



# **DIAKONIA**

## **News**

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

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## From Your Editors



Dear Friends:

It's time for another edition of the DIAKONIA Newsletter.

Many people are involved in putting the Newsletter together, and my thanks go to all of them. I hope that you find much of interest in this edition and are able to catch up with the activities of DIAKONIA over the past year.

*Laura Lazar  
English Editor*

When you will read this issue, you will notice that the word *historic* appears more than once. Indeed, DIAKONIA World Federation has made a huge step in changing its domicile from the Netherlands to Germany.

When DIAKONIA was founded immediately after World War II in the Netherlands, it was considered a counterpart to the Kaiserswerth General Conference. The original motivation was to stay connected internationally but without the dominance of the German motherhouses. It took over 10 years and the petition of the Swiss motherhouses before German associations were allowed to join DIAKONIA. As DIAKONIA was founded in Utrecht, Netherlands, all DIAKONIA

treasurers had had to maintain official contact with the Utrecht Chamber of Commerce. That was not a problem as long as the treasurers lived in the Netherlands. However, in 2009, Laura Lazar, from the US was chosen as treasurer. Simultaneously, one of the two Dutch member organizations dissolved, and only a few sisters were left at Amerongen. The Amerongen sisters continued to serve as DIAKONIA liaisons to the Chamber of Commerce for a few years, but their number continued to decline.

It became apparent to the Executive Committee that the Association's legal domicile needed to be moved to a country with a large number of member associations such as the United States or Germany. As most DIAKONIA member groups are located in Europe, Germany was deemed the best choice.

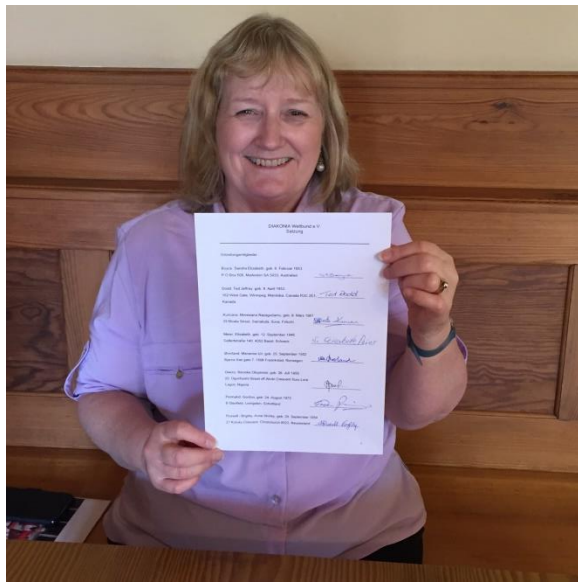


How wonderful that resentments that had been so strong 70 years ago could be set aside! The DIAKONIA Executive Committee as well as delegates at the DIAKONIA World Assembly 2017 in Chicago voted unanimously for a transfer from the Netherlands to Germany!

*Ulrike Kellner  
German Editor*

## Reflections from the President

The highlight for the DIAKONIA Executive has been the change of domicile, and the formation of the new Foundation to be known as DIAKONIA World Federation e.V. This has been a long process faithfully executed by a committed team of people. Grateful thanks are expressed to Sr Ulrike Kellner and Sr Traude Leitenberger, along with Dr. Müller and Martin Vogler.



*DIAKONIA President Sandy Boyce with the signatures of the founding members of DIAKONIA World e.V.*

This marks a new development for DIAKONIA World Federation - not just a new name and place of domicile, but an invitation to prayerfully consider future directions and priorities.

I have been reflecting on the story of blind Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46-52) who lives on the margins of society. He may not have sight, but he listens intently to what he hears around him. He's heard the stories about Jesus. And when he has the opportunity, he shouts out to get the attention of Jesus. Although Barti-

maeus is told to be quiet, and not to create a disturbance, he will not be silenced. Jesus hears Bartimaeus, and stops to give him his full attention. Bartimaeus throws off his cloak and approaches Jesus. His cloak may have been his only possession - a source of shelter, and a place on which alms could be placed, a marker of identity. Jesus simply asks: 'What do you want me to do for you?' Bartimaeus answers 'My teacher, let me see again.' Jesus' says, "Go! Your faith has made you well." But when Bartimaeus recovered his sight, he followed Jesus 'on the way' - the sacrificial way of service, the sacrificial way of the cross

The symbol of the cloak discarded invites reflection on what we might need to 'throw off' in order to follow Jesus in our time and place. His words and actions pointed to a new social order, where the least would be the greatest and the greatest would be the least, where all would find a place of belonging. This is Mary's song that we call the Magnificat. This is God's plan for shalom in the world. Perhaps we might explore the implications of 'throwing off' our own cloaks that serve to keep us safe and secure as individuals, and as institutions. We may need to throw off the cloak that represents 'how things have always been done', in order to be free to faithfully follow the way of Jesus, and join in with what God is doing in the world. We may need to throw off the cloak in order to engage in transformative diakonia in a rapidly changing world. It's worth doing some more thinking about this story, and the cloak, as a symbol for our own time, and an invitation to fuller participation in God's mission.

I am grateful to be working with a team of committed people on the Executive who are prepared to think creatively and collaboratively on key priorities and directions that will enable DIAKONIA World to flourish and continue to offer leadership. We welcome hearing stories from associations and regions about how they are joining in with what God is

doing in the world, and to look forward to sharing these stories more widely amongst our wonderful worldwide DIAKONIA World Federation. We are blessed to be a blessing!

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

## **History in the Making**

*By DIAKONIA World President Rev. (Deacon) Sandy Boyce*

At the 2017 DIAKONIA World Assembly in Chicago, the delegates celebrated 70 years since the formation of the association that would become the DIAKONIA World Federation. It was a time to remember and to celebrate, and also to plan ahead for the future. In particular, a proposal was brought to the Assembly that the domicile of the Federation be moved to Germany, where it could be offered more practical support.



*DIAKONIA Presidents and the director of Neuendettelsau, Dr. M. Hartman, signing the contract*

In June 2018, during the first full meeting of the new DIAKONIA World Executive, an historic founding meeting took place in Neuendettelsau to establish the new Foundation. A revised Constitution

and Bylaws had been approved, and a contract established with Diakonie Neuendettelsau to provide administrative and financial support for the work of the new Foundation to be known as DIAKONIA World Federation e.V.

The Project Team worked hard on all the legalities and logistics required to form the new Foundation; so much thoughtful and practical work has gone into the preparation of documents for the change of domicile. The documentation included a revised Constitution and ByLaws in accordance with the requirements of German law. The contract with Diakonie Neuendettelsau was signed by Rector Rev. Dr. Hartman, along with the President and Regional Presidents of DIAKONIA World Federation.

When the legal and administrative process has been completed, the “stichting DWF” in the Netherlands would be dissolved and assets transferred.

It was an exciting day for all involved, recognising the historic significance of the occasion and we all look forward now to a flourishing partnership with Diakonie Neuendettelsau.

## DIAKONIA e.V. Liason Person to Neuendettelsau

My name is Thorsten Walter. I was born in 1980; I am married to Christiane; and we have three children: Jakob, 6 years old; Jael, 3 years old, and Levi, 1 year old.

I have worked at Diakonie Neuendettelsau since 2010. Until recently, I was head of the European-Institute, which in October 2018 and due to expanded activities, was renamed the Institute for International Cooperation. My responsibilities include development activities in other European countries; the maintenance and encouragement of international cooperation; and international project management including fundraising.

I am also a managing director of SoCareNet Europe, a networking organization which supports and advises more than 20 members from Central and Eastern Europe in order to help them build up and offer social and health services in their locations. The goal of SoCareNet Europe is to foster active exchange of experiences between members and to promote new collaborations.

I originally trained as a caregiver for people with special needs. After two years as a missionary in Mexico, I earned BA degree in nursing management at the Catholic College of Munich. From 2011 to 2013, I studied part-time at the University of Bayreuth and earned a Master of Business Administration in Health Care Management.

When I learned that Diakonie Neuendettelsau was awarded the management contract by the DIAKONIA World Federa-

tion, I was very happy about my new and expanded area of responsibility. Over the past few years, I have been able to network with many organizations and people in Europe and beyond. This new responsibility represents to me a continuation and confirmation of my previous activities. I hope that this new relationship is not only open, future-oriented and efficient but also enables cooperation with the DIAKONIA Executive Committee and all DIAKONIA members.

I want to work with all DIAKONIA members to develop new forms of lived faith in communion with each individual and with diaconal communities so that all of us can continue to keep the core message of DIAKONIA visible so that God's love, grace and mercy in the world will pass through us, not only in speech but also in action.

At a seminar on diakonia and youth in Cuba in August 2017, young people from 40 nations developed the concept of the Table of Diakonie / Mesa del la Diakonie / Tisch der Diakonie. At this table, Jesus invites all those who are weary and busy to be refreshed and fulfilled so that they themselves become salt and light in their own living and working environments. That is what I wish for DIAKONIA World Association.

I'm really looking forward to working with you and wonder what God will do in this new relationship.

*Thorsten Walter*







Diakonie Neuendettelsau is one of the largest diaconal institutions in Germany. It runs over 200 facilities; employs more than 7,800 people; and offers high-quality health and social services. It is headquartered in Neuendettelsau, a small village near Nuremberg but has facilities located throughout Bavaria and other European countries. One area of service is education: Diakonie Neuendettelsau runs nearly 40 schools and training institutions. Another area of service is services to the aging: walk-in and in-home services for senior citizens are provided approximately 20 places in Bavaria and Poland. It also runs hospitals in Ansbach, Neuendettelsau, Nuremberg and Schwabach and provides services for more than 2,000 people with disabilities within the Franconia region. An estimated 1,100 children visit its daycare centers, nursery schools and afterschool care centers in the Nuremberg region. Recently it has also started providing support for people seeking asylum and for immigrants.

