

# diakoneo

GREEK: TO BE A SERVANT; TO SERVE

THE ASSOCIATION FOR EPISCOPAL DEACONS | ENGAGING THE DIAKONIA OF ALL BELIEVERS

NOVEMBER 2013

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## Dancing with the sisters... and brothers

DIAKONIA WORLD ASSEMBLY | Berlin, July 2013

BY DEACON PAMELA NESBIT

Every four years, somewhere in the world, the members of the Diakonia World Federation meet to spend time together, to learn and to share our ministries. This past July, we met in Berlin. The Association for Episcopal Deacons is a member of Diakonia World Federation through the regional organization DOTAC (Diakonia of the Americas and Caribbean). The other regional organizations are Diakonia Region Africa Europe and Diakonia Asia Pacific.

Despite being on the Central Committee for DOTAC as the AED representative, I had not attended the Diakonia World Federation conference before. Because we come from so far, the World Federation meetings are long. We stayed on the campus of a diaconal community and met for five full days. In that time we heard speakers, met in small groups, attended workshops, took care of the administrative business of the organization, toured, ate and danced together. We took time for a report on the World Diakonia international project to bring attention to human trafficking. We were informed of the reasons for and extent of this form of oppression. We were encouraged to learn how it exists in our communities and to speak about it in the churches. This call is particularly important for Episcopalians, since much of the market for victims of human trafficking is in the United States.

For me, part of the fascination of this trip was the opportunity to spend time in Berlin. This is a city in which the cost of the Cold War is painfully apparent. I had opportunities to see and hear stories about the human costs of the division



On the last night we danced to African drums with a German deaconess.

of Berlin: loving relationships strained or broken by the imprisonment of people behind the wall and the dreadfulness of living under the cold scrutiny of the East German authorities. And I was challenged by conversations with people from East Germany as they described their shock and dismay, after the wall came down, when they were exposed to the materialism of the West. They couldn't understand how people could become so obsessed with the "things" that we in the West see as so important at the cost of relationship and community.

### MEETING DEACONESSES

I spent a great deal of time with deaconesses. As

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**“Walk in Beauty”**  
**Intentional relationships**

BY DEACON TINA CAMPBELL



As the dust settles from the recent triennial in Williamsburg last June the institutional life of the Association proceeds. There have been regular phone conversations with Lori, our new Executive Director. There has been the planning for the next Executive Committee meeting, the next Board meeting, and the next Archdeacons/Deacon Directors Conference. But something new has come on to my calendar for 2014 – a provincial gathering of deacons next June in Vancouver, WA.

Some of you who have been around AED for a while may remember that at one time we had an Assembly every two years. The decision was made to move to an Association-wide gathering every 3 years for a number of reasons. But one happy outcome was that a triennial would put us in a three-year cycle that would include one year to focus on General Convention, one year to put on a Diaconal Assembly, and one year for Regional Gatherings. It is this third year of the cycle that is less well known or implemented. But I am happy to report that at this time three such gatherings are being planned for 2014. Provinces I, II, and VIII are busy finding a location, deciding on a theme, soliciting funding (AED can provide a bit of financial support) and inviting presenters.

Regional gatherings, such as these, provide opportunities for fellowship, networking, and learning. An often-made comment on the Assembly evaluations reflected how good it was to be among deacons and how much strength and solidarity was felt. Regional gatherings are often more accessible since they are closer and less expensive than the triennial Assembly. Subject matter and expertise tends to be locally based.

In the last issue of Diakoneo, Ormonde Plater wrote about the canonical understanding of a “Community of Deacons. “...the nature of deacons exists not so much in ordained persons, deacons taken individually, as in the order as a whole, deacons taken as a collective body.” He goes on to note that this doesn’t happen by “chance or desire”. (June 2013, pg.11)

Is your area ready to host a regional gathering of deacons? Perhaps not, but there is certainly the opportunity to start building community at a local level. Things as simple as coffee together, phone or email conversations, shared meals, diocesan or deanery-wide meetings all can help nurture, sustain, and strengthen deacons and diaconal ministry. 2014 may not be the year for a regional diaconal gathering in your Province, but it can be the year for the intentional building up of relationships and networks that might become the foundation of a larger gathering in the future.

