



DIACON NEWS

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These past two years have been a time of growth and transition in our diaconal community. Last April 15-18 forty diaconal ministers gathered at the Savior Pastoral Center in Kansas City for our fourth conference under the theme "Splashed With Promise." If you did not receive minutes from that conference and would like a copy, email Kris Perry at krisp@visi.com and a copy will be sent to you.

At the last conference a new leadership team was elected along with three working teams: **Communications Team**, chaired by Karen White, responsible for developing rapid communication for emergency needs, developing a diaconal ministry website, sending out semi-annual newsletters, increasing visibility of diaconal ministry in our synods, seminaries, candidacy committees and churchwide, and gathering items for our archives. **Candidate Support Team**, chaired by Terry Moore, is responsible for the support of candidates who are approved awaiting call and helping them assimilate into the consecrated community, support of all candidates who have attended DMFE prior to their approval, developing a mentor program for candidates attending their first DMFE, and developing a welcome and integration packet/process for newly consecrated diaconal ministers. **Conference Planning Team**, chaired by Patricia Gerber, is responsible for planning and implementing the next diaconal ministry conference (see page 4 for further information).

The community also agreed to assess yearly dues of \$25 to help offset the cost of administration expenses such as this newsletter as well as to join two diaconal associations, DOTAC (Diakonia of the Americas and Caribbean) and World Federation.

(continued on page 4)

If you received this newsletter via snail mail it is because a) I do not have a current email address for you or b) your email is not permitting mail from my address to be delivered to your inbox. In order to maximize the DM treasury, we would prefer to send correspondence via email. Please contact Kris at krisp@visi.com with your current and preferred email address as well as your ideas, concerns, joys, and corrections. Thank you!

NEWS FROM NORWAY

The upcoming LWF Consultation on Diaconal Ministry

By Nancy Gable

October 14, 2004

It was an all too brief a trip to Oslo, Norway, last week for my Lutheran World Federation (LWF) core group meeting. Three of us trickled through the Oslo airport to the Diakonhjemmet in northwest Oslo for a three day meeting. Our host, Kjell Nordstokke, welcomed us to *Det Norske Diakonhjem, Diakonhjemmet Hospital and College* (<http://www.diakonhjemmet.no>).



Let me introduce you to the work group: **Reinhard Boettcher** (Study Secretary for Theology and the Church, Department for Theology and Studies, of the Lutheran World Federa-

tion) guided the discussions. Reinhard, a pastor, holds a Ph. D. in Systematic Theology and has served the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany in parishes and the mission field. He worked closely with the Diakonie School in Bavaria, teaching there for at least 10 years. Each interaction during our meeting demonstrated his commitment to diaconal ministry as a particular, public, and recognized ministry in the Lutheran churches.

Rebecca Sangeetha David, graduate theology student in London, is a native of the Tamil region of India and a member of the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church. A graduate of the United Theological College in Bangalore, India, with a specialization in New Testament, Rebecca hopes to serve the church as a pastor and teacher.

Kjell Nordstokke, Director and Doctor of the Theology Department at Det Norske Diakonhjen, Diakonhjemmet Hospital and College, is a pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Norway. A widely known author and presenter on the centrality of diakonia and diaconal ministers in the Lutheran church, he is instrumental in fostering a growing awareness of the role of diaconal ministers in the Church of Norway. In April 2005, Kjell becomes the Director for Mission and Development in LWF. (If you look closely at Kjell in this photo you'll notice that he is wearing

an LTSG sweater!). As Kjell and I compared resistance towards persons serving in diaconal ministry in our denominations, he noted that many times he hears words like, "These people will take away the diakonia of the laity." Sound familiar? His response is this: "Show me empirical data that supports this. Then I might agree with you." There is, in Swedish and Norwegian, empirical data to support the increase of the laity's diakonia due to the involvement of diaconal ministers – too bad it isn't yet translated into English!