Diakonia Neuendettelsau also runs for the international academy DiaLog, located at Neuendettelsau, which offers highly-regarded advanced training programs in social fields. In Fürth, near Nuremberg, it runs Wilhelm-Löhe-Hochschule, a college. Additional facilities at Neuendettelsau include a bakery, a nursery, and a butcher shop as well as a

three-star hotel named DiaLog-Hotel Neuendettelsau.

Diakonie Neuendettelsau also is involved in other countries. It runs two institutions for senior citizens in Olsztyn and Kattowice, in Poland, and is developing a third one in Danzig and cooperates with partners in Europe and other elsewhere.

Diakonie Neuendettelsau's mission statement identifies three standards by which reliability and stability are guaranteed: Christian activism; Professional; and Profitable. Christian activism, the diaconal heart of the work of Diakonie Neuendettelsau, understands every single person as a unique person in the image of God.

Although Diakonie Neuendettelsau has a long history, it understands itself as an innovative and modern organization. It was founded as a deaconess motherhouse by Pastor Wilhelm Löhe in 1854, and it has left significant imprints on diaconal life in Germany. Diakonie Neuendettelsau was the source of innovations that have been undertaken in such fields as social work and education and that then were adopted by other organizations. For example, in 1954, it developed the social year/diaconal year, a period of time in which young people voluntarily serve in social institutions for one year. This innovative idea continues to this day.

# DIAKONIA EXECUTIVE REPORTS 2018

## DIAKONIA Executive Committee 2018 – Minutes

*By Rev. Sandy Boyce and Sr. Traude Leitenberger*

The Executive Committee (EC) meeting 2018 of the DIAKONIA World Federation (DWF) took place at Evangelischer Diakonieverein Berlin-Zehlendorf e.V., Glockenstraße 8, 14163 Berlin/Germany from June 28 - July 4, 2018



*Executive Committee Members*

**Present: Members:** Sandy Boyce (President); Meresiana Kuricava (DAP Regional President); Ted Dodd (DOTAC Regional President); Marianne Uri Øverland (DRAE Regional President and Vice-President DWF); Anne Russell-Brighty (DAP Vice-President); Ibironke Oworu (DRAE Vice-President); Gordon Pennykid (DRAE); Sr. Elisabeth Maier (DRAE); Christa Megaw, Advisor (DAP); Birgit Banzhaf (DRAE). **Officers:** Diane Kaufmann, Web Manager; Traude Leitenberger, Secretary. **Associate member of DOTAC:** Deacon Jan Cherry. **Guests:** Martin Vogler, Change of Domicile Project Group Team Leader; Dr. Elmar Müller

**Apologies:** Laura Lazar, Treasurer and English Editor; Ulrike Kellner, German Editor; Birgit Banzhaf (DRAE) [on June 29, 2018]

**EC's actions to implement change in DIAKONIA's legal domicile to Germany:** The DIAKONIA World Assembly participants, gathered in Chicago in 2017, approved a change in legal domicile for DIAKONIA from the Netherlands to Germany. The EC were informed about the process and timeline for the change; and approved a revised constitution. The first three days of the 2018 EC meeting time were used to implement this change. The events of those days are described as follows.

*June 28, 2018: Preparation of EC for Diakonie Neuendettelsau visit:* Prior to the EC meeting, information about the steps involved in the change of domicile were circulated to EC members for comments, and a final version was then approved. At the meeting, Martin Vogler and Dr. E. Müller briefed the EC; responded to questions; and explained the process for the next day when the EC would travel to Diakonie Neuendettelsau, partner with DWF for the change of domicile.



*Martin Vogler and Dr. Elmar Müller explaining the change of domicile*

*June 29, 2018: Visit by EC to Diakonie Neuendettelsau:* The EC travelled to Neuendettelsau to formalize the agreement and sign documents to move the legal address from the Netherlands to Germany. The establishment of registration in Germany is expected to take three months. When the registration has been approved, the Project Team will meet in Neuendettelsau to complete the final steps such as changing the bank account address, changing the name to (DIAKONIA Weltbund e.V./DIAKONIA World Federation e.V.), and other formalities. When this work is concluded, the registration in the Netherlands will be terminated. The EC appreciated the warm welcome at Neuendettelsau and the shared vision for diaconal ministry. The EC also looks forward to a fruitful ongoing partnership with such a vibrant institution J



*Monument of Wilhelm Löhe in Neuendettelsau*

*June 30, 2018: Follow-up by EC to Diakonie Neuendettelsau visit:* Martin Vogler and the EC reviewed the previous day's activities and discussed the DIAKONIA By-Laws revisions noting both that there must be consistency in language between the revised Constitution and the revised By-Laws and that the revised By-Laws need to conform

with current practices. Christa Megaw (DAP) was appointed an advisor to the EC, and Birgit Banzhaf (DRAE), because she was not present to sign documents at Neuendettelsau, was formally appointed to the EC. Once the change in domicile to Germany is completed - expected to occur by December 31, 2018 - the Project Team will be thanked and dismissed.

*Action:* A small task group will review the By-Laws and circulate them to the full EC for comment and approval. Martin Vogler and Traude Leitenberger will meet at Neuendettelsau on September 3, 2018, to complete outstanding formalities.

### **Regular EC meeting**

Sandy Boyce welcomed the Executive Committee and noted that the majority of EC members for the 2017-2021 term are new. She gave an overview of the purposes of DIAKONIA; orientated new EC members; and listed the tasks of the EC for the next three years. She asked the EC members, "What can we learn from each other given that we come from diverse cultural and denominational backgrounds, and what is our work together between the world assemblies?" Sandy outlined the EC agenda and explained how to use the colored cards during the meeting. DOTAC representatives led the opening devotions.

### **Membership change for ELCA Diaconal Community:**

The EC had been provided with documents outlining the changes in the ELCA roster and its impact on Jan Cherry's community and on her position as DOTAC Regional President. The DOTAC Central Committee appointed Jan as an associate member and elected Ted Dodd as regional pres-



ident. Both attended the 2018 EC meeting.

**Approval of the minutes:** The minutes from the 2017 EC meetings at Valparaiso, Indiana and Loyola University, Chicago were approved.

All reports (see below) were given. The EC received the reports and expressed appreciation for the work.



*DIAKONIA President Sandy Boyce and DIAKONIA Regional Presidents at Berlin*

**Website:** The EC recommended that the website photo be changed often; and suggested that young people be recruited to assist in improving the website by making it more attractive and creative. Diane and Gordon will update the website. Gordon was added as an administrator for the Facebook page.

**Newsletter:** EC agreed that the Newsletter will contain the activities of the EC and other reports and will be sent to member associations by email. Member associations who are not able to access the internet should contact the Secretary. The objective of the newsletter is to inform member associations about the activities of the EC and to strengthen relationships.

### **World Council of Churches (WCC):**

DWF has been in the background of the activities at the WCC, but in the last few years there has been an improvement in the relationship. The WCC now recognizes the DWF and has a working document that is available to DWF. It is important that DWF has a representative and voice at the WCC meeting that will be able to explain that the work of DWF is broad and includes theology as well as social work. The EC agreed to participate in the movement Thursday in Black. Christa and Ronke are responsible for determining the specifics of that participation. The next WCC meeting will be Karlsruhe in 2021.

### **International Diaconate Center (IDC)**

Ann Wren had represented DWF at IDC. As Ann is no longer on the EC, discussion was held about who could serve as representative from the EC to IDC since this is one of our main ecumenical partners. It was determined that it is not financially feasible to have a representative at every meeting. Ronke volunteered to be the liaison and will inform EC about IDC activities.



*DAP Members of the EC: Christa Megaw, Meresiana Kuricava, Ann Russell-Brighty (from left to right)*

**Re-Di:** The EC agreed that it would be good to build connections with Re-Di.

The importance of research was acknowledged. It would be good to identify a person interested in research who could connect with Re-Di. The next meeting will be from September 12-14 2018, but no one from DWF will attend. It is important to pay attention to the Re-Di website; establish contact; and probably their newsletter.

*Action:* Anne and Ted will follow through.

**Justice Group:** This item was not discussed in the meeting. The EC needs to provide leadership in setting justice priorities and raising awareness of justice issues.



**Evaluation of the 2017 World Assembly:** Ted Dodd led a process to identify highlights, elements that need to be kept, and improvements. A summary report of this activity is to be prepared for those who plan future assemblies. Various reports from Chicago were tabled including finances. These documents will be posted on the DIAKONIA website. The EC agreed that a planning manual should be prepared which includes available documents from previous assemblies such as the registration process, songbooks, liturgies and other materials. The EC also agreed that expressions of thanks would be conveyed to key organizers involved in the Chicago Assembly and noted that the current EC meeting was being held exactly one year after the Chicago Assembly.

**Planning for 2021 World Assembly, Darwin, Australia:** Christa talked about the proposed venue. Club Tropical Resort is on the outskirts of Darwin City

and can accommodate 400+ guests. The Assembly will meet from June 30 to July 7 under the theme **WEAVERS OF THE WORLD**. The anticipated registration fee is € 850. The DAP planning team was commended for its work. A brainstorming session was held using the questions: 1) What do we want to keep? 2) What do we want to improve? 3) New topics?

*Action:* Christa invites suggestions.



*DOTAC members of the EC: Ted Dodd, Jan Cherry (from left to right)*

## Finances

*Finance report:* The 2017 financial report was approved. Almost all member groups have paid their fees: Some associations pay during the Assembly for the four years and some pay year by year. Income is decreasing. The EC considered the possibilities of reducing costs in certain areas such as EC meetings. Recipients of the Travel Fund will be expected to write a report about their experience at Assembly. Applications for the Travel Fund need to be submitted as early as possible in to meet the deadline which is on the application form. The EC is aware that the financial considerations of member organizations also have pastoral implications.