Tina Campbell, President

**A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO DUTTON MOREHOUSE, RETIRING EDITOR**

AED would like to thank our stalwart *Diakoneo* editor and *Deacon Update* online publisher for his many, many years of service to AED’s communications needs. Dutton Morehouse has steered our communications since the early 2000’s, picking up the pieces in an emergency transition and never looking back. He has represented us well in many forums and faithfully attended as many diaconal assemblies and events as possible. We thank Dutton for all his hard work and wish him, and his wife Joyce, good health and a restful retirement!

## Planning steps for AED's future

BY DEACON LORI-MILLS CURRAN

**M**y entry into the job of Executive Director of AED has been a whirlwind. There is no way to keep up with the knowledge and background of Susanne Watson Epting! In the six months since I was hired, and the three months I have served, I have not been able to learn a quarter of what she has forgotten.

But my hope is that I bring some qualities of my own that will partially make up for what I lack in experience. With these, I hope to tackle some priorities that were established by the AED Board in 2012. These are: to facilitate education and formation in its broadest sense to support the diakonia of all believers; to develop AED's focus on young adults; to create a plan for AED's long-term financial viability; to refine our organizational infrastructure; and to keep AED engaged with the world on church-wide issues.

These are kind of fancy terms. But I understand them to mean we want AED to provide resources for diaconal formation and the empowerment of all believers in Christ's

service, and make sure AED has a well-developed plan for the future. I am so happy to be able to help with this goal.

I have been a deacon for 25 years in four dioceses. This experience alone helps me: I know my view of the diaconate is not reflective of "the only one" that is correct. Susanne has a wonderful presentation on the various phases of the diaconate which teaches well how the diaconate is flexible to fit the needs of its context in place and in time. This is our strength, and this is our challenge. I earnestly solicit your prayers for AED, and its mission within the Episcopal Church.



### A NEW, UPDATED LOOK FOR DIAKONEO

Welcome to the first issue of a newly designed Diakoneo. You'll still find the information you've come to value, plus a few new things and an updated look.

I know that often it takes time to adjust. Which is why we need to hear your feedback.

As AED's new Communications Director, I'd like to ensure that this newsletter provides information of interest and value - to deacons, deacons in formation and all believers.

### YOUR INPUT IS IMPORTANT. WE'D LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU. WRITE FOR AED!

We're always looking for new articles that provide meaningful and valuable news, ministry projects, activities and more. Publicize your event. Share news from your diocese. Throughout this issue, you'll see new features and invitations for you to share yours! How about it?

Contact Anne at [communications@episcopaldeacons.org](mailto:communications@episcopaldeacons.org). All of our voices together can live out our mission to "Engage the Diakonia of All Believers."

I look forward to hearing from you.  
Deacon Anne Pillot  
Diocese of Ohio

## calendar what's coming

### PROVINCIAL EVENTS Diocese of Maryland Gathering for Deacons

February 15, 2014  
9 am -1 pm  
Diocesan Center

Specifically to discuss aspects of the Manual for Deacons

### Province VIII Regional Gathering

June 27-June 29, 2014  
Vancouver, Washington

For more information  
contact Gen Grewell at  
[ggrewell21@comcast.net](mailto:ggrewell21@comcast.net).

### New England Deacons Network, Province I Deacons Conference

October 3-5, 2014  
Location: TBD

For more information contact:  
[kyle.pedersen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kyle.pedersen@sbcglobal.net) or  
check the Province I website:  
[www.province1.org](http://www.province1.org).

### ARCHDEACONS/DEACON DIRECTORS CONFERENCE

March 27-29, 2014  
Baltimore, Maryland

### AED BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

March 29-April 1, 2014  
Baltimore, Maryland

### 78TH GENERAL CONVENTION

June 25 – July 3, 2015  
Salt Lake City, Utah

a deacon in The Episcopal Church, I never thought much about deaconesses. I knew that The Episcopal Church had made them deacons in the 70's and thought, and still thinks, that that was a good thing. The sexism that had kept women from ordination was finally ended and we could take our place among the clergy of our church. However, many conversations with deaconesses in the Lutheran and Methodist traditions, who ordain women at every level and also continue to have deaconesses, has opened my mind. I realized I had never really known anything about the deaconess tradition in my denomination.