We gathered to plan an "International Consultation on Diaconal Ministry in Lutheran Churches". The consultation will be held in early November, 2005 in San Paulo, Brazil. Each presiding bishop of the LWF member churches will be asked to nominate two persons to attend the consultation. The core group will need to select the roughly 25 persons who will come to the consultation. The goal is to have a good mixture of folk from the eight LWF regions (Africa, Asia, Central Eastern Europe, Central Western Europe, Nordic Countries, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America) and a mixture of persons practicing diaconal ministry and those responsible for preparing diaconal ministers. Funding issues prevent us from inviting more participants.

For those of you who did not read the "Statement of Need" for the program, the operating principle is that many (perhaps all) LWF member churches claim to hold the role of diakonia in the church in high regard. Yet most of these churches, and the presbyters serving in them, are resistant to embrace people serving as diaconal ministers. Early in our conversation we discussed whether the purpose of the consultation was to prove that diaconal ministers had a rightful space in ministry.

For good or ill, I suggested that it is pointless to strive to prove that to doubters who may not be open to hearing the "proof". As the diaconal minister in the core group, I expressed the hope that hearing how we deal with crunch points in ministry will equip us to be more articulate with the role of diaconal ministers throughout the LWF member churches. Perhaps I was being selfish when I stated that I simply get tired of trying to prove the need for my diaconal existence!

Report to the Community

October 16, 2004

A Fresh Look at Call Processes in ELCA

by Sue Setzer

In our planning, we decided to focus on three crunch points, or strategic issues, faced by diaconal ministers. Each day of the consultation will be dedicated to a particular crunch point. Following morning worship, each morning will feature a presentation of a case study (by a diaconal minister), then a theological presentation on the intersection of the crunch point and Lutheran theology, followed by prepared dialog between the case study presenter and a diaconal minister from another member LWF region.



Intertwined with this will be opportunities for questions of clarification and statements of other's experiences. Each afternoon, following lunch and time for siesta, smaller groups will discuss the topic and how this is/is not experienced in their practice. Guiding questions will be provided for these discussions as what results from this time will be shared later in the afternoon in a plenary discussion. This information will also be written and produced in an LWF document. Evenings will be devoted to hearing how different LWF member church bodies prepare diaconal ministers.



Two observers will be invited to watch and follow the consultation's action and, in turn, summarize this for the participants and for the LWF printed document.

It was very exhilarating to work with a group that holds diversity in presenters as a value for presentations and activities. There was a strong commitment to the representation of women/men, clergy/diaconal ministers, north/south/east/west member churches as we developed the list of participants and presenters. Day One the group will be in a diaconal center in San Paulo and the presenters will be from Latin America region (most likely from Brazil). Day Two presenters will represent the North American and European regions and Day Three will utilize representatives from the Asian region.

Our goal is to embody the richness of this diversity as participants are selected.

The diversity in call process approaches throughout the ELCA has precipitated a churchwide study. Responding to a memorial from the Arkansas/Oklahoma Synod Assembly, the Department for Synodical Relations and the Division for Ministry received a grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans to study current call processes and provide guidance for synods, congregations, institutions, agencies, and rostered leaders.

The first meeting of the newly appointed Call Process Review Task Force met September 22, 2004, in Chicago to define goals and determine how to work together through 2005. Task Force consultant Roy Oswald helped shape the focus of the review as he presented insights from the recently published *Beginning Ministry Together: The Alban Handbook for Clergy Transitions* that he authored with James Heath and Ann Heath.

While uniformity among synods and other calling entities is unlikely, the Task Force agreed to research current processes to identify norms, strengths, and best practices. Principles underlying call processes suggested for rostered leaders will be grounded in the biblical and theological foundation presented in the *Together for Ministry: The Study of Ministry* adopted by the churchwide assembly in 1993. Workgroups will articulate the purpose and understanding of call, then will develop a handbook with guidelines, a national mobility database, and new forms for rostered leaders as well as for congregations, agencies, and institutions. Particular attention will be given to the distinctive needs of rostered lay leaders and to those called to settings other than congregations.