*General Fund budget for 2019:* The EC approved the following budget:

<i>Income (in Euros)</i>	
Member fees	31.000
Interest	500
Gifts	500
Draw on General Fund	16.400
<i>Total</i>	<i>48.400</i>

<i>Expenditures</i>	
Executive Committee	15.000
Neuendettelsau	
management contract	8.000
Honorarium	5.000
Professional services	13.000
President's Discretionary Fund	5.000
Ecumenical relations	2.000
Administration	300
Miscellaneous	100
<i>Total</i>	<i>48.400</i>

**DIAKAID:** A report was received from Nigeria on its use of the 2017 DIAKAID funds. The EC affirmed the work in the area of education and approved the third round of funding. The EC members were overwhelmed about the execution of the project and the managements of funds allocated. See report below. No applications were made for consideration at this meeting. The EC agreed to continue to encourage requests for grants for educational and development projects.

**2019 Regional Assemblies:** DRAE will meet in Edinburgh, Scotland, June 19-24, 2019. DAP will meet in Fiji, July 8-12, 2019. DOTAC in Vancouver, Canada, August 14-20, 2019.

Information about regional assemblies will be provided by the regions (and see below).

**Executive Committee meeting schedule through 2021:** The full EC

will meet approximately every 18 months, and the acting board (President, Regional Presidents and Officers) will meet in person between full EC meetings with other EC members participating by Skype. The next full EC meeting is in Neuendettelsau in November 2019. The following one is in Darwin in June 2021, prior to the World Assembly. The acting board will meet in June 2019 and June 2020.



*DRAE members of the EC: Birgit Banzhaf, Elisabeth Meier, Marianne Uri Øverland, Ibironke Oworu, Gordon Pennykid (from left to right)*

**2019 Executive Committee meeting dates:** In 2019, during the DRAE Assembly, those EC members present will meet together and may involve other EC members by Skype. The 2019 full Executive Committee meeting will be held from November 12 (Tuesday) to 16 (Sunday), 2019, in Neuendettelsau, Germany. The first and last days of the meeting are designated travel days.



## Report of the President

By President Rev. (Deacon) Sandy Boyce

**The President visits the Philippines, October 2017:** I was invited to be guest speaker at the DIAKPhils Conference. It was a real honor to be part of their gathering which included people from the four deaconess associations in the Philippines. For the deaconesses, the conference was an opportunity to be refreshed personally and spiritually, and to have some recreation. Many have limited holidays, which is why there was a full day in the program dedicated to low key recreational activities.



Former DAP Regional President Emma Cantor and DIAKONIA World President Sandy Boyce at the Philippines Assembly

The deaconesses offer incredibly faithful service in their church context as well as the wider community. The theme for the Conference was the same as the 2017

Assembly, *Shaken by the Wind*. I had planned to adapt some of Michael Kinnamon's input at the Assembly in Chicago to the Filipino social and cultural context to give a flavor of what was presented at the Chicago Assembly. What struck me was how difficult it is for the church to raise issues of concern in the public arena. Indeed, the risk is very clear about taking a position on social justice that is critical of the Government, and the cost is high as has been evidenced by the extra-judicial killings of pastors and community leaders who express concern for the welfare of the people. Please remember the Deaconesses and their Churches in your prayers as they faithfully seek to serve God in the complex social, economic and political landscape in the Philippines.

### DIAKONIA World Assembly

The DIAKONIA World Assembly held in Chicago in 2017 was a wonderful event, and there is much to be thankful for, especially the commitment, enthusiasm, energy of the planning team and volunteer helpers. And soon enough it will be the turn of Australia to host the 2021 DIAKONIA World Assembly in Darwin. A small team from DAP has already begun serious planning for the Assembly, and has a theme and a venue. Keep a lookout for further information in the new year and begin making your plans to attend the 2021 DIAKONIA World Assembly.

### AADA (Anglican Deacons, Australia)

The biennial meeting of AADA (Australian Anglican Diaconal Association) was hosted in Adelaide earlier this year. I



made a presentation during the conference dinner. The presentation provided an opportunity to speak about DIAKONIA, which was especially helpful to raise the profile of the Federation since few amongst the Anglican Deacons knew a great deal about DIAKONIA. I also spoke about the role of diaconal ministry in fostering the diaconal work of the whole people of God (as distinct from Deacons, Deaconesses and Diaconal Ministers doing/holding responsibility for diaconal ministry in the church). It was also good to continue to develop some good connections between DUCA (Diaconia of the Uniting Church in Australia) and AADA.

### **DIAKONIA Executive**

This is a time of transition for the Executive, with the change of domicile, a new partnership with Diakonie Neuendettelsau, and many new members of the 2017-2021 Executive. The DAP Executive is entirely new, and DOTAC had appointed a new Regional President. As well, there were changes in the composition of the DRAE membership of Executive. Our two DIAKONIA News editors, Ulrike Kellner and Laura Lazar, were unable to be present, and their

wisdom was greatly missed. The Executive was grateful for Laura's thorough preparation of the financial documentation provided for the meeting. As well, the Executive expressed many thanks for the work of the DIAKONIA Secretary, Traude Leitenberger, who is thorough and well-planned in her work, and brings a gentle wisdom and a steady approach to her responsibilities.

In addition to hearing reports, the Executive had an opportunity to focus on ways to build connections across regions and associations and build a prayerful and supportive community in DIAKONIA. The Executive is mindful of the critical nature of the next few years and will be tracking trends and opportunities in the church generally and in particular in diaconal ministry. There will be many challenges ahead, and the central question remains: What is God doing in the world, and how can we join in with God's mission? It may require reprioritising, changes of direction, and doing things differently. It may require letting go of some things and taking new things up in order to be able to respond to the invitation to participate in God's mission.

**Member fees and donations 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 Secretary

*By Sr. Traude Leitenberger*

Almost one year ago we held our 2017 Executive Committee meeting in Valparaiso, Indiana, USA. The minutes of that meeting were prepared and sent to Executive Committee members for correction. Corrected minutes were sent to all member organizations in March 2018.

The **minutes** of the meeting with the newly appointed Executive Committee members were sent to the new members only also in March 2018.

The editors prepared the new edition of **DIAKONIA News** which was sent by email in November 2017 to Executive Committee members, member organizations, and subscribers. It was also uploaded on the **DIAKONIA website**.



*DIAKONIA Web Manager Diane Kaufmann and DIAKONIA Secretary Traude Leitenberger at Berlin*

**Membership fees:** In cooperation with regional Presidents and Treasurers, member data was updated. Invoices for the 2018 membership fees for DAP member groups were sent in February. Invoices for DOTAC and DRAE members were issued by the Treasurer for both the DRAE and DIAKONIA membership fees.

**Project: Relocation of DIAKONIA World Foundation from the Netherlands to Germany:** Martin Vogler presented the work of the project group to the Executive Committee and the voting delegates of the member organizations at the DIAKONIA Assembly in Chicago. Remarks have been considered and inserted. The project group was instructed to continue the process and to prepare all steps for the transfer to Germany. Initially, it was planned to relocate the foundation to Berlin, taking into account various arguments, the foundation will now be relocated to Neuendettelsau, Germany. All documents concerning the formalities were sent to the Executive Committee and officers on May 31st, 2018.

The founding event with the new constitution will take place in Neuendettelsau on June 29th, 2018. As the notary will have to notarize the signatures of the President and the three Regional Presidents, the formalities have to take place in Bavaria.

I would like to give my great thanks to Martin Vogler, Ulrike Kellner and Dr. Elmar Müller for the tremendous work done in the past two years.

The **DIAKONIA Prayer** is always available at the beginning of each month, and the feedback from those receiving it is still very positive.

The **43. Kaiserwerth General Conference** took place in Bielefeld/Bethel, Germany from June 14th to June 17th, 2018. The conference theme was: *Community – more than ever*. 120 members from 13 countries participated.



*DIAKONIA Secretary Traude Leitenberger gives a greeting at the Kaiserswerth General Conference*

I was invited to present greetings from DIAKONIA. It was a great oppor-

tunity to promote the DIAKONIA community with its international significance and invite to the DIAKONIA Africa / Europe region in Scotland 2019 and the 2021 World Assembly in Australia.

**Change in the management of the Kaiserswerth Association:** Dr. Christine-Ruth Müller was for ten years Director of the Kaiserswerther Association in Berlin. She retired in September 2017, and her farewell celebration took place at Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche in Berlin, on September 27, 2017. Particularly noteworthy was her commitment to DIAKONIA.

Reverent Christa Schrauf the new Director had her investiture afterwards.

For the leaving and the new Director, Marianne Uri Øverland brought greetings on behalf of DIAKONIA from Sandy and the worldwide communities and Associations.

Marianne Uri Øverland, Ulrike Kellner and I participated in the celebration.

### Important Internet and Email Adresses

#### WEBSITES

DIAKONIA World Federation

<http://www.diakonia-world.org>

#### WORLD "OFFICERS"

[president@diakonia-world.org](mailto:president@diakonia-world.org)  
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#### REGIONAL

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[dotac.president@diakonia-world.org](mailto:dotac.president@diakonia-world.org)  
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[drae.secretary@diakonia-world.org](mailto:drae.secretary@diakonia-world.org)

## Report of the Treasurer

*By Laura Lazar*

Presented below are the General Fund income and expenditures for 2017. General Fund expenses exceeded income by 6,119 Euros, which can be explained by the fact that the cost of the Executive Committee meeting was higher than normal. In Assembly years, DIAKONIA pays the Assembly registration fees for Executive Committee members, which increases the total Executive Committee cost. Although not reported below as part of the General Fund, income from the 2017 Assembly exceeded expenses by 16,464 Euros.

### DIAKONIA World Federation 2017 Income and Expenditures

Income (in Euros)	
Member fees	35.482
Interest	71
Gifts	1.107
Total	<u>36.660</u>
Expenditures	
Executive Committee	23.907
Honorariums	15.000
Professional services	3.449
President's Discretionary Fund	246
Administration	177
Total	<u>42.779</u>
Decrease in General Fund	<u>6.119</u>

**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 DIAKAID

*by Deaconess Caroline Abubakar and Deaconess Ronke Oworu*

The Order of Deaconesses of the Methodist Church Nigeria, received a second DIAKAID grant of € 1,338 to enable it to continue to support the training of its deaconesses in gender development and leadership. The funds were used to pay for both the airfares of two lecturers and the feeding, accommodation and transportation of the four deaconesses who participated in the training.

