Executive Committee welcomes new members from the DAP region: Deaconess Meresiana Sadrata - DAP President (Fiji), Rev Deacon Christa Megaw, and Archdeacon Anne Russell Brightly (New Zealand) - DAP Co-Vice Presidents. Deacon Jan Cherry (USA) will continue on the Executive Committee serving as DOTAC President joined by Ted Dodd, Diaconal Minister (Canada). Rev. Marianne Uri Øverland (Norway) continues as President of DRAE joined by Deaconess Ibironke Oworu (Nigeria), Sr. Birgit Banzhaf (Germany), and Deaconess Elisabeth Meier (Switzerland).

DIAKONIA is blessed to have diligent and competent officers: Secretary, Sr Traude Leitenberger, and Treasurer,

Laura Lazar. They take care of the administrative and financial matters that are the responsibility of the Executive Committee. Thanks also to Diane Kaufmann, the web manager, and Dc. Ulrike Kellner and Laura Lazar, who as German and English editors, produce DIAKONIA News each year.



*DIAKONIA Assembly 2017:
Louise Williams preaching at the Opening Worship*

Looking to the future, the Assembly affirmed the decision that the next DIAKONIA World Assembly will be held in Darwin, Australia in the DAP region. I will meet with the DAP Executive Committee in Darwin in January 2018 to begin our planning. Time to start saving for a trip ‘down under’!



*DIAKONIA Assembly 2017:
Representatives from DAP Region*

This year DIAKONIA World Federation recalled our rich heritage and celebrated significant events, and celebrated our ancestors in faith, and remembered with love those who have

passed into God's care. Their work continues in those who they have influenced, mentored and inspired. We were able to name our contemporary context with honesty and the many challenging issues facing our global community. We embraced the opportunity to open ourselves afresh to God's Spirit, who is even now ushering in the reign of Christ which we will recognize when we experience peace, love, joy, hope, reconciliation and justice. We commit ourselves again to join in with God's transforming work in the world.



*DIAKONIA Assembly 2017:
American Hymn Festival*

And as the calendar draws us into Advent and the anticipation of Christmas, we share in the wonder of God revealed in Jesus Christ, who 'moved into the neighborhood' (*Eugene Peterson, The Message*) and lived as one of us thereby showing the face of God to humanity.

May peace prevail in our fractured world.

*Rev (Deacon) Sandy Boyce
President
DIAKONIA World Federation*

DIAKONIA EXECUTIVE REPORTS 2017

DIAKONIA Executive Committee June 2017 Summary Minutes and Decisions during the Assembly

The DIAKONIA World Federation Executive Committee (EC) met in Valparaiso, Indiana, USA, at the Center for Diaconal Ministry of the Lutheran Deaconesses Association from June 23 to 27, 2017.



DIAKONIA World Executive at Valparaiso, Indiana

The Committee received reports on the activities of the Federation. It decided on final issues related to the 2017 Assembly and met with planning committee members.

The Committee decided to commit to strengthening the DAP region.

For this reason, two vice-presidents of DAP will be members of the Executive Committee for the next Assembly-planning period. An initial goal for DAP is to establish a constitution and by-laws.

The Executive Committee noted that the **Travel Fund** can no longer depend on the General Fund for large subsidies. A letter, similar to one used by

DRAE, will be created to clarify future funding for assembly travel and will be added to the minutes. New Travel Fund criteria will be added to the By-laws.

At the Assembly, it was noted, that for the election of the DIAKONIA president, only 46 delegates of 61 registered delegates had been present. The majority of nonvoters came from the DAP Region, and, to enable their voices to be heard, their travel and registration costs had been supported out of the Travel Fund. As a result, the Executive Committee decided that those member groups whose voting delegate did not vote, will not be supported by the Travel Fund for the 2021 Assembly. Member groups will be informed about this decision. The Executive Committee also decided that the voting process needs to be reviewed and strengthened.

During the Assembly, **delegates unanimously agreed to move the DIAKONIA domicile from the Netherlands to Germany. They also accepted the proposed new constitution.**

Sandy Boyce was reelected DIAKONIA World Federation President.

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 of the President

By President Rev Sandy Boyce

1. President's visits since last EC meeting:

Methodist Diaconate Task Group (DTG) NZ - October 2016:

The Methodist Diaconate Task Group invited me to meet with them during the New Zealand Methodist General Conference and to use the time that had been made available to the DTG to give a presentation both about DIAKONIA and about diaconia in the Church. It was great to be meet with the deacons and to help contribute to the understanding of the diaconate in the Methodist Church.

Less than 12 months prior, there had been no news about DANZA for some time, and it was an email I wrote to the General Secretary while I was in Chicago that began the journey to meet with the Methodist deacons. I also had the opportunity to spend time with Shirley-Joy Barrow, whose diaconal work was acknowledged at the General Conference. She retired in 2016. It was good to have intentional time with Shirley-Joy and to hear about some of her hopes as well as the frustrations that she had experienced. A Methodist deacon will attend the World Assembly.

National Association Deacons (Australia, Catholic) - March 2017, Hobart (Tasmania): Deacon Nick Kerr invited me to attend the NAD meeting in March where the guests included Rev Prof Klaus Kießling and Dr Stefan Sander from IDC (International Diaconal Centre). The program included acknowledgement of the 50th anniversary of the re-establishment of the permanent diaconate in the Catholic Church and the release and launch of new norms and guidelines for Australian Deacons. I was asked to bring a

short greeting from DIAKONIA. Now there's a challenge: To speak about DIAKONIA in a meaningful way at a gathering of male Catholic deacons as well as give a wider perspective about diaconal ministry in five minutes (or so!). But I was well received and my talk raised many questions for further conversation



DIAKONIA World President Sandy Boyce with IDZ-President Klaus Kießling

Klaus acknowledged our meeting in Berlin in 2013 and the way I had helped make a connection when he asked if there was an Australian Catholic Deacon who he could contact regarding IDZ. I immediately followed up with Deacon Nick Kerr (based in the Catholic Cathedral, Adelaide). Nick responded and is now very connected with the work of IDZ.

Anglican Deacons NZ - May 2017 (Deacons School) - Wellington

The Reverend Anne Russell-Brighty invited me to the annual Deacons School for the Anglican Deacons in New Zealand at which a number of Methodist deacons were also present. This is a welcome collaboration! At the Deacons School, I was asked to make a presentation about DIAKONIA and to introduce them to the wider diaconal federation of associations. It was all new to them and very inspiring for them to find their place in such a network. I was also asked to chair an

evening meeting where decisions were made about the future of DANZA and the Constitution. It is very pleasing that the meeting affirmed a commitment to DANZA and to being part of the DIAKONIA World Federation. The meeting elected Anne as Convener. She is attending the World Assembly.



New DANZA Executive Committee

A visit to Adelaide - DAP Executive and invited representatives from DAP Associations: In October 2016, a special meeting was held in Adelaide, convened by Emma Cantor (DAP President), and Alison McRae (DAP Vice-President), with invited representatives from some DAP associations. This was not intended to be a DAP regional meeting with all associations but one where invited representatives helped the DAP Executive consider its purpose and procedures. Invitations were extended to DAP associations and it was great to have the wisdom of those who were able to attend including Anne Russell-Brighty (NZ Anglican Deacons) and Brenda Fawkner (NZ Methodist Deacons), Meresiana Kuricava (Administrator, Deaconess Order, Fiji), Gay Nye from the Australian Anglicans, and Ristua Sirait from Indonesia (who had been elected to the DAP Executive in 2013). It was a very helpful meeting and one that clarified future directions. There will be more in the DAP report. It was extremely helpful to connect DAP associations in a meaningful way. And it will be good to

have Fiji and DANZA represented at the World Assembly. In fact, all DAP



DAP Meeting 2016

associations will be represented at the World Assembly this time. Thanks to Emma and Alison for their work on the meeting and the follow up work that has happened. We hope this good work enables DAP to function more effectively in the future. I note that Emma and Alison will both conclude their terms on Executive in 2017 and will be handing on the work to a new Executive.