In the Johannesstift, the place where we stayed, there was a building named for Theodore Fliedner, about whom I knew nothing. I learned that Fliedner, a Lutheran pastor with a gift for organization, began the deaconess movement as a way to initiate a tradition of respectable women helping those in need, particularly the sick. He started communities set up with himself as a father figure, his wife as a mother figure and deaconesses who lived within the community and were obedient to him. There are still many deaconess communities in Germany and elsewhere, however now they are administered by the women who live in them. Today there are over 40,000 deacons and deaconesses in Germany, some of whom live in community and some of whom do not. They are an integral part of the health care system. I met deaconesses from Africa who live with orphans, from India who care for the sick, from Finland who are professional nurses and more. Clearly the deaconess line is alive and well and now includes the ministries of men.

As an Episcopal Deacon who has read her Barnett and her Plater, I'm aware that I was very familiar with the line of ancient deacons and then transitional deacons and finally vocational deacons that is the lineage of my order. Historically this lineage has been primarily if not exclusively male and oriented toward being a professional in the church. It was interesting and inspiring to become aware of the "female" line, almost 200 years old, that runs through the first deaconesses in Germany, through the Church of England and then to the Episcopal Church. It is important to note that this often-overlooked line of ministry has been unwaveringly



*Above: Meeting at the World Diakonia Assembly.  
Left: African deaconesses at the Assembly.*



focused on service to the suffering.

The next DOTAC conference will be in Brazil in 2015. The next Diakonia World Federation conference will be in the Philippines in 2017. Attendance at either of these would involve significant travel and expense. However, if it is possible for you to gather the resources to do so, believe me, it will be well worth it.

*To see additional photos of the Diakonia World Federation, visit their website at [www.diakonia-world.org/2013/AssemblyPhotos.shtml](http://www.diakonia-world.org/2013/AssemblyPhotos.shtml)*



*Everything in Berlin is set up to encourage biking. These bike lanes are a part of the sidewalk, so that bikers can ride safely through the city. Berlin in an incredibly "green" city.*

*Additional photos on page 4*

## **Summary Minutes: Executive Committee Meeting**

June 25 – June 30, 2013  
Heimathaus, Berlin/Germany

Detailed reports were given on the work of the presidents, the regions, the officers and the situation with the ecumenical contacts.

### **Finances**

The Executive Committee accepted the 2012 Annual Report.

### **DIAKAID and Emergency Fund**

- Nigeria – the education of two Nigerian deaconesses was sponsored and will be continued with a 2,500 Euros payment (for the third and last year). A full report was provided.
- South Africa: The Nakekela Sewing Project, which enables women to earn their own money, was funded with 1,000 Euros. A full report was given.

### **Election of new President**

The Rev. Sandy Boyce was elected as new DIAKONIA World President.

New Regional Representatives and Secretary were appointed.

### **Next DIAKONIA World Assembly**

After an intense and lengthy discussion the Executive decided to accept the invitation to the Philippines for the 22<sup>nd</sup> DIAKONIA World Assembly 2017.



Above: Berlin Cathedral is the Lutheran cathedral in the middle of Berlin, known as the Berliner Dom, as seen from a cafe across the River Spree looking toward East Berlin. The closing ceremony of the Assembly took place here.

Above right: A booth from a street fair set up on Saturdays at the Hackescher Market, in Berlin.

Right: A part of the Wall that has been turned into an outdoor art gallery with images of freedom.



## in memoriam

Deacons who have died in the last year, listed by name, ordination date, (age), date of death and diocese.

Edward N. Cundiff, 2004 (61)	10/3/12	Central Florida
Mark A. Rivera, 1987 (73)	10/18/12	Central Florida
K. Mark Pederson, 1987 (84)	10/19/12	Iowa
Mary Edythe Monagin, 1992 (83)	10/21/12	Michigan
Sara Jane Aseltine, 1992 (81)	10/27/12	Northern California
Vera Evans Hayes, 1988 (85)	10/27/12	East Carolina
Louis James Wilson, 1959 (91)	10/30/12	Eau Claire
Betty Elaine Seidle, 2004 (73)	11/6/12	Maine
Lonalee Hamlin, 1996 (83)	11/23/12	Eastern Oregon
Robbin Harvey, 1992 (77)	12/12/12	Ohio
John W. Willets, 1992 (71)	12/13/12	Chicago
George William Bill Ray, 1989 (86)	12/23/12	East Carolina
Roger Colin Hammond, 2012 (67)	12/25/12	Ontario
Mildred Glynn, 2007 (70)	12/26/12	E. Newfoundland
D. Bruce Williams, 