The training, which was held from January 29 - 31, 2018, at the Methodist Theological Institute in Ogun State, Nigeria; the lecturers were from CORAT Institute Kenya; and the trainees included not only members of the Order of Deaconesses but also members of other denominations.

The training covered the following topics:

- Organizational attributes for leadership
- Gender perspective on development and management
- Time management

The Order of Deaconesses, Methodist Church Nigeria, appreciates the support of DIAKONIA World Federation provided through the DIAKAID grant.

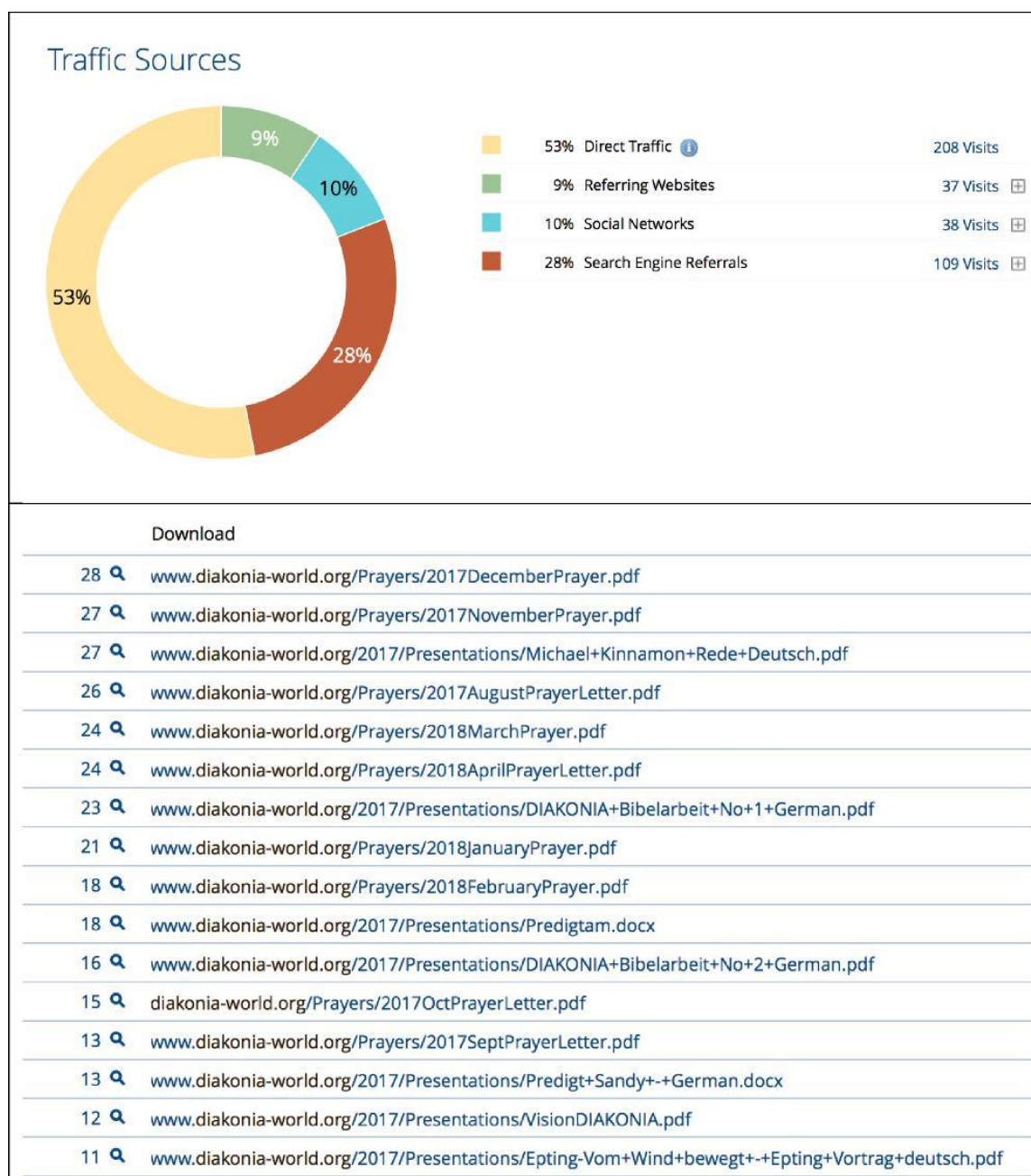


*CORAT-Group Nigeria*

# Report of the Web Manager

*By Diane Kaufmann*

The monthly prayer letter continues to be the most popular **DIAKONIA website** download. Website visitors come primarily from the United States and Germany but also from Korea, Canada, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Australia, and other countries. As is true for any website, in order for the website to remain vibrant, content from many different sources is needed. Send contributions to [webmaster@diakonia-world.org](mailto:webmaster@diakonia-world.org).



The **DIAKONIA World Federation Facebook** group now has 792 members and is a good source for current news from different DIAKONIA communities. Please join the Facebook group, but note that, because it is a public group, you will need to answer several questions to be approved by an Administrator.

# **DIAKONIA-Asia-Pacific (DAP)**

## **Report of the President**

*By Meresiana Kuricava, Regional President  
and Anne Russell-Brighty, Regional Vice President*

### **Personnel**

DAP is comprised of a variety of groups, some with relatively small numbers, from a range of denominations in different countries in the region - Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, Philippines and Australia. It is known that there are 10 candidates training to be UCA deacons and 8 as deaconesses in Fiji, at present.

### **Events/Celebrations**

The Methodist Deaconess Order in Fiji celebrated their 50th Golden anniversary in February 2017 by laying the foundation stone for extra classrooms for the deaconess training college.

The 18th National Biennial Assembly of the National Philippines associations was held on October 23-27, 2017 in Boracay Island, where Rev. Sandy Boyce gave the keynote Address. This was a time of gathering and learning together.



*Assembly Philippines*

A range of activities, lectures, services and celebrations have been held at the

Diakonia Sister house in South Korea in the past year. (see report below)

The Japanese deaconesses held a special Easter gathering for children in the area.

In April this year, DANZA (Diakonia Aetearoa New Zealand Association) met in Christchurch during the national Deacon School which is offered annually as a 5 day intensive in service training opportunity. The theme was 'Ministry in times of change.' Four new deacons were ordained in New Zealand in the last six months, the number of deacons belonging to DANZA has increased and one member of DANZA has attended the Anglican- Roman Catholic Conference on the Diaconate in Canada in May.

The next DUCA (Diakonia Uniting Church in Australia) national gathering will take place in Feb. 2019 in Sydney. The working theme for this conference is "Unnamed sacred places." This will be followed by a 5 day intensive in which candidates join together to participate in formation for diaconal ministry.

The key national event for AADA (Australian Anglican Diaconal Association) has been the biennial National Conference titled, 'Walking Sacraments' which was held in Adelaide in April. Sandy Boyce was the invited speaker at the conference dinner

### **Highlights**

Rev Sandy Boyce, a Uniting Church in Australia deacon, was re-elected as President of World Diakonia at the

World Assembly in Chicago in 2017. A new DAP Executive was appointed – Deaconess Meresiana Kuricava from Fiji as President, Rev Anne Russell-Brighty, (New Zealand) and Rev Christa Megaw, (Australia) were appointed as Co Vice Presidents, with Rev Judy Knowling (Australia) being appointed to the DAP Executive.

In January this year, Sandy Boyce, Meresiana Kuricava, and Judy Knowling met in Darwin for 4 days to begin to plan for the Diakonia World Assembly in Darwin in mid 2021. We are really looking forward to welcoming members of Diakonia around the world to our region in 2021.

A DAP gathering is being planned from 8-12 July, 2019 in Suva, Fiji. The proposed theme is the same as the World Assembly 'Shaken by the Wind.'

### **New members in your Region**

While we know there are deaconesses in West Papua, we have not been able to make contact with them as yet. There are also Deacons/Deaconesses in the Presbyterian Church in Vanuatu, but this is also a work in progress in clarifying the nature of the diaconal ministry.

### **DIAKAID**

In 2016 DIAKAID funding was granted to Fiji and also to the Philippines (DiakPhils). No further funding has been given. It will be important for the DAP Executive Committee to have clarity around the process including annual reporting in order to support and advise associations who may wish to apply for funding.

### **Issues/Concerns/ Impediments/Challenges**

*AADA:* Many Dioceses across Australia have dwindling numbers of Deacons and the Diaconate is seen as a transitional order and not a vocational order. There are a variety of reasons for this including

- Lack of differentiated training
- The imperative to fill vacancies in parishes (with priests)

Deacons are largely non-stipended but are required to complete the same amount of study and training as those who are called to the priesthood and then face the reality of a non-paying position.

*Fiji:* the progress in building the classrooms has been delayed because payment of contributions is behind schedule and some of the deaconesses have outstanding fees.

*DUCA:* While many deacons, especially older members, are connected to the association, others are not. This is in part because their focus is on their diaconal ministry rather than the value of the association. This latter group do not see the need for paying fees to DUCA, even though the fees are kept low. This means that DUCA funds are rapidly declining. Many deacons working in congregations find that the demands of congregational life can compete with the time needed to focus on diaconal work.

### **Publicity**

Most of the associations have websites and Facebook pages. The DAP blog-site was a temporary arrangement in 2009 and needs to be updated to a website that is easily maintained.





*Former DIAKONIA World President Chita Framo*

### **The role and future of diaconal ministry agents**

Several deacons in DUCA continue to be ordained each year around Australia. There have been 2 Aboriginal people ordained as deacons in the Uniting Church in Australia in recent years. As the number of people has decreased in congregations and budgets have become tighter, the number of placements for deacons has decreased – but people are still called to exercise this ministry wherever they are placed.