2. DIAKONIA World Assembly

Clearly, the lion's share of the work for the DIAKONIA World Assembly has been shouldered by the team based in North America, which includes Lisa Polito, Diane Marten, and Jan Cherry (with Dawn Riske), and many, many others. Ulrike's work in translation has been diligent and timely. Louise Williams' work on sponsorship has been invaluable. **Thank you to all those, who have contributed to the logistics of the Assembly.**



I hope we can spend time at the Executive meeting discussing and documenting the process so it can be fash-

ioned into a resourcing manual for those who host a World Assembly in the future. We cannot 're-invent the wheel' each time and the incredibly hard work in preparation for Chicago (and from previous Assemblies) needs to be built upon constructively. We also need to be clear about expectations of members of the Executive.



DIAKONIA World Assembly 2017: Choir

3. DIAKONIA World Registration

We will have opportunity to have an update about the proposed change of domicile for the registration of DIAKONIA World Federation (from the Netherlands to Germany). I am extremely grateful for the small project team which has steered the process, which has needed close attention to ensure that all things are in place for a seamless transition if agreement is reached by the voting delegates. I acknowledge with thanks Dr. Elmar Müller's generous contribution. Martin Vogler, Traude Leitenberger and Ulrike Kellner will guide and resource our discussions in the Executive meeting so that a final proposal is ready to take to DIAKONIA World Assembly for discussion and voting.

4. Meeting schedules

Many thanks to Lisa and her team for hosting in Valparaíso for the 2017 Executive meeting. This is in addition to the many logistics on the 'to do' list for Assembly. Thank you, Lisa! Traude

and I have been working on a schedule for the 2018-2021 Executive meetings. The next Executive Committee meeting will be in Berlin in mid-2018 as part of the transition arrangements to change the domicile of the DWF registration.

5. Transitions

As I look back over the last 4 years, there have been many highlights, as well as challenges. I am very mindful about significant transitions ahead for the Executive Committee. The collective wisdom of those who have sat around the meeting tables these last 4 years is greatly appreciated, and I wish to acknowledge with deep gratitude the contribution of those who have given their time and attention to the work of the World Executive. The sense of community and connection has enabled us to conduct our work in a climate of goodwill and reciprocity. I acknowledge also the work of Traude (Secretary) and Laura (Treasurer) whose work continues between Executive meetings, and Diane's work on the website.

*Rev (Deacon) Sandy Boyce
President*

DIAKONIA World Federation



DIAKONIA World Assembly 2017: Bell Choir

Report of the Secretary

By Sister Traude Leitenberger

We held our last Executive Committee meeting in Versailles, France. The minutes of that meeting were prepared and sent to Executive Committee members for correction. Corrected minutes were sent to all member organizations on October 20, 2016.

The editors prepared the new edition of DIAKONIA News which was sent by email in November 2016 to Executive Committee members and alternatives, member organizations, and subscribers. It was also uploaded on the DIAKONIA website.

Membership fees

In cooperation with regional presidents and treasurers, member data was updated. Invoices for the 2017 membership fees for DAP and DOTAC member groups were sent in February. Invoices for DRAE were issued by the DRAE Treasurer for both DRAE and DIAKONIA member fees.



DIAKONIA World Secretary Traude Leitenberger

Election of the President

The Nominating Committee, composed of Ulrike Kellner (DRAE), Jan Cherry (DOTAC), Alison McRae (DAP) and Traude Leitenberger arranged the process for the election of the president during the Assembly in Chicago.

Project to transfer the DIAKONIA World Federation from the Netherlands to Germany

In June 2016, the Executive Committee commissioned a group composed of Martin Vogler (DRAE treasurer), Ulrike Kellner (DRAE), Dr. Elmar Müller and Traude Leitenberger to initiate the process. The first meeting took place at Johannesstift in Berlin, Germany in November 2016.

Revisions of the DWF constitution were worked out by Martin Vogler and Ulrike Kellner in close cooperation with Dr. Elmar Müller. Executive Committee members were involved in each step of the revision, and their remarks and comments were taken into account.

The draft constitution and bylaws will be discussed at the 2017 Executive Committee meeting. Prior to that meeting, Executive Committee members will receive the draft. Further steps and implementation of the relocation will be discussed at the Executive Committee meeting and at the World Assembly.

DIAKONIA Assembly in Chicago

A lot of time and work has gone into preparation for the upcoming Assembly. My part concerned mainly the reimbursement of voting delegates who applied for support out of the Travel Fund, booking their airplane tickets, and answering many questions.

Thanks very much to Lisa Polito, Diane Marten, Johnna Georgia, Jan Cherry for the good teamwork.

Together with Sr. Brita Baumgärtel, I organized a post assembly city tour in Chicago for a German group.

DIAKONIE Poland requested and received the DIAKONIA membership application form.

The **DIAKONIA Prayer Letter** is available at the beginning of each month, and the feedback from those receiving it has been positive because the prayer can be used throughout the month.

The **Kaiserwerther Generalkonferenz** invited members to a study trip to Poland. The Deaconess Motherhouse EBEN-EZER in Dziegiełłow/Poland is a member organization of DWF.

The Director of the Motherhouse prepared the program as a cultural content, we visited the abandoned sites of former motherhouses in different places. We met church authorities of the diaspora church in Poland, visited diaconal institutions, and had a symposium organized by Diakonie Poland on social tasks and responsibilities in Poland.



Marek Londzin (Motherhouse Eben-Ezer), Wanda Falk (Diaconate Ev.-luth. Church Poland, Hans-Dieter Kottnick (Speaker at diaconal conference in Poland)

The **German Protestant "Kirchentag"**, takes place in one of the German cities every second year. It is a convention and a celebration of faith and responsibility for our society. More than 10,000 people took part in Berlin, from May 25 - 28, 2017.

Kaiserswerther Verband and VEDD had a booth at the market of opportunities. The theme was diaconal professions, and I had many interesting conversations with young students who were interested in DWF's international networks.

*Traude Leitenberger
DIAKONIA World Secretary*

Important Internet and Email Adresses

WEBSITES

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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 2016. In 2016, operating income exceeded operating expenses by a small amount. I attribute this to the following reasons:

- Member fees were up slightly.
- The cost of the Executive Committee meeting was low because both the costs of room and board and the costs of tra-

vel were below normal. (Reuilly was inexpensive compared to other places we have met, and two EC members did not attend.)

- Other costs, such as those for ecumenical relations, president's discretionary fund, and professional fees (no legal fees in 2016) were nonexistent or lower than normal.