Task Force members include Richard Bruesehoff, Julius Carroll, David Daubert, Kathy Gerking, Bishop Marie Jerge, Marcia Johnson, Stacy Kitahata, Marilyn McCann-Smith, Stan Meyer, Jan Nesse, Kent Peterson, Randall Schlect, Sue Setzer, Martin Smith, Noreen Stevens, Maxine Washington, and Roy Oswald as Consultant. The Diaconal Ministry Community Lead-

ership Team submitted nominations, as did other church leaders.



Sue Setzer invites diaconal ministers to contact her at suesetzer@bellsouth.net with stories of effective call processes and with suggestions on how to meet the call process needs for varieties of calls and settings. Task Force meetings are scheduled for April 13 – 15 and November 9- 11, 2005.

(continued from front page)

The current Leadership Team has now held three conference calls and each working team has had one call to begin working on their goals and objectives this next year.

Our community are now official members of DOTAC and World Federation, and Beth Barkhau has been asked to be our representative to both organizations. She will travel in February or March to Brazil for the next meeting of DOTAC. Margy Schmitt Ajer will serve as our representative to NAAD (North American Association of the Diaconate) and will attend their upcoming meeting in Chicago. Please keep both in prayer for safe travel and good communication.

We have also decided to open our CDMTALK through Ecunet to all those candidates who are Approved, Awaiting Call.

The DMFE in Gettysburg this past July gathered together 44 new candidates. Prayer mentors from our community wrote notes to these participants and the two weeks were most rewarding and energizing. One of our new candidates, Ed Broestl, has volunteered to work with our Teams to design and implement the new diaconal ministry website, which will be accessible through the ELCA website, hopefully in January or February, 2005.

For those who have not already done so, we encourage you to use the ELCA on-line resource People and Places to submit your mobility papers.

The Leadership Team will meet in Chicago next April with a number of individuals, including Bishop Mark Hanson. If you have an item that you would like discussed with the LT, or if you have any additions or corrections to this newsletter, please contact Kris Perry via email at krisp@visi.com. If you have not already done so, please send in your Directory Update Form and a photo so that a new pictorial directory can be sent out soon.

Articles for future newsletters can be sent to Karen White at dmkarenwhite@peacegahanna.org.

We look forward to serving the community and hope to see you at our next conference. Blessings on your ministry!
Kris Perry, LT Chair

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

**Diaconal Ministry Conference
October 13-16, 2005**

**Simpsonwood Conference and Retreat Center
Atlanta, Georgia
www.simpsonwood.org**

You won't want to miss the fifth conference of diaconal ministers located at the beautiful Simpsonwood Conference and Retreat Center near Atlanta, GA. Each room, whether single, double or quad occupancy, has its own private bath. Watch your mailbox for registration information and pricing in early 2005! Questions in the meantime can be directed to Patricia Gerber, chairperson of the Conference Planning Team, at: patricia-gerber@sbcglobal.net.

Happy Birthday

November

- 2 - Joanne Otte
- 4 - Morgan Gordy
- 12 - Rachelle Gilbertson
- 18 - Shari O'Brien

December

- 29 - Terri McMaster

January

- 3 - Gracia Hegener
- 17 - Joyce Freund
- 22 - Patty Lee
- 29 - Mindy Holland

February

- 6 - Anne Becka
- 6 - Mary Lasits
- 13 - Linda Fox
- 25 - Marilyn Olson

March

- 2 - Carole Bohn
- 7 - Letha Isbell
- 10 - Laurie Beckman
- 26 - Libbie Reinking
- 31 - Barb Martyn

April

- 11 - Heather Feltman
- 13 - Kathy Massa

HEAR OUR PRAYER

The sixth mark of diaconal ministry, to be grounded in community, is yet another opportunity for us to foster community by supporting one another in prayer, in all joys and sorrows. Prayer is appropriate anytime, though Thursdays at 1:00 Mountain Time has been designated as a time for our community to “pray together.”