### **Academic/Conferences**

Rev Deacon Michelle Cook (DUCA) is undertaking a PhD exploring the following: What does acknowledging first and second peoples mean for our understanding of what it means to be church? How does our understanding of what it means to be church get critiqued by the actual existence of first peoples and second peoples? How do people in congregations actually develop their own understandings of what it means to be part of a church which says it is a church of First peoples and second peoples - a church that is committed to covenant relationship

with First peoples and claims itself to be a multicultural church?

Rev Deacon Sandy Boyce (DUCA) is working on a Doctorate of Ministry thesis exploring the experience of people returning from short term placements and exposure visits (less than a year and as little as a week) with partner churches, and how the 'sending' churches might be enriched if they took seriously the experience of the returnees and through them develop CQ (cultural intelligence) that is so necessary in a contemporary multi/inter-cultural and multi-faith context, and learn from the lived experience of the partner churches including theological reflection.

Deaconess Sabitha Swaraj (Methodist Church in India) has completed a Masters of Divinity in the USA and has admission for a Doctorate of Ministry program. Currently she is seeking funding as the program does not have a scholarship.

Rev Deacon Denise Champion (first Aboriginal woman ordained in the Uniting Church) travelled to Canada in July 2017 with 7 Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (Congress) leaders, as part of the Moderator of the United Church of Canada (UCC) Rev Jordan Cantwell's Reconciliation Dialogue. The purpose of the trip was to take a look at the way another Church had worked through sovereignty and treaty discussions with its First Peoples, to better inform the conversation in the Uniting Church. (Treaty and sovereignty will be proposals at the Uniting Church triennial Assembly in July 2018). The group met students at the UCC's Native Ministries Consortium Summer School in Vancouver and visited the Vancouver School of Theology. They heard many survivor stories from Canada's infamous residential schools, with many similarities to Abo-

original Stolen Generations. The Congress group hosted a reciprocal visit of UCC friends in March 2018.

#### **Other**

We hope and pray that communication between DAP groups and with DOTAC and DRAE will continue to improve.



## Annual Letter of the Korean Deaconesses 2017

By Sr. Ree Young Sook (Abbess), *Diakonia Sisterhood in Korea*



A voice  
of one  
calling  
in the  
wilderness,  
'pre-

pared the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low; the crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.' (Isa 40:3-5)

As it is written in Isaiah the prophet: 'I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way – a voice of one calling in the wilderness, "Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him." 'And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. (Mk 1:2-4) 'A voice is calling.'

So there was a voice and the voice carried a message. There was, of course, a person behind this voice: John the Baptist. But the message he was carrying overshadowed the messenger. John was there to prepare the way of the One who would come after him; One the straps of whose sandals John regraded himself as not worthy to stoop down and untie. (Mk 1:7) That message, for John, was much more important than himself. When people asked John who he was, his reply also drew attention to the message: "I am the voice in the wilderness, to prepare the way for the Lord" (Jn 1:23)

In our life, we tend to focus on the messenger than the message. Our attitude to a statement is often affected by our relationship with the person who is making the statement. Sometimes,

we even brush aside a perfectly valid point just because we want to show distance to the person making the point. What if we could listen to the words without being affected by the circumstances or even the person carrying the words? Then the words will carry its meaning throughout the space and time. Shouldn't this be the true nature of the Words of God?

Jesus came to this world and in that moment, the Word that was in the beginning became flesh and came to live among us. If we cherish the Words of Jesus because of the miracles of Jesus, we are somewhat missing the point. The Word was there before the coming of Jesus and even when the embodiment of the word was gone, Jesus is with us through the words he has spoken. In this way, the Holy Spirit comes to us across time and space.



There are so many messages around us. If we could hear these messages, without being influenced by the messengers, then we are truly hearing the messages. John the Baptist said: "I must become less and he must become greater". When we reduce ourselves, empty ourselves and kill ourselves, then the Word will live in us. The eternal world of the Spirit where there is no 'you' and 'me' but the Word.

We pray that we can continue and strive to reduce ourselves so that the Word becomes greater and greater until that is the only significant thing in this world. On this day of Christmas,



we reflect and see how the Word has been with us in the year 2017.

### **Diakonia Mother Centre in 2017**

1st to 5th January, we started the year 2017 with a group retreat, away from the daily works, we regained spiritual well-being through silent mediation of the Words of our Lord. After this we had similar retreats every month to empower our work of serving others through our own spiritual riches.

8<sup>th</sup> to 10th February, we held general meeting of the sisterhood, to share the works of the past year in our numerous branches and planned for the newly started year.

30th April to 1st May, we held a celebration for 37th anniversary of Diakonia Sisterhood in Korea as well as, 14th anniversary of Diakonia Family Community, at Danbi Church, a church we had established as the central hub of the Family Community. There were much joy in sharing, meditation, and life, as well as food and dances.

14th April, about 30 Christians from nearby churches came to our Mother Centre in Mokpo to participate in our Good Friday service. We together walked the Way to the Cross that we had prepared in the hills behind our centre, meditating on the meaning of Christ's suffering. We also held Easter, Thanks Giving and Christmas services with the elderly people in our Centre for Elderly. We all had joyful time full of the presence of the Lord. Thank God, Immanuel!



25th to 26th April, we invited Prof. Beom-Seong Lee of Diakonia Practice Theology Seminary and held a lecture series on missionary works and history of Diakonia. This also gave us a

chance to get together in deep reflection of our place in God's work.

28th June to 3rd July, two sisters, Abbess Young-sook Ree and Rev. Jong-sook Ro, went to Chicago and took part in the 22nd General Assembly of the World Diakonia Federation.



Four hundred people from twenty-eight countries joined together under the theme of "Shaken by the Wind" in a festival of lectures, bible study, group discussion, prayer and sharing. It was an occasion that strengthened our sense of solidarity in Diakonia and share the joy of community.

15th October, there was a commemoration lectures on the last Prof. Byoung-moo Ahn, who was a renowned theologian who was material in making Diakonia Sisterhood possible in Korea.



21st October, we celebrated 100th birthday of the mother of the Sisterhood, Ms. Seong-sook, Yuh.

### **Diakonia Family Community in 2017**

Danbi Family Community in Cheon-An has been running day care centre for the elderly in the area. Seventeen elderly people are being looked after in a facility of about 200 m2, and we are building a new facility to provide them a family house for all the elderly people to live together.

Jupyeong Family Community in Jin-An has built four green houses to grow blueberries and saw much harvest.



We have been practising organic farming in the past three years and all the efforts finally came to fruition. We also have a mission for the people with severe disability run by Rev. Ho-il Song



in this community and the people of this mission visited Che-ju Island, helping each other walk and feel, experiencing the beauty of the island through the ears and eyes of each other.



27th to 28th October, the Family Communities had a general meeting. 31 people from family community, Sisterhood and other concerned parties came together to share their experiences and encourage each other. On the 28th we held a service together confirming 9 more members into the Family Community. To God be the glory through the lives of these precious members in their own places of work.



8th to 9th, and 15th to 16th December. We held an intensive training on the theme of the Bible and history with members of Diakonia Family Communities as well as some interested individuals. It was held at the office of the Diakonia Social Welfare Foundation led by Prof. Ju-min Hong.

### Visits and External Activities in 2017

3rd March, we participated in the World Prayer Day meeting in Yon-dong Church, Mokpo;



14th to 15th August, we took part in the Korean national community federation meeting; and 4th to 7th October, we joined the Beautiful Village Community Festival, confirming our solidarity with other similar movements in Korea



5th to 6th June, eight students and professors of Korea Diakonia University paid a visit; 7th to 9th September, nine students from Diakonia Practice Theology Seminary paid a visit; and 20th to 21st November, four sisters from Jesus Seminary came to us sharing experiences in spirituality and the ideas for plans for the sisters.





8th to 9th March, Rev. Solomon Benjamin and Frau Kerstin Neumann, of EMS Germany, in East Asia division came to visit us together with a missionary stationed in Korea, Ms. Karina Schumacher.

**Korea Diakonia Welfare Foundation in 2017, Diakonia Elderly Home:** Diakonia Elderly Home has been recognised as the model facility for long term care by Gwang-Ju Provincial government and was awarded a special award of thanks. Two sisters, thirty-eight workers work here tirelessly to provide best care for the sixty elderly people. They offer various programs, including, art, singing, pottery classes, smile therapy, game therapy and birthday parties.

### **Home Welfare Project**

We have provided material support on new year, mid-autumn festival and in April and December as in the previous years. This project targets marginalized families such as grandparents/grandchildren families, single-parent families, refugees from North Korea and multi-cultural families. We visited eleven such families in the summer but there are still many more families that we need to reach out in the neighbourhood. Study-helper program for the North Korean refugees and multicultural families is making an exemplary progress. Fifteen student volunteers are in constant contact with seven students from our target families and are making much impact through their diligence and sincerity.

### **Scholarship Project**

All together thirty students - ten from North Korean refugee families and twenty students from other families under our Household Project – received scholarship this year. Eight of them are expected to graduate after this year. Some of them got admitted into universities and some found jobs.

### **Hospice Service**

This year, we focused on improving health of the people under this service. Mr. Kim, who had been diagnosed of lung cancer continue to receive treatment but the cancer has spread to other places. Although he does not suffer from much pain and the treatment is going smooth without any noticeable side-effects but progress is very slow. Mr. Koh, who had been diagnosed of colon cancer, has shown much progress and now is able to live a normal life. The others did not show any major breakdown in health all throughout the year. Thank God and thank our supporters of prayer.



God came to us as the embodiment of the Word, and he left his Words with us. As we strive to acknowledge the work of his Words through our projects, we also thank our supporters who remember in their prayers.



## Sad News



Sister Mitsu Yamaura was born on January 9, 1919, and was baptized on February 24 of that year. She became a deaconess on June 27, 1954. She served Jesus' people as a nurse and a

missionary in both a home for elders and a disabled children's home.

When she was 90 years old, she moved to the home for elders and lived with her younger sister there for a few years. She died peacefully in October 13, 2018, at 99 years. Looking back over her life as a deaconess, she said, "I was always happy."