DIAKONIA World Federation 2016 Financial Results Actual Compared with Budget		
	Actual	Budget
Income		
Member fees	34,848	31,000
Interest	163	750
Donations	0	500
Decrease in General Fund	0	7,150
Total	<u>35,011</u>	<u>39,400</u>
Expenditures		
Executive Committee	13,234	16,500
Honorariums	15,000	15,000
Professional services	2,996	5,000
President's Discretionary Fund	0	1,400
Ecumenical relations	266	1,000
Administration	360	400
Miscellaneous	0	100
Total	<u>31,856</u>	<u>39,400</u>
Increase in General Fund	<u><u>3,155</u></u>	<u><u>0</u></u>

DIAKAID

Report of the Order of Deaconesses Methodist Church Nigeria

The Order of Deaconesses, Methodist Church Nigeria applied to DIAKAID for sponsorship of four (4) deaconesses to CORAT in Kenya for a workshop on Gender and Development and Women in leadership training. The courses were took place in May and November 2016.

Due to the high rate of foreign exchange which almost made it difficult to send the Deaconesses to Kenya, we were able to reach an agreement with the lecturers of CORAT in Kenya and the Rector of the Methodist Theological Institute in Nigeria to work out a schedule of training in Nigeria since the lecturers were in Nigeria for another denomination.



The lecturers from CORAT were in Nigeria in November to train Women at the West Africa Theological School in Lagos and so they were able to train five of our Deaconesses in both Gender and Development and Women in Leadership.



The training was for one week from November 7-11, 2017. Some of the core subjects during the training were:

- Challenges and opportunities for Women Leaders
- Gender perspective to development and management
- Stewardship and accountability
- Effective leadership
- Organizational and personal integrity
- Time Management



This saved us lots of money. The grant given from DIAKAID was €1500.

EXPENSES: €1000 given to support the air ticket of the two lecturers from CORAT.

€ 500- Travel expenses, accommodation and provision of meals for five participants from different areas of the Country.

APPRECIATION

We appreciate this support towards educating our Deaconesses. We hope to continue with this arrangement of having the lecturers over in Nigeria for the next round of training as it will save us money and enable us to train more of our sisters who will in turn train others within their localities.

Find attached a few photographs. Surprisingly, the lecturers were Male Ministers!!!

Deaconess Ronke Oworu

Report of the Webmaster

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

Because of the 2017 World Assembly, the website saw a lot of activity. The statistics below show the difference:



June 2016-2017

	Page Views	Unique Visits	First Time Visits	Returning Visits
Total	7,744	5,045	3,369	1,676
Daily Average	22	14	10	5














June 2015-2016

	Page Views	Unique Visits	First Time Visits	Returning Visits
Total	3,794	2,408	1,907	501
Daily Average	11	7	6	2

Visitors came from these countries:

Country				
199 Hits	39.80%	United States		
123 Hits	24.60%	Germany		
30 Hits	6.00%	United Kingdom		
25 Hits	5.00%	Canada		
16 Hits	3.20%	New Zealand		
10 Hits	2.00%	Philippines		
9 Hits	1.80%	Nigeria		
9 Hits	1.80%	Japan		
9 Hits	1.80%	Czech Republic		
9 Hits	1.80%	Austria		
8 Hits	1.60%	Switzerland		
6 Hits	1.20%	Netherlands		
6 Hits	1.20%	Korea, Republic Of		
5 Hits	1.00%	Indonesia		
5 Hits	1.00%	France		

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28 Hits		www.diakonia-world.org/Prayers/2016SeptemberPrayerLetter.pdf
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11 Hits		www.diakonia-world.org/Prayers/2016AugustPrayerLetter.pdf

Facebook Page by Lisa Polito



We currently have **725** members on the DIAKONIA World Federation facebook page. This number is up from 549 summer of 2016.

Facebook traffic has picked up considerably during this last year, partial due to the Assembly. Hundreds and hundreds of pictures were posted on the page by many people during the Assembly.

Just a reminder to encourage the people who we know to join. Please post in your first language, the rest of us can see, sort of, what you are saying with the translation. We need everyone to advertise the group to the people in their member group.

DIAKONIA EXECUTIVE REPORTS 2017

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

Members of the DAP Executive, along with invited people from other member associations of DAP gathered in Adelaide, South Australia, October 12-16, 2016. Those present were: Alison McRae, UCA Australia (DUCA); Emma Cantor, Philippines, (DAP President); Ristua Sirait, Indonesia (Alternate 1); Gay Nye, Australian Anglicans AADA; Brenda Fawcner, New Zealand Methodist (DANZA); Anne Russell-Brightly, New Zealand Anglicans (DANZA); Meresiana Kuricava, Fiji, Methodist; and Sandy Boyce, UCA, Australia, DIAKONIA World Federation President.



Banner DAP

We met at Pilgrim Uniting Church, located in the center of the city of Adelaide, and were generously hosted by Sandy, members of her congregation, and some deacons in Adelaide. The purpose of the gathering was to reconnect as a region and plan for the future of DAP especially as we looked towards our participation in the DIAKONIA World Assembly held in Chica-

go in July 2017. We were pleased to be able to reconnect with the New Zealand Deacons.



New and Old DAP Executive

The small group of people worked some long days, but we were pleased to be able to share social time together and enjoy the hospitality of a member of Sandy's congregation on our last evening together.

We agreed to hold a DAP conference in 2019 in Fiji, and Meresiana offered to follow up on it. This will be offered as a Region-wide conference.



Banner Methodist Deaconess Order Fiji

NEWS ABOUT THE DAP MEMBER GROUPS

Indonesia:

The HKBP Deaconesses General Conference was held in Sipoholon, Tarutung in March 2016 and was attended by 207 deaconesses. The main focus was the discussion of the deeper meaning of *Deaconesses* in the Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP) and to elect representatives to the Synod Worker Assembly and to the HKBP Great Assembly.

New Zealand:

At present, there are 6 active deacons with many in retirement continuing to be involved in ministry. In all that we do, we are aware that we are following the heritage of the Deaconess Order. Up until four years ago most deacons were self-supporting and covenanted to their home parish. More recently there has been some development in appointing a deacon to another parish through itinerancy. The development of different ministry roles has increased

connections between church and community and continues to raise the profile of the church in some community groups.



Banner Diakonia Philippines



Banner Diakonia Sisterhood in South Korea



Banner Methodist Church India, Deaconess Order



Banner DUCA Australia

Report DIAKONIA of the Americas and Caribbean (DOTAC)

By Lisa Polito, Regional President

NEWS ABOUT THE DOTAC REGION

The death of Deaconess Becky Louter affected our whole region.



Banner DOTAC

The *DOTAC Central Committee* met in November 2016. We planned regional gatherings and reports for World Focus times. We also met with local diaconal people in the greater Seattle area.



Banner IECLB

The *third DOVE event* was held at Crieff Hills, Ontario, Canada. It was coordinated by Marg Robertson, ODM; Anne Blane, ODM, pastoral ministry; Vicky Aldersley, Diaconal Minister, UCC, ministry with Six Nations and

New Credit; Joan Tuchlinsky, diaconal minister, UCC, Sexual Assault Centre; Scott Knarr, deacon, Lutheran, musician and ministry on Six Nations; Anne Keffer, deaconess, Lutheran. Events included: learning about First Nations Schools; participating in a drumming circle; restorative justice; being an ally; gender violence; outreach with sex workers and more.

PUBLICITY

We have a *Facebook page* with 431 members. It is used to share information about events, concerns and joys with others in the region.

We have recently been doing a lot of work on our website page.

FUTURE MEETINGS

We have begun planning the *August 2019 regional gathering* to be held at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada. All are welcome!