Health Concerns / Sympathies to
Alex Herrera, husband of Sue Vogel-Herrera,
chemo and radiation treatment
Craig Senft, husband of Ardie, continued healing
The family of **Patricia Lucas** upon her death July
13, 2004

Congratulations to
Sue Vogel, on her marriage to Alex Herrera March
15, 2004
Mindy Hoffman, on her marriage to Stuart Holland
August 14, 2004

Recent Consecrations
Suzanne Beauregard - June, 2004
Linda Daug-Deegan
Linda Fox - September 26, 2004
Joy (Wasniowski) Heine - June 11, 2004
Melissa James, November 7, 2004
Marilyn Olson - June 5, 2004
Suzanne Rigg - April 18, 2004
Kathryn (Trink) Schwartz - June 26, 2004
Christine Van O'Linda
Sarah Wilson - June 18, 2004

New Positions
Heather Feltman - Director for ELCA Domestic Disaster Response
Ed Kruse - ELCA Director of Stewardship, October
1, 2004
Tammy Devine - Director of Wellnes for the Board
of Pensions, October 1, 2004

*Prayers for Discernment to those
Approved Awaiting Call*

If you know of a networking connection for those candi-

dates approved awaiting call, please feel free to contact him/her with appropriate information. If you are approved awaiting call, contact us so we can include your bio in our next issue.

Cynthia Bowden (tinuevial@aol.com): A graduate of LTSG, Cynthia's focus area is chaplaincy, primarily eldercare and long-term care with secondary interest in hospice and hospital chaplaincy. She currently resides in Westminster, MD but is open to relocation.

Donald Burgess' (dmburgess6@cox.net) calling has led him to serve those who are in the midst of the grieving process as well as those facing their own mortality. He also supply preaches and holds a lifetime teaching certificate with Arizona community colleges. Don is a graduate of Fuller Theological Seminary and an avid Civil War buff. He is married with children and grandchildren.

Jennifer Larson (krueger_jennifer@hotmail.com): A graduate of Luther Seminary in cross-cultural studies, Jennifer is currently working at the Southwestern Washington Synod Office as Assistant Office Manager. She is married to Kurt, an associate pastor in Olympia, WA and they have two adorable guinea pigs, Squeegie and Brownie Bear Mullet. Jennifer is seeking a call in a cross-cultural setting, perhaps administrative.

Kathy Massa (kam_mwm@yahoo.com): A graduate of Wartburg Theological Seminary in 2002, Kathy has spent most of her time working with computers and accounting. She and her husband (a pastor serving Immanuel Lutheran in Cresco, IA) have spent 25 years in rural ministry helping congregations recognize their gifts and utilizing them outside the congregational walls. They have two grown, married children and four grandchildren.

Janell Weum's (weumjc@cs.com) greatest gift in ministry is mercy and her passion to journey with people. She is drawn towards those who are going through transitions due to death, illness, job loss, health loss, aging, etc. Janell had an opportunity to utilize her gifts in developing an older adult ministry focus and a bereavement ministry at Maple Grove Lutheran Church in Minnesota. Older adults are often faced with issues of transition and it is with this population that she sees opportunities to celebrate, affirm and nurture their discipleship.

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Pendants/Necklace/Bracelet/Ring/Lapel Pin

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952-949-1104

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Ring

Karen Colter

Reynoldsburg, OH

740-927-7450

Designed by Karen White, this ring is gold with infinite cross set on textured surface, with small ruby at intersection of infinite sign and body of vertical cross.

Diaconal Ministry Community of the ELCA
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Eden Prairie MN 55344-4929

Address Correction Requested