Sister Mitsu Yamaura was the last remaining sister from the Hamamatsu Deaconess Motherhouse.

## Founding of Hamamatsu Deaconess Motherhouse

*By Sister Rieko Mochizuki, Motherhouse Bethel, Japan*

Tamotsu Hasegawa, a Christian, founder of the social welfare organization SEIREI Hoyoen, had learned in a film about German deaconesses. Then, after World War II, Pastor P. G. Meller, chief of the Bremen district in Germany, visited Japan. While there, he became deeply concerned that many orphans had no place to live. He told Mr. Hasegawa that, if Mr. Hasegawa thought it would be helpful, deaconesses could be sent to Japan. Mr. Hasegawa welcomed the presence of deaconesses. So, in November 1953, five German deaconesses from different motherhouses arrived in Japan to work as nurses at SEIREI Hoyoen.

Mitsu Yamaura, a nurse, had cared for tuberculous patients at SEIREI Hoyoen for eight years and had learned about deaconesses from Mr. Hasegawa. She and her colleague Hifumi Ichikawa decided that they wanted to be deaconesses. They believed that Jesus was calling them to do so.



Thus, with the support of the German deaconesses, on June 27, 1954, the Hamamatsu Deaconess Motherhouse was founded. Sister Hanni Wolff, a German deaconess, working with the Japanese deaconesses started the first home for bedridden elderly people in Japan.

# DIAKONIA of the Americas and Caribbean (DOTAC)

## Report of the President

*By Rev. Ted Dodd, Regional President*

### Central Committee News

On June 19th, 2018, Diaconal Minister Ted Dodd was elected President of DOTAC (DIAKONIA of the Americas and the Caribbean). Ted has been, and will continue, representing DUCC (DIAKONIA of The United Church of Canada) on the Central Committee.



*Ted Dodd and Jan Cherry*

The reason for the change relates to DOTAC by-laws. These rules recognize associations not individuals, and only individuals who are part of DIAKONIA World Federation associations are eligible to stand as officers of DOTAC. In January 2017, Jan's denominational group, the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America), decided to close the rosters of diaconal ministers, deaconesses and associates in ministry, and create a new single roster of Ministers of Word and Service, called deacons.

The deacons of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America met on October 14, 2018. They have prepared founding documents for an organization with the title "ELCA Deacons for ecumenical engagement affinity group" and they will submit application to join

DOTAC when the Central Committee meets in November.

### World Assembly in Chicago

DOTAC was asked to host the DIAKONIA World Assembly in Chicago in 2017. Many members associations and communities were involved in local arrangements and programming.



*Diane Marten, Ted Dodd, Noreen Stevens,  
Lisa Polito*

### DOTAC Assembly in Vancouver

The next gathering of DOTAC (Dia-konia of the Americas and Caribbean) will be held in Vancouver, August 14-20, 2019. The gathering will lift up the theme: "Respecting Covenant - Risking the Journey toward Reconciliation" and examine it through the lenses of indigeneity, creation and global migration.



*DOTAC 2019 logo +dove+and+smudge+and+bowl*



The logo was created by indigenous artist, Darlene Gait and can be interpreted in various ways. The smudging bowl is identified with indigenous ceremonies in many cultures, and the dove is a symbol of the Holy Spirit for Christians. Pictured together, they capture our hopes for reconciliation and right relation. And perhaps, the pen in the beak of the dove hints at a verse in Jeremiah:

"But this is the covenant that I will make with my people after those days, says God: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

Maybe the pen points to a day when covenants will be honoured and respected and written on our hearts."

**Member Organizations:** Each of our member organizations embody a unique culture and expression of diakonia. Deaconesses, deacons, diaconal ministers, and home missionaries are included within the ranks of these communities. Many of these communities are undergoing structural and spiritual changes. Denominationally, three of the communities are rooted in Methodism, two Anglicanism, five Lutheranism, one Presbyterianism, and then there is a hybrid ecclesial lineage in The United Church of Canada. Six of the communities are largely from the United States (but have individuals working in other areas of the world); four claim Canadian roots; one hails from Brazil and one organization represents the many islands of the Caribbean.

**Association of Anglican Deacons in Canada:** Iona Report – An important document, entitled The Iona Report: The Diaconate in The Anglican Church of Canada, has been revised and published. In this report, theological rationales' and competencies for the diaconate have been articulated. A commit-

tee, also, has been formed to implement the recommendations of the report.



*AADC Group*

**Conference** – In July, 2017, the AADC's triennial conference was held in Victoria, British Columbia. The theme centred around the declaration: "The Light of Christ Shines." Speakers and workshops dealt with issues of Poverty, Homelessness, Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and the Environment

**Changing of the Guard** – After serving for many years, the founding members still on the Board elected to retire in 2017.

#### **Association for Episcopal Deacons:**

**Youth** – AED wants to lower barriers to interest young people in diaconal vocations. They are implementing strategies to further this aim.



*AED with banner*

**Resources** – The AED has proactively encouraged the writing and sharing of diaconal literature and scholar-



ship. Their website and quarterly newsletter offer rich and stimulating thinking about the diaconate.

**Deaconess Community of the ELCA:** Prophetic Witness Sisters are involved in actions for social justice including Ecumenical Advocacy Days, Anti-human trafficking, immigration, and the Farm Bill. The community participates in shareholder advocacy as they use their financial assets to promote gender equity and reduce carbon footprints in large corporations.

Health Study Tour – September 30-October 7, 2017, a delegation from Kaiserswerth General Conference joined Sisters in New York City to experience and examine the US healthcare systems.



*ELCA Deaconess Community Chicago 2017*

Mission Support Grants -- Since 2004, the community has awarded over 2 million dollars to mission projects from Russia to Romania.

**Roster of Word and Service – ELCA**  
One Roster – This group's roster was closed when the ELCA moved to unify Diaconal Ministers, Deaconesses and Associates in Ministry into one roster of Ministers of Word and Service, with the title of Deacon. As of January, 2018, approximately 1,283 people are now on this unified Word and Service Roster.



**Lutheran Diaconal Association:** The recently re-named Lutheran Diaconal Association comprises the women of the Lutheran Deaconess Conference and the men of the Community of Lutheran Deacons.

Self-Care Retreat – In the winter of 2018, the LDA co-sponsored a cruise with the United Methodist Deaconesses, Home Missioners and Home Missionaries.



*LDA group Self-care Retreat*

Conferences – The 2017 Lutheran Deaconess Conference and the Community of Lutheran Deacons both met for their annual meetings immediately following DIAKONIA at Loyola. In 2018, the LDC conference was July 12-16 in Baltimore, Maryland. The Deacons met July 6-8 in Chicago.

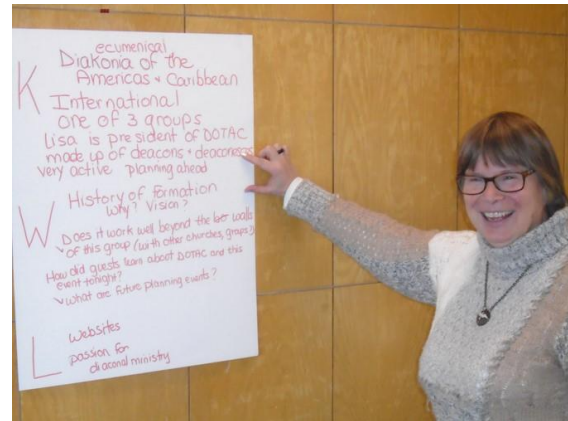
**Igreja Evangélica de Confissão Luterana no Brasil:** Two Communities/One Connection – The Diaconate from the Brazilian church IECLB is represented by two groups.



*Dancing Arlete Prochnow and Dionata Rodrigues de Oliveira*

**The Lutheran Evangelical Sisterhood / Associação Diacônica Luterana:** In November 2016, keys to an apartment, located in the Motherhouse of the Deaconesses, was given to the Diaconal Communion (COD) to be the organization's Headquarters – and to connect the two groups with one another.

**Diaconal Ministers –Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada:** White Paper – The ELCIC has produced a report “Public Ministry in the ELCIC” that promises to enrich discussion about diakonia in the church.



*ELCIC Judy Whaley*

**The Order of Deaconesses and Home Missioners – United Methodist Church:** Consecrations – At the National Gathering of the United Church Women in May, 2018, 24 new deaconesses were consecrated. Consecrations are mandated to take place at a national Church Gathering, so the whole church welcomes in new members.



*UMC Deaconess consecration*

**Recruitment –** After 40 years of the same system, a new, more friendly candidacy/entry process has been put in place. Strategic targeting of groups are organized to help persons discern God's call. Examples:

- in January, an event targeted to the Korean Women's Network in California,
- in November a gathering in Arizona is planned
- hopes are in place for women who are wanting to transfer their deaconess relationship from the Philippines



**United Methodist Deacons and Diaconal Ministers:** Social Action – In response to the resurgence of white supremacy in the United States, many deacons were involved in counter demonstrations and prophetic witness.



*UMC Deacons ordination*

**Wesley Diaconal Community -- Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas:** Concerns – The Caribbean has been hit with a number of hurricanes in recent years: in 2016, Matthew and in 2017, Irma and Maria. Recovery is difficult after so much damage, and many of the elderly are not coping with the loss.



*Wesley MCCA Diaconal Community banner*

### **Presbyterian Church in Canada – Order of Diaconal Ministry**

Gatherings – The Order meets biennially, usually at Crieff Hills Retreat & Conference Centre in Ontario. The last gathering focused on the theme “Joy in Word and Service.” Sessions dealt with issues of church and world: Reconcilia-

tion with Indigenous Persons, Refugee Sponsorship and Support, Parish Nursing and Faith Formation.



*Presbyterian Church in Canada  
Order of Diaconal Ministry*

In 2019, the Order will be hosting a gathering for people in The Presbyterian Church in Canada serving in specialized ministries but who are not members of the Order. The hope is to link arms in ministry and offer an opportunity to gather for prayerful support and the strengthening of relationships...and how to open and welcome these individuals into the Order.