DOTAC – Lisa attended the ELCA Deaconess Community gathering and the United Methodist Deaconesses and Home Missioners gathering. She gave presentations, led worship and had lots of fun talking about DIAKONIA (getting people to sign up to work at DIAKONIA)



Regional President Lisa Polito at Chicago registration

Canada:

The *Association of Anglican Deacons in Canada* (AADC) is holding its triennial conference in Victoria, BC, July 27 - 30.



Banner AADC

There are approximately 30 Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada *Diaconal Ministers* serving across Canada and five diaconal ministry candidates in training. Interest is growing in diaconal ministry, which is cause for celebration!



Banner United Church of Canada

The *Order of Diaconal Ministries of the Presbyterian Church* (ODM) in Canada face an uncertain future. It is not growing in numbers as it shrinks in size. The story is the same across the Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC). We

in the ODM know the value of embracing and living out diaconal ministry. Within the PCC, the statement on diaconal ministry emphasizes three areas: Christian Education, Pastoral Care and Social Services. Those three areas are still relevant, but the means for living them out is changing.

We record the *death of Katherine Lu* (designated 1952) on April 13, 2017.

The dates for the *next Biennial Council meeting* have been changed from the spring to the fall of 2017. The new dates are Sunday evening October 1st to Tuesday noon, October 3rd at Crieff Hills Community. The theme of the council meeting remains the same: Joy in Word and Service.

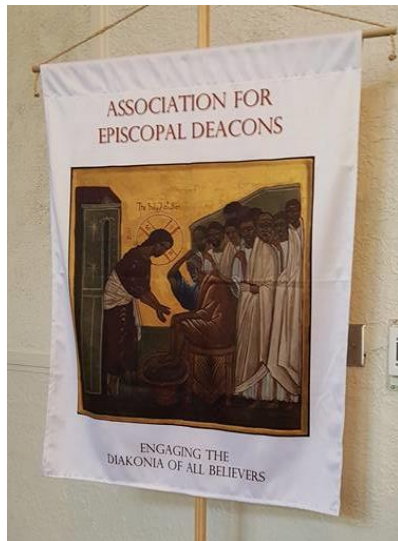
Tori Smit serves as the regional minister for faith formation for the Synod of Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda. We congratulate Tori on earning her Doctor of Educational Ministry degree through Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia (May 14, 2016 convocation). Tori's focus was on best practices for ministry with children in congregations with ten or fewer children. A very relevant and practical focus for diaconal ministry within the PCC today!

United States:

The *Association of Episcopal Deacons* (AED) in the Episcopal Church USA is steadily growing particularly among the young. The focus on prayer and service speaks to their spiritual needs and call. The job of those of us who have been deacons a long time is to make the diaconate as an institution sustainable before we die off.

There are approximately 3,300 deacons in the Episcopal Church at this time. Of those 553 are members of AED. We will ordain about 50 new deacons this June. There are approximately 250 deacons in formation. We also have 93 diocesan memberships.

In March 2017, we held our annual Archdeacons and Deacon Director's Conference in San Antonio. This is an opportunity for people who are in charge of diaconal formation to meet and discuss common concerns. Much of the conference is in the open space format. All notes are posted on the AED website.



Banner AED

We do not have access to the resources of the nation church, so we do it ourselves on a shoestring. Catherine Costas, a deacon in the Diocese of San Joaquin, keeps the updated list of deacons. TEC does not have such a list because this is done by the Church Pension Group, and most deacons don't have pensions. They also don't distinguish between deacons and transitional deacons. A couple of years ago we hired Deacon Anne Pillot to be our communications manager. She is in charge of Diakoneo, the Deacon Update emails and the website. She is excellent and her efforts have resulted in a real increase in the sense of community among deacons in TEC (www.episcopaldeacons.org).

The *ELCA Deaconess Community* welcomed through investiture the following: Sister Le Brandes; Sister Karie Hamilton; Sister Stacie Lightner; and

Sister Karen Norton; and through consecration, Sr. Tashina Good and Sr. Michelle Walka. We celebrated the promise of resurrection and gave thanks for the life and ministry of Sr. Gunnel Sterner, who died July 15, 2016.

The 2016 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Churchwide Assembly approved adoption of the roster of Ministry of Word and Service. Beginning January 1, 2017, associates in ministry, deaconesses of the Deaconess Community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and diaconal ministers will be on a single, unified roster of Ministry of Word and Service (using the title 'deacon').



Banner ELCA

The Ministry of Word and Service roster is in its infancy; however, members of the three previous rosters are faithfully coming together to educate the whole ELCA deacon roster on DIAKONIA/DOTAC, so that the whole is invited to share in the ecumenical relationships, connect and learn from diaconal partners and celebrate diakonia in God's world.

The Deaconess Community of the ELCA will continue as a separately incorporated organization, which relates to the ELCA and also serves in

the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC). Members of the Deaconess Community of the ELCA may roster with the Ministers of Word and Service in the ELCA or Diaconal Ministers of the ELCIC. The Deaconess Community of the ELCA is a member community of World DIAKONIA Federation through its separately incorporated status.

In partnership with Luther Seminary, in St. Paul, MN, the Deaconess Community of the ELCA offers the course, "Diaconal Ministry: History, Formation and Spirituality" each January. As we live into our relationship with the ELCA and the Ministers of Word and Service this course will continue as way for us to partner in resourcing and equipping diaconal leaders. In addition to Word and Service candidates in the ELCA, the course has become popular with diaconal candidates from various denominations, Word and Sacrament candidates and rostered leaders who take the course for continuing education. (<http://deaconesscommunity.org/>)



Banner United Methodist Order of Deacon

The *United Methodist Deacons* marked the 20th anniversary of the first ordination of deacons with full clergy mem-

bership in 2017. We met June 28, 2017 with the British Methodist Diaconal Order - to explore emerging scholarship on diakonos as emissary.

In 2016, the United Methodist Church annual conferences ordained 70 new deacons and commissioned and licensed 68 into provisional membership as a step toward ordination. The total number of active ordained deacons is 1450, and there are 298 in provisional membership. Membership remains steady.

An emerging area of interest is leadership in creation-care justice. As the United Methodist Church wrestles with shrinking membership in the United States, deacons are positioned to lead churches into ministry where people are and engage them in ministries of compassion and justice, thus challenging churches' passive habit of waiting for people to show up on Sunday morning.



Banner LDA

The *Lutheran Deaconess Association* approved five women for consecration. Deaconesses and deacons met immediately after DIAKONIA. Highlights included anniversary celebrations including Louise Williams 50th consecration anniversary and a consecration.

Report DIAKONIA-Region-Africa-Europe (DRAE)

By Marianne Uri Øverland, Regional President

NEWS ABOUT THE DRAE REGION

The 2017 *DRAE Executive Committee* (EC) met at Diakonie Neuendettelsau, in Bavaria, Germany, February 1-5, 2017. The EC members were guests of Diakonie Neuendettelsau, and all costs for food and lodging were covered by our hosts. Sister Roswitha Buff and Rector Doctor Mathias Hartmann were our hosts, and Ulrike Kellner represented DRAE in planning the meeting.



DRAE Executive with Director Hartmann and Sister Roswitha Buff

The DRAE EC had a very nice dinner with our hosts and toured Neuendettelsau. EC members participated in two services at the Neuendettelsau Church and visited the Rummelsberger Diakonie, a diaconal project in Bavaria, where they were hosted by Martin Neukamm.

The EC welcomed two new members: Armin Raunigk replaced Martin Neukamm and Barbara Weidmann will serve as bookkeeper.