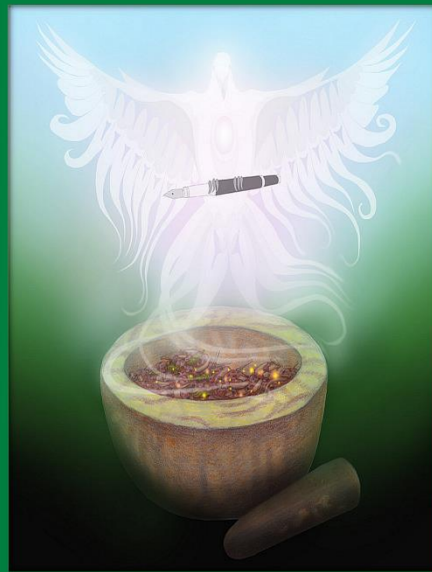
**Diakonia of The United Church of Canada:** In April 2018, DUCC met in Winnipeg and explored the theme “Courageous Risking.” Presentations, site visits and workshops dealt with the issues of restorative justice, social enterprise, reconciliation with indigenous peoples, human rights, and the use of arts in furthering social justice.



*Winnipeg gathering of DUCCs*

*DIAKONIA of the Americas and Caribbean Conference – August 14-20, 2019*

*Registration will open November 15<sup>th</sup>*



Original Art – Unknown Girl 2018

*Respecting Covenant*

*— Risking the Journey of Reconciliation*

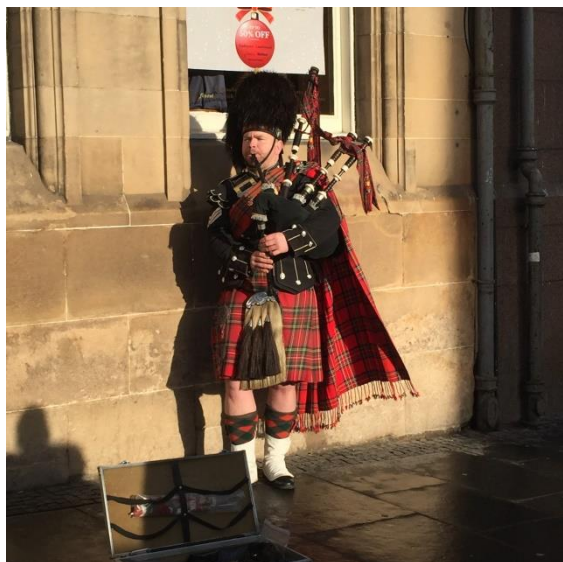


# DIAKONIA-Region-Africa-Europe (DRAE)

## Report of the President

*By Regional President Rev. Marianne Uri Øverland*

**2018 DRAE REGION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING:** The annual meeting of the DRAE Executive Committee was held in Edinburgh, Scotland from January 17- 21, 2018. This was the first meeting of the new DRAE Executive Committee since their election at the 2017 Assembly. Gordon Pen-ykid, DRAE secretary, hosted the meeting.



Besides attending to normal DRAE business, the Committee members also met with the Scottish deacons and participated in their annual meeting; visited Queen Margaret University, the site of the June 2019 DRAE Conference; and met with the Conference planning group. On Sunday, they participated in two worship services: one at Livingstone Village Kirk and another at St. Andrews, Deans.

### DRAE STANDING COMMITTEE

The DRAE Standing Committee (SC) consists of DRAE's president, secretary and treasurer. Normally the Committee does its work by email; however, given the newly-formed Executive Committee and a new secretary, the

SC met in person in Berlin from October 27 - 28, 2017. Besides reviewing what was needed for the handover, the SC spent time on job descriptions, the Constitution and Bylaws, the regional conference and the use of Dropbox.



*DRAE EC members in Edinburgh*

### REPORTS ECUMENICAL MEETINGS

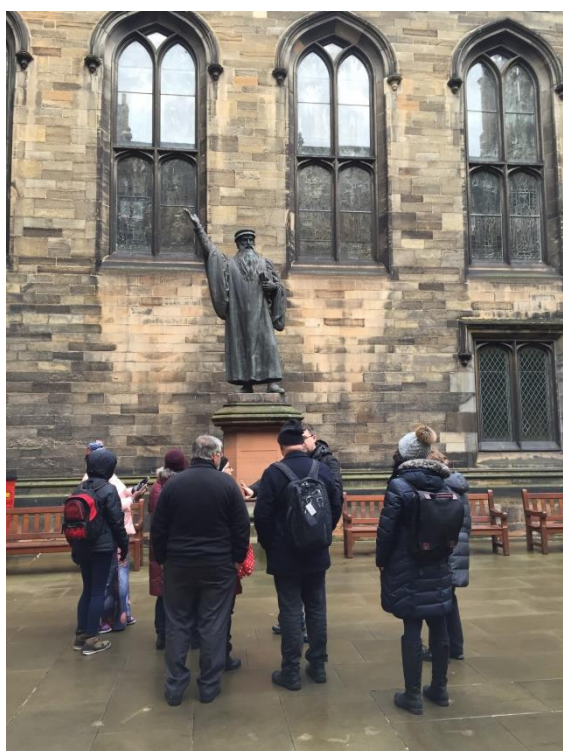
**Eurodiaconia:** DRAE has signed a memorandum of understanding with Eurodiaconia including an agreement to take part in each other's general meetings, that is, the Annual General Meeting (AGM) for Eurodiaconia and the regional conference for DRAE. The 2017 AGM was held in Oslo from June 20 - 22 with the theme Precariousness and Polarisation – the Challenge for Diaconia. Marianne Uri Øverland represented DRAE. The 2018 AGM for 2018 was in Wroclaw, Poland from June 13 - 15.

**World Council of Churches:** DIAKONIA has been an advisor to the World Council of Churches for many years and is invited to its Central Committee meetings. The 2018 Central Committee meeting was June 15 - 21 in Geneva, Switzerland. Marianne Uri Øverland represented DIAKONIA and presented a report.

*ReDi:* DIAKONIA is invited to the International Society for the Research and Study of Diaconia and Christian Social Practice (ReDi) conferences. The seventh bi-annual ReDi Conference was held in Berlin from September 12 - 14, 2018, with the theme Beyond Services – Towards Justice.

**OTHER CONTACTS:** In 2017, no invitations to visit were received from member organizations; however, in 2018, there were two: one in January to Estonia and one in September to South Africa.

On September 27, 2017, Marianne Uri Øverland participated in a celebration in Berlin to bid farewell to Doctor Christine-Ruth Müller, departing director of the Kaiserwerth Association and welcome Pastor Christa Schrauf as new director.



## **CELEBRATIONS, CONFERENCES AND CHANGES IN PERSONNEL:**

The DRAE region is the largest DIAKONIA region. There are many celebrations, conferences and changes in personnel during a year. For an overview, see the full report on DRAE website ([www.drae.diakonia-world.org/en/main/executivemeetings](http://www.drae.diakonia-world.org/en/main/executivemeetings))

## **APPLICATIONS FOR DRAE MEMBERSHIP:**

Applications for membership are being considered for three Anglican Diocesan Orders: the Deacons of Grahamstown Diocese; the Deacons of Pretoria Diocese; and the Deacons of False Bay Diocese. These groups may be encouraged to join the DRAE region rather than individual dioceses.

## **CHALLENGES IN THE REGION**

Many of our member organization continue to address challenges in their own organizations and their environments as well as diakonia as a whole. See full report.

## **PUBLICITY**

There were numerous articles and press releases during 2017. See full report.

## **NEXT MEETINGS:**

*2019 Executive Committee meeting:* The Executive Committee will meet prior to the regional conference. There are not enough resources to meet twice in one year. The Standing Committee will meet in January 2019, the normal time for the Executive Committee meeting.

*2019 Regional Conference:* The regional conference will be held from Wednesday, June 19 to Monday, June 24, 2019, at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh, Scotland.

## Report from ABAJA BA KRISTO, Rubengera, Rwanda

*By Sr. Berthe Mukarurangwa, Prioress "Abaja ba Kristo"*

Dear Friends of Sisterhood Abaja ba Kristo, on behalf of the sisters and all members of the community. I cordially greet you. Your prayers and donations encourage us enormously. Thank you very much.



We are very grateful for the visit of eight friends from Amerongen, who spent two weeks with us. The guests met our sisters; got to know our work; and visited our projects. The meetings between them and the children they sponsor brought great joy to all. Some sponsorship relationships had existed for many years, and finally they were to meet in person. Thanks to their sponsors, many former orphan children are well educated and integrated into society,

A group of former orphan children visited the sisters and expressed their gratitude to the community.



In April, heavy rains destroyed houses, roads and fields. Several people died when their houses collapsed; others drowned in the rising waters. Older people said that such floods had not occurred since 1963.



Other than the heavy rain, we have had joyful times. We welcomed to the community a young woman who has started her probationary year.

Peter Oudshoorn visited Rwanda in the Spring to help the sisters with the bookkeeping for the guest house and the schools as well as preparation of the financial reports. The sisters are grateful for his help and training, so that they can now carry out these tasks themselves.

The kindergarten, which was started in 2017, is going well. There are 115 children in three groups, and parents are happy with their children's progress. Because the school has a good reputation, already there are applications for 2020.





Obstacles confront us. We intend to offer primary school education classes to in addition to kindergarten. Nearby building locations had been promised, but now it turns out that they are inappropriate. We will need to build a school and hope to start doing so in the near future.

Parents are hoping that the sisters can continue to provide their children's education. We pray for donations for this project.

I am writing this letter from Amerongen. I will travel to Germany and then return to Rwanda in July 2018.

## **News from Cameroon – Urgent Prayer Request**

The following is from Sister Esther Herren, Kommunität Diakonissenhaus Riehen, Switzerland, who is a member of the board of the Circle of Friends of Emmanuel Sisters, and who was able to speak by phone with the sisters in Cameroon in early September 2018:

Greetings from Sister Judith, Sister MaryAnn and the other Cameroon sisters, who urgently ask for our prayers at this time.