Armin Raunigk with DRAE Secretary Sabine Ritter

The DRAE Standing Committee consists of the secretary, treasurer and regional president. The Committee works and communicates through e-mails. It is an efficient way of working, and there is much contact across borders and languages.

ECUMENICAL GATHERINGS

Elisabeth Meier and Marianne Uri Øverland attended the AGM of Eurodiaconia, June 8-10 2016 in Utrecht. DRAE was invited to give a workshop on the theme: Hospitable Communities. Not many attended the workshop, but we had interesting discussions both afterwards and at the common presentation in plenary. Marianne Uri Øverland attended the AGM 2017 in Oslo June 19-22. At a pre-meeting in Oslo a *partnership agreement between DRAE and Eurodiaconia* was signed.



DRAE Executive with Diakon Martin Neukamm at Rummelsberg

The *Central Committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC)* met in Trondheim, Norway, June 22-28, 2016, under the theme: Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. Marianne Uri Øverland represented DIAKONIA World Federation in the opening sessions. For many years, DIAKONIA has been a member of a WCC advisory group.

ReDi, the International Society for the Research and Study of Diaconia and Christian Social Practice, held its Sixth Biennial Conference in Helsinki, September 15-17, 2016. The Conference theme was Diaconia in Dialogue - The Challenges of Diversifying Contexts. Marianne Uri Øverland attended the conference on behalf of DIAKONIA World Federation. (see report below)

OTHER CONTACTS

During the year, main contacts are via e-mail. Some correspondence is from people interested in being supported by DRAE rather than in joining it. For 2016, there were no invitations to visit from member groups.

On June 2, 2017, Marianne Uri Øverland attended the funeral of Sister Inga Bengtson at Samariterhemmet representing DIAKONIA World Federation. (see obituary below)

NEW APPLICATIONS

A new application from the Order of Deaconesses Lagos, a *group* from Order of Deaconesses, Methodist Church Nigeria has been submitted. They have applied to join both DRAE and DIAKONIA.

WITHDRAWALS

DRAE has been informed about the *closure of the Diaconate Association of the Church of England (DACE)*. DACE will withdraw from the membership of DIAKONIA and DRAE at the World Assembly. The decision was confirmed at the EC meeting in March, and they are now completing the required processes of the Charity Commission and an appropriate distribution of the funds, which will take until the early summer. The DACE web site has been removed and therefore will need to be removed from the DRAE website list.



Banner Diakonia United Kingdom

CHALLENGES IN THE REGION

There has been a challenging time in the *Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya* due to leadership problems affecting the Church for 10 years with the last five years being the worst. The deaconesses' work is almost at a standstill because the system is not working due to regional political balkanization, threats, and lack of financial support of their work.

As KWV (Kaiserswerther Verband, Germany) diaconal communities become smaller and smaller, their institutions seek ways to preserve the spirit of deaconesses within their businesses. With great success, some, for example, Augsburg and Neuendettelsau have offered a basic diaconal course for institutional employees.

PUBLICITY

There were numerous articles and press releases during 2016. One highlight was the release of the *book 100 Years of Kaiserswerth Association* in conjunction with the anniversary celebration.

In February 2016, former mother superior of the Reuilly Sisters, Sœur Evangéline Vié, published her book *Protestantisme et Vie Monastique: Vers une Nouvelle Rencontre?* It is

meant as a contribution in conjunction with the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation.

FUTURE MEETINGS:

The *2018 Executive Committee* will be held January 17-21, 2018, at the Gillis Centre, Edinburgh, Scotland.

The *2019 DRAE Regional Conference* will be held June 19-24, 2019, at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh, Scotland.

NEWS ABOUT DRAE REGION MEMBER GROUPS

Celebrations, Conferences and Changes in Personnel

The DRAE region is the biggest region. Therefore, there are many celebrations, conferences, and changes in personnel during the year. Many are listed below:



Banner Methodist Church Nigeria

Nigeria:

The Order of Deaconesses in the Methodist Church Nigeria celebrated its thirty-fifth anniversary in May 2016, with various programs and lectures on women's health, empowerment, and community. The Church has proposed starting a new ministry category, the Order of Deacons, and the issue is under consideration. Those among the present group of deaconesses who would wish to move to the deacon or-

der would be considered. For now, the position of a deacon in the Methodist Church Nigeria is transitory, that is, deacons move on to become priests.



Banner Highveld Deacons, South Africa

Germany:

As the largest member of DRAE (and of DIAKONIA World Federation) the *Kaiserswerther Verband (KWV)* consists of approximately 70 diaconal communities, deaconess motherhouses, and diaconal institutions throughout Germany. About 50,000 people work within these institutions in every possible diaconal way. Among these employees, there are around 1,600 deaconesses and around 3,000 diaconal sisters and brothers.

In 2016, the KWV itself celebrated its 100th anniversary with a three-day event in Berlin. Three hundred fifty participants gathered under the theme 100 Years into the Future. The celebrations included the membership assembly (AGM) and a formal reception at Villa Elisabeth as well as a party (in connection with the 175th anniversary of the motherhouse Teltow-Lehnnin) and a ship cruise.

A number of member groups in KWV celebrated impressive jubilees:

- 180 years: Kaiserswerther Diakonie
- 175 years: Evangelisches Diakonissenhaus Berlin Teltow-Lehnnin

- 165 years: Ev. Diakonissenanstalt Karlsruhe-Rüppur; Stift Bethlehem, Ludwigslust
- 160 years: Großheppacher Schwesternschaft, Weinstadt
- 150 years: Diakonissenanstalt Emmaus, Niesky
- 150 years: Ev. Diakonissenmutterhaus Frankenstein, Wertheim
- 140 years: Paul-Gerhard Stift, Berlin
- 130 years: Ev Diakoniewerk Schwäbisch Hall
- 125 years: Diakonissenmutterhaus Eisenach; Ev. Diakonissenhaus Leipzig
- 120 years: Diakoniegemeinschaft Paulinenstift, Wiesbaden
- And also: The host bakery in Dresden celebrated 150 years of existence!

Members of KWV gathered in four regional conferences under the common theme Loyalty in Diversity: Regional Conferences Deal with the Mission Statement of KWV. In 2016, the conferences took place in Flensburg, Wetzlar, Niesky and Darmstadt.

On November 24, 2016, together with the other ViD (*German Diaconal Associations*) members, KWV organized a symposium at the church office of the Evangelical Church in Germany at Hanover on the theme Community and Businesses – Common Responsibility for Diaconal Identity.

With speeches and a festive service, the *Zehlendorfer Verband* celebrated its 100th anniversary in Berlin.

The Schwesternschaft Friederikenstift is seeking a new mother superior.



Banner DILA, Finland

United Kingdom:

In 2017, *Methodist Deaconess Order (MDO)* celebrated the 30th anniversary of the renewal of the Order, a point in time when men and women were both called to lifetime vocations following a decision of the Methodist Conference in 1986.

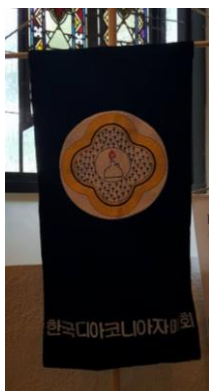
At the May Convocation, Sue Culver completed 8 years' service as warden of MDO. In September, the Order welcomed new warden Karen McBride and new deputy warden Richard Goldstraw.



Banner Deacons Scotland

Following the retirement of Janie Martin, after 14 years of service as secretary to the *Diaconate Council of Scotland*, a new appointment was made: Catherine Wallace, was commissioned as a Deacon in 1989 and has worked in parishes in Scotland and in the States.

At the *DACE* AGM, Ann Wren retired as president, and there was no one to fill the role. Therefore, the decision was made to recommend to the membership that the Association be closed. The present Executive will continue in order to fulfill constitutional requirements.



Banner Daughters of St. Mary, Egypt

France:

On November 5, 2016, celebration of the 175th anniversary began. Marguerite Lena, philosophy professor and member of the Xaverian Sisters, gave a lecture on Relevance and Irrelevance of Monastic Life Today.

Austria:

Evangelisches Diakoniewerk Gallneukirchen director Magister Christa Schrauf term ends effective the end of 2016.

Herwig Hack and Elisabeth Stachl, who live at the EDG, were awarded the literature award Ohrenschaus at Vienna.

Report from ABAJA BA KRISTO, Rubengera, Rwanda

Jan van Bijk, Janny Oorebeek and Schwester Dorien Peet sent a report on their impressions from a 2017 visit to the community Abaja Ba Kristo in Rubengera, Rwanda.



Deaconess Community: Five girls finished their year of probation and received their uniform. At the end of this year, another two girls will start their probation. Some of the sisters go to university. It is very important for them to have a good education so that

responsibilities can be carried on many shoulders.

There was a huge party on September 2nd: Three sisters celebrated their 25th deaconess- anniversary, and two others were consecrated. Consecration means that the deaconesses committed themselves fully to the community, a step that is taken after 10 years. The sisters invited about 500 (!) people to celebrate this special occasion.





It is very good to see that Sister Evodio's health has improved.

Last year she could do nothing for herself and was dependent on the help of others. We thought she would die, but now she walks around and can even dance!

Follow up on the orphans: During our stay, we met many children who had lived within the village: These children now live in families and enjoy it: teenagers attend



high school or learn a profession; children attend elementary school or

kindergarten. But there are some differences in circumstances: some are very poor while others live well.

Sister Emilienne takes care of the follow-up for those children waiting for adoption. The children receive money so that they can attend school or to cover their living needs. In 2018, houses will be built for three families because their current houses are in very bad condition. We search for resources to finance this project.

Indatwa School: It was a feast to again see children in the house of the former orphanage! Every morning there are more, as 70 children in two groups, enjoy the lessons, in both English and French! There is much singing and playing, inside and outside. In the middle of the morning, every child receives a cup of coffee and a roll. Sister Emerthe, who is leading this school, was educated in Tanzania and has many years of experience. They plan to extend the school by adding another

building next year because there will be a third group of pupils. They made parents who cannot afford the school fees form a support group. They meet every week to talk about their problems and ideas. They pay a small amount every week into a group fund. Members, who need funding for their income-producing projects, receive money from the fund.

Technical school: We also visited the technical school led by Sister Marie-Louise. It is good to see what the pupils craft: furniture, toys, doors, windows etc. This month the third group of students will graduate and search for a job. So far graduates have no problems finding jobs as the school has an excellent reputation.



Other projects: In addition to major projects, the sisters take care of moth-

ers who cannot feed their babies adequately. They provide them funds to buy milk and help them attend to their children. Recently a number of mothers have been expecting twins. The sisters also provide funds to help 40 high school students pay their fees so that they are not forced to stop their education. New groups of farmers, both male and female, are trained every year



Executive Foundation Friends of Abaja ba Kristo: Dirk-Jan Bac, Schjeorien, Cees Oosterhus, Janny Oorebeek, Jan Yen bijk (from left to right)

Emmanuel Sisterhood Annual Newsletter for the year 2016.

Dear Brethren,

We send you Calvary greetings in the blessed name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

It is with profound joy that we send you this newsletter, which has become our tradition to share with you how our community moved on during the year past.

To begin with, we want to thank you all, for always being there for us even when we do not have the chance of meeting physically. Thank you also for taking delight in reading our annual letter.

We remain very thankful to the Lord for the good health we experienced throughout the year. This served as a special blessing for us to carry out our activities and move on gracefully in life. Of course, we were not completely without a few health crises, but God remained our stronghold, support and healer. The major health problem we encountered was the operation on Sr. Ruth in November which was successful. She is now in the process of recuperating. Sr. Loveline too has been suffering since last year from severe back ache and is undergoing some exercises with a physiotherapist. There is improvement and we are praying for complete healing.

With regards to our prayer life, our community maintained the liturgical monastic prayer hours. Individual sisters were in constant communion with God through personal prayers and devotion. As usual, retreats and recollections were also observed and an annual retreat in August led by Rev. Fr. Isaiah Fru crowned it all. Our Chaplain Rev. Fru Henry continued to take care of us spiritually through counseling, spiritual meditations and celebration of the Holy Eucharist on Thursdays and Sundays. We also had guest preachers who nourished us with the word of God.

On the 27th December 2016, the final professed sisters had their special recollection to thank God and renew their commitment as they journey with God in this vocation.

During our offices, we had the joy of using the liturgical prayer books revised by Rev. Gerhard Rhim from Germany. These prayer books were completed and blessed in October 2016, for daily use in our offices. Thanks to Rev. Gerhard Rhim and his brotherhood of St. Michael who supported us financially for the printing of these books. We remain indebted to Rev. Rhim for new Psalm books and many other useful liturgical gifts he has blessed us with. May God bless him and all of you who have contributed to our community bountifully.



African Sisters dancing at the Assembly

Our community also continued to experience some growth in vocation. Our young sisters are determined in the life with courage, patience and perseverance. Some sisters have made steps forward in their spiritual lives: Sr. Victory and Sr. Beatrice made their first vows, while Naomi became a postulant in November 2016. This gives us joy and confidence that God leads the way for our monastic vocation in the PCC.

Our activities went on well and these sustained our economic life. The communion elements, the anointing oil and the liturgical vestments maintain a very

close and special link between our community and the Church. We are indeed grateful.

In the area of cattle rearing, we were able to add two zero-grazing cows from revenue raised from the farm itself. The reason for keeping these zero-grazing cows is to produce more milk.

Our little poultry farm is doing well, and recently we have extended it a little more to enable us to have eggs for both daily consumption and commercial purposes. Three of our sisters serving as nurses in the Presbyterian Hospitals are kept busy offering the best of their abilities by rendering services to patients and also supporting the community with small paid salaries.

Sister Loveline and Emmanuel, serving with the educational sector of the Church, stayed back in the community because of health reasons. The academic year which began in September 2016, however, has been brought to a halt in the English-speaking part of Cameroon due to political upheavals. Join us to pray for this situation.

Other activities and works consisted of some renovations in the community and the guest house. Our new guest house is near completion, and we should be very delighted to put it to use in the coming months, all things being equal. It consists of 10 self-contained sleeping rooms, a sitting room, small kitchen, a store, a chapel and a common room.

Our Madeleine Home Care and Training Center is going well. Sr. Mary Ann continues to be in charge along with and a few sisters who work with her in turns. The number of girls and children with disability has grown to 30 including few orphans. The center runs a handicraft workshop to train girls with special needs along with some few women who join from the neighborhood to learn. In December 2016, we graduated three of these young women who came to learn a craft such as sew-

ing, embroidery, knitting, or decoration. Other activities in the center like the bakery, rearing animals and the fishery are going well although we experienced some theft of fish from the fish pond. To remedy this, we hired a night watchman to keep guard. We are very thankful to the Association of the Circle of Friends who support this center in various ways and other friends and people of goodwill who have been there to give life and a smile to the faces of these of our sisters and children who live with disabilities. The center is witnessing growth in all aspects.