The situation in the English-speaking provinces of Cameroon, where the sisters live, becomes worse and worse. The government does not grant equal status to English speakers, and for the past two years there have been more strikes and increasingly volatile encounters. Governmental troops have been arresting and even killing large numbers of people, sometimes because of vague suspicions that the people are rebels. Unfortunately, the rebels themselves are also violent. Many people have had to flee into the bush or to stay with relatives. Fear and violence are increasing; food prices are also rising.

These circumstances are a big challenge especially for the center in Akum, where disabled young women and children live. One graduate Juliette had successfully completed her training and opened her own workshop. She only survived because her people carried her and her wheelchair into the bush. Unfortunately, her workshop burned down. Now she is very de-

pressed and lives once more in the center.

The all need strength and the hope which only God can give. Sister MaryAnn, who leads the Center, reports how depressing it is to hear shooting all the time and to never know what will happen next. But, they hold on for the sake of the women and children at the Center. When I phoned, Sister MaryAnn was cradling a baby who had been given to them.

We heard from project Agape, led Sister Judith, that they still try to bring food to groups of people with disabilities in the villages. Recently they distributed medication for people with epilepsy. They are very brave! However, since September 7, the situation in the neighborhood of the community in Bafut has escalated totally.

Sr. Judith found no words to describe the recent violence and horror. People have advised the sisters to flee. The five oldest and most fragile of the sisters, including Sister Judith, found shelter in the monastery of the Benedictines Babete near Bafoussam (in the French-speaking province). The fact that they reached the monastery is a reason to give thanks. They plan to



transfer more sisters if possible. All others have to stay on the premises. It

is highly dangerous to leave the place, there are shootings everywhere

## **VISITING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AT AJUA**

*Report by Sister Judith – June 2018*

The purpose of the visit to Ajua by the Agape Unity team coordinators, the two Reverend Sisters plus a driver was to assist persons with disabilities with their basic needs during difficult times. Adjua and its neighboring quarters of Njimiya and Mundum constitute border villages of Bafut Subdivision. Sister Judith and her team covered the distance over the hills to share the love of the Agape Unity program with disabled persons and their families.



*Beautiful hills and valleys along the road to Ajua on the outskirts of Bafut*

Having estimated and prepared packages of rice, soap, salt, matches and juice for thirty persons with disabilities, we were surprised to meet more than sixty persons with disabilities coming from the three quarters that make up the village. Those who could not walk to the meeting hall were represented by abled relatives. Sister Judith and the coordinators took turns educating people on the causes of disabilities, how to care for persons with disabilities, and the need to follow up treatment for those who are taking drugs. They also provided education on both the needs to educate children with disabilities and to show them love as those children learn and engage them-

selves in various vocations so that they can live with dignity and self-esteem.



*Sister Judith talks to a cross section of the population, and a coordinator - in the blue agape t-shirt - educates a group of people with disabilities.*

It was then time for the people with disabilities to receive their take-home packages. Despite the unexpected greater number of people present, packages that were mean for thirty persons were eventually redistributed to the group of over sixty persons with disabilities.



*Five-kilogram rice bags with buckets, soap, and salt were available to be distributed to persons with disabilities.*

At the end of the day with words of thank you and with smiles in their faces, the beneficiaries had a group picture with Sister Judith and expressed their desire for Sister to hold a similar program in Adeumunkong, a village whose people were not visited very often.



*Village beneficiaries pictured with Sr. Judith.*

It was a very successful day for Sister Judith and her team.



## **95th Anniversary of the “Eben-Ezer” Deaconess Motherhouse in Dziegielów (Poland)**

*By Reverend Marek Londzin, Director*

In September 2018 we celebrated the 95th anniversary of the “Eben-Ezer” Deaconess Motherhouse in Dziegielów.

The motherhouse was founded in 1923 by Pastor Karol Kulisz (Born in Dziegielów on June 12th 1873). After World War I he became known as a preacher, as the leader of the pietist awakening movement, as a social activist and as a patriarch. Even as a vicar in Ligołta Kameralna (today in the Czech Republic) the “Betesda” Senior and Nursing Home.

Most of all he was very observant and his heart was sensitive to the misery which appeared in the aftermath of the war. Pastor Kulisz founded the “Eben-Ezer” Charity Work for the abandoned and homeless children as well as for the disabled and the unemployed.

This is what we would like to emphasize in a very special way today when Poland celebrates the centennial of its independence. His greatest wish was to be able to build and to work in a free country. He never asked about confession or ethnicity; he was only interested in the person’s needs. At the time that the charity was founded, his helpers were women committed in the community, as well as young girls who

were then formed to be deaconesses. The beginning was very difficult. There was absolutely no support except one’s faith.

With time, the number of deaconesses increased and they took up new tasks as hospital nurses and chaplains in the hospitals of Cieszyn and Bystra, as well as in kindergartens and parishes.



We started our 95th anniversary celebration on Saturday, September 15th with the concert of a chamber orchestra and the ECHO choir from the Czech Republic. This was a good introduction for the main celebration which took place on Sunday, September 16th. For work-related reasons, it was impossible for the Voivodeship Council to participate in the celebrations on Sunday; therefore, their words of greeting were presented on Saturday during the concert. At 10:00 a.m.

on Sunday, the main Divine Service began with a solemn procession of sisters, pastors and bishops. The service was presided over by Reverend Marek Londzin (Director) accompanied by Reverend Emil Gajdacz (Superior Emeritus) and Reverend Tymoteusz Bujok. The very moving sermon was delivered by Bishop Adrian Korczago of the Diocese of Cieszyn who is also President of the Deaconess House's Board of Trustees.

The Divine Service was attended by many staff members of "Emmaus" senior citizen's home and by residents in wheelchairs. The residents, together with the staff, also presented a play about the 95th anniversary of "Eben-Ezer". It touched the sisters and everyone present very deeply.

The motherhouse received numerous greetings on the occasion. Bishop Ryszard Bogusz (President of Diakonie Poland) spoke on behalf of his organization. Mayor Krzysztof thanked the sisters and all the staff for their service and prayers and wished God's blessing upon the whole work. Sylwia Cieslar, Vice-President of the Silesian Provincial Parliament, handed the

"Eben-Ezer" Motherhouse the gold medal of merit of the Voivodeship of Silesia.

The same gold medal of merit was also awarded individually to Sr. Ewa Cieslar (Superior) and Sr. Lidia Gottschalk (Superior Emerita).

The music was provided by the church choir conducted by Jean Claude Hauptmann.

After the Divine Service, the participants were invited to an open-air lunch near the church. In the afternoon, while having coffee and cakes on a sunny and very warm day, there was time for many good conversations and sharing of memories.

Superior Sr. Ewa Cieslar and Director Reverend Marek Londzin would like to thank, on "Eben-Ezer"'s behalf all those who sent or gave us their greetings and prayers.

The greatest joy in this jubilee event was the presence of our home residents with those who care for them. It was the first time that such a thing was possible in this way. Praise to God. May He repay all those present with his blessing!





# **DRAE 2019: SCOTLAND**



The Diaconate of the Church of Scotland looks forward to welcoming you to the 25th anniversary assembly of DRAE.

**Venue:** EDINBURGH, QUEEN MARGARET UNIVERSITY

**Date:** 19 JUNE – 24 JUNE 2019

**Theme:** “FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS” (Esther 4:14)

**Speaker:** JOHN BELL



**Registration is open. Please check the website [www.drae.diakonia-world.org](http://www.drae.diakonia-world.org)**



## ECUMENICAL RELATIONS

### Gerald DuPont from USA New President of the IDC

<http://diaconia-idz.org/blog/studienkonferenz/>

Since the founding of the International Diaconal Center for First Non-Europeans Gerald DuPont, deacon from Galveston-Houston, Texas/USA, is the new president of the International Diaconate Center (IDC), founded in 1965. DuPont replaces the German Klaus Kießling, who had not run for twelve years in the vice and presidential office. With DuPont, a non-European leader is in the lead for the first time in the history of the IDC. Patron of the IDC is Bishop Gebhard Fürst, seat of the management Rottenburg am Neckar.



The members of the IDC elected the new board, which then appointed the new president on Sunday in Lourdes as part of their study conference "Healing and healing in a diaconal church". DuPont was for many years Chairman of the NADD, North American Association for the Diaconate. In addition, he has, unique in the world, a seat in the US Bishops Conference. The newly elected board appointed IDC Vice President Gilbert de Lima (India) and Mark Woods (UK). Montserrat Martinez (Spain) represents the wives of the deacons on the board. Managing Di-

rector of the IDC remains Stefan Sander (Osnabrück / Rottenburg).



from left: Montserrat Martinez, Spain; Gerald DuPont, USA; Marie Françoise Maincent-Hanquez, France; Erik Thouet, Germany; Gilbert de Lima, India; Nick Kerr, Australia; Charles Dube, Zimbabwe; Edwin Ng, Hong Kong; Martin Brunner-Artho, Switzerland; Terttu Pohjolainen, Finland; Alberto Magno Carvalho de Melo, Brazil; César Braga de Paula, Colombia; Benas Ulevičius, Lithuania; Miguel Ángel Ortiz Corrales, Cuba; Stefan Sander, Germany.

Members of IDC Miguel Ángel Ortiz Corrales (Cuba), Charles Dube (Zimbabwe), Martin Brunner-Artho (Switzerland) and Terttu Pohjolainen (Finland) confirmed as delegates. New delegates elected were Benas Ulevičius (Lithuania), Marie-Françoise Maincent-Hanquez (France), Nick Kerr (Australia), Erik Thouet (Germany), Edwin Ng (China) and Alberto Magno Carvalho de Melo (Brazil). The advisers appointed were Ferenc Molnar (Hungary) and César Braga de Paula as representatives of the Latin American Episcopal Conference (CELAM).