In the same spirit, the Agape Unity Program (AUP) headed by Sr. Judith is on a sound footing. The program is comprised of sisters and benevolent persons who go out and give drugs to epileptic patients. Also, AUP members go out, identify and assist people living with impairments especially (handicaps). Toilets have been constructed; bed/beddings have been made; food items, calipers, white canes, crutches, clothes and medical check-ups have been provided.

Sisters Ruth and Divine have been working relentlessly and their efforts have reached, identified and supported children from Ndu, Bawuru and Bafut in sponsoring their medical bills and paying for operations for those with physical disabilities. They are able to do this thanks to the financial help from Lilliana Fund Foundation (LFF). The two sisters also participated in the meetings of the Lilliana Fund as this foundation has been of great support to the handicap children under our care.

Two of our sisters completed their studies from various institutions: Sr. Marie Joelle from the Presbyterian Theological Seminary Kumba with a Bachelor of Theology Degree and Sr. Marie Pierre with Grade I Certificate from the Presbyterian Teachers Training College Mbengwi (PTTC).

In 2016, just we held series of meetings to enhance the smooth functioning of the community. These ranged from quarterly Council meetings, meetings with workers of the Sisterhood, and a Community Assembly. We were privileged to have mother Evangeline, the former Prioress General from our Mother House in France. The community benefited a lot from her sharing with us. Our prioress and mother Evangeline also met with the leaders of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (PCC) to discuss issues concerning our community. We like to mention here that Sr. Judith also held meetings with the team running the AUP. Also Sr. Shalom and Sr. Angele attended the PCC Synod of "Unfailing Love" which held in Presbyterian Church Center Bamenda.

Regarding journeys, we did not travel much last year. We however remain very thankful to the Lord that, in all our movements, He was in control and took special care over our going out and coming every day. In this vein, we remember with grateful hearts the return of Sr. Joy from France, the journey of Sr. Selima to France and back, our sisters who were going out on daily basis for work in hospitals, the various visitations we made to different Presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon to celebrate the Presbyterian Church Day and also witness for Christ through our vocation.

Visitors: Our community was highly guested during the year 2016. Among the numerous guests we had were Sister Angelika from the Sarepta Sisterhood in Germany; Sr. Victoria MacNeil

of the Community of Jesus in Orleans, Canada. Brothers Daniel and Andrew, from the same community also came for Holy Week and celebrated Easter with us. The Rev. Hiedi, a pastor from Mission 21 visited. Mama Lucy, our mother from PCC USA; the Vicar General of the Little Brothers of Jesus; many pastors paid us visits; as well as friends and people of good will. We were richly blessed through their visits.

Also, various groups, movements from within and without the PCC, paid us visits. Some held retreats and seminars. Very, very impacting were our brethren of the EEC from Dschang.

This year did not pass without painful and difficult moments brought by the departures of our loved ones. There was the sudden and painful death of the father of Sr. Florence Papa Tatah; the passing away of the brother of Sr. Evangil Frederick; the tragic death of the father of Sr. Loveline; Papa Tani and some of our close friends, neighbors, and family members. Their departures made us sad. Nevertheless, we hope to meet with them and to depart no more in the fullness of time.

All in all, God alone has brought us to yet another new year of great expectation in 2017. We praise Him and trust that He will continue to lead us especially during the difficult period of political cloud of uncertainties that hovers over Cameroon. May He also be with you in all your endeavors throughout this year. Have a blessed Year 2017.

*Emmanuel Sisters
Bafut - Cameroon*

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 ReDi

by Marianne Uri Øverland

ReDi, the International Society for the Research and Study of Diaconia and Christian Social Practice held its 6th Biennial Conference in Helsinki September 15-17, 2016. The theme of the Conference was “Diaconia in Dialogue – The challenges of diversifying contexts.” The conference sent out invitations for participation in:

- Workshops on the theme “Health questions as part of diaconia and faith based community work”
- Open space session on the theme “Master Degree Programmes in Diaconia.”

I was asked by DIAKONIA World Federation to attend the conference to see if there is any reason for the organization to connect with ReDi.

ReDi is mostly a gathering of researchers from universities and colleges. In my opinion, it connects more with our different schools and study programs than with actual diaconal activity, which is more our focus. Even so, ReDi does ask for projects based on actual diaconal practice.

Before there is further contact with ReDi, DIAKONIA should determine whether our member groups are interested in being part of a research-focused organization.

A Description of ReDi:

Diaconia is a vital contribution of the churches to welfare, health and well-being across the world. The actions of churches in different countries and from different traditions cover a wide spectrum of activity with varying profiles.

Diaconal work rests on multidisciplinary foundations including theological studies, professional studies such as social and community development work, youth work and health care, pedagogy, ethics and social sciences. Research draws on many different traditions including all kinds of empirical research such as quantitative and qualitative studies as well as participatory research, evaluation research, historical and critical analysis and hermeneutics.

Researchers, universities and research institutes in the field have developed varied approaches to support the development of diaconal work and to provide a critique of contexts and practice. The launching of ReDi as an independent international research society marks a new and important step in strengthening this work.

ReDi builds on the successful series of research conferences which have been organized over the last ten years as well as the network of universities which have developed the European Master's Degree in Diaconia and Christian Social Practice. In 2010, the international peer-reviewed Journal ‘Diaconia-Journal for the Study of Christian Social Practice’ has been launched. The new society will bring together diaconal practice and research on a structured, international platform.

ReDi is a membership-driven organization led by an Executive Board. This board is elected from among both individual and organizational members.

2017 DIAKONIA World Assembly

From June 28 through July 5, 2017, the DIAKONIA family gathered in the US for the 22nd World Assembly at Loyola University, Chicago, Illinois. Close to 500 people from around the world gathered under the theme ***Shaken by the Wind...***



DIAKONIA Assembly 2017:
Procession into Mundelein Hall

Each day had a different focus:

Shaken by the Wind....

- **... to be gathered together:** On Wednesday, June 28 (Arrival Day), we left behind our daily routines to assemble in Chicago;
- **... to create community:** On Thursday, June 29 (Program Day 1), we became a community through our worship, our common experiences and our sharing together;
- **... to rock the foundations:** On Friday, June 30 (Program Day 2), we found our assumptions being questioned as we listened to speakers and to each other;
- **... to face the chaos:** On Saturday, July 1 (Program Day 3), together we confronted humankind's violence and turmoil;
- **... to experience the unknown:** On Sunday, July 2 (Program Day 5), we dispersed to encounter Chicago through worship and exploration;
- **... to form a new perspective:** On Monday, July 3 (Program Day 4), we reconnected bringing fresh un-

derstandings of our world and of ourselves;

- **... to nourish hope:** On Tuesday, July 4 (Program Day 5), we celebrated the promise that we have been given in community;
- **... to be scattered to serve:** On Wednesday, July 5 (Departure Day), we departed Chicago to continue the diaconal work to which we are called.



DIAKONIA Assembly 2017: DRAE Presentation

Our three keynote speakers provided insights on how the wind blows. Michael Kinnamon described how the wind is shaking us in our daily lives and in society; Bishop Christopher Epting spoke of how the wind has changed the diaconate during the past century; and Gwen Sayler traced the wind in the Old and New Testaments. All speeches and bible studies are available at www.diakonia-world.org.



DIAKONIA Assembly 2017:
Young people discuss DIAKONIA's future

As required law, the Assembly serves as the organization's quadrennial general meeting. For a number of years, Assembly business meetings have been conducted as *World Focus* sessions.



*DIAKONIA Assembly 2017:
Young people had their own session*

During three World Focus sessions, Assembly participants listened to reports and presentations; discussed the future of DIAKONIA; elected the president to a second term; and confirmed the new DIAKONIA World Executive Committee. These sessions focused

on our Past; our Present; and our Future. (A report on the decisions made at the Assembly is included as part of the Executive Committee meeting report above.)

And finally, on July 4th, we celebrated the 70th anniversary of the founding of DIAKONIA at a picnic on the Loyola University campus grounds with a huge birthday cake, fireworks and a beautiful American Hymn Festival! Thanks to Our Lord for DIAKONIA!

Please read below, the impressions of two Assembly attendees.



*DIAKONIA Assembly 2017:
Brazilian delegation*



*DIAKONIA Assembly 2017:
Preparing for Independence Day*



DIAKONIA Assembly 2017: Electives



Shaken by the Wind – A Report from Deacon Heidi Albrecht

Chairperson of the VEED (Deacon Association in Germany)

Shaken by the Wind was the theme of the 2017 DIAKONIA World Assembly held June 28-July 5, in Chicago. The Assembly, in the *Windy City*, did stir the nearly 500 participants from every continent



DIAKONIA Assembly 2017: Worship group

Yes, quite a wind blew but not only from Lake Michigan towards the land. The theme *Shaken by the Wind* was carried throughout the lectures, bible studies, workshops and small groups. The sisters and brothers from North and South America, who prepared this assembly, challenged us - deaconesses, deacons, theologians, diaconal workers – to bring God's spirited actively into the societies where we live. To stand for peace, justice and the protection of the creation is the essence of what we are called to do. And to bring this message to our own countries – especially in difficult political and societal times – is what we must do.



DIAKONIA Assembly 2017: Worship group

Devotions and worship encouraged us to walk this path of the diaconate continuously and at all times. This means that we must stand up with courage against the powerful and the laws of the world of the white men: laws which marginalize people and keep political systems from developing in a way that allows all people to live in peace and justice and to have most needs provided.



DIAKONIA Assembly 2017: Worship group

It is good, that such places exist – all over the world – that awaken us und grant blessings. God is taking care of us: here and now and everywhere!!!



Shaken by the Wind – A Report from Deacon Carmen Treffinger

Oberin of Evangelische Diakonissenanstalt Stuttgart

Since the founding of the DIAKONIA World Federation in 1947, an assembly of sisterhoods and diaconal communities has been held every four years. In 2017, four hundred fifty sisters and brothers from all over the world met at Loyola University, Chicago, on the shore of Lake Michigan.



DIAKONIA Assembly 2017: Small Group

All attendees – including nearly 70 sisters and brothers from Germany experienced a wide-ranging program beginning with the opening service and through the closing worship with Eucharist. Every morning began with either a bible study or lecture, all with enormous depth.



DIAKONIA Assembly 2017: Small Group

The first lecture impressed me and my colleagues the most. It was given by Dr. Michael Kinnamon, former chairperson of the Faith and Order Committee of the World Council of Churches. Of course, the question of the presidency of Donald Trump was in the room and had raised concerns regarding travel to the US. Kinnamon responded to these concerns in an exemplary way. I quote: *In my judgment, however, Trump's presidency is a manifestation of currents in this society that are dramatically contrary to the gospel, even as his presidency is also an agent of negative change.*



DIAKONIA Assembly 2017: Small Group

In conjunction with the theme of the Assembly, Kinnamon named five societal winds which are shaking the US at the moment:

- Economic policies, including proposals for the funding of health care, that favor the wealthy at the expense of the poor.
- A rejection of scientific research regarding climate change and a consequent attack on regulations and legislation designed to help protect the environment.
- An emphasis on the military, including military action at the expense of diplomacy.

- An isolationist mentality that promises to reduce US presence and funding when and where they are most needed around the world.
- An apparent nostalgia for an America that was predominantly white and Christian, which has led to unwarranted and mean-spirited fear of immigrants, refugees, Muslims, and other minorities.



DIAKONIA Assembly 2017: Small Group

Kinnamon concluded, that the *culture of fear* grows out of false and propagandistic rhetoric in the US and elsewhere. Therefore diaconal work is more important than ever. Dr. Kinnamon even called the audience to diaconal resistance. His presentation generated open discussions by the Assembly participants within their small groups.



DIAKONIA Assembly 2017: Small Group

Other things were impressive too: The many personal encounters and the sharing and singing together. The song *He's got the whole world in His Hands* moved us to tears. We prayed the Lord's Prayer in so many languages. We had the opportunity to visit local churches on Sunday and participate in their worship services.



DIAKONIA Assembly 2017: Small Group

Another highlight was experiencing the American Independence Day on July 4th. We had a picnic on the University grounds; joined in an American hymn festival; and watched fireworks over Lake Michigan.



*DIAKONIA Assembly 2017:
Electives*



*DIAKONIA Assembly 2017:
Independence Day*



*DIAKONIA Assembly 2017:
Electives*

Sad News

Inga Margareta Bengtzon was born July 20, 1920, and died May 6, 2017, in Uppsala, Sweden. The funeral service was held at Samariterhemmets Church on June 2. Lennart Lindgren, director of Samariterhemmet, officiated, and Rolf Nordblom, former director, gave the memorial speech.

Inga Bengtzon served as a deaconess for 65 years and was Mother Superior and Director of the Diaconia Foundation Samariterhemmet. She was the president of DIAKONIA World Federation from 1979 to 1992.

Inga Bengtzon was a visionary. In 1984, she underlined the prophetic dimension of diakonia in a speech at a Nordic diaconal meeting. She asserted that diakonia was foundational for the Church and “is and shall, and must be prophetic, foresighted, predictive, energetic, fearless - salt and light to the world.” At the 1983 WCC General Assembly, she argued for the inclusion of a self-critical dimension of the diaconal role that challenges the Church’s “locked, frozen, static and self-centered structures” in order to turn those structures into a “workable, living instrument for the Church’s task of healing, reconstruction and sharing with each other.” She thought diakonia should not be limited to institutional forms but must “break through the already established structures and demarcations in the institutional church” in order to act, heal, and build in the world. And she argued both that prophecy is a message that must be advanced, regardless of cost and that the prophet’s message is inconvenient because it “exposes and opposes all situations and circumstances where people are violated against or violate

God’s creation.” This is what it means to be “salt” in the world (Bengtson, 1984).



Inga wrote books and journal articles; she served on committees that explored diakonia; and she engaged in ecumenical dialogues regarding diakonia and the Church.

Her publications and presentations include:

- Bengtson, Inga M. *Diakonia II. The Organisation of DIAKONIA*, in: Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement, Geneva/Grand Rapids 1991.
- Bengtson, Inga. “Diakonia Worldwide: Does the Church Need a Diaconate?” St Colm’s Public Lecture, Edinburgh, 1988.
- Bengtson, Inga M. “The Churches and the Diaconate in the Ecumenical and International Perspective”, 1985.

DRAE Region President Marianne Uri Øverland represented DIAKONIA World Federation at the funeral service. In speaking, Marianne emphasized the important role of Inga Bengtson in DIAKONIA World Federation and gave thanks for the years she had served the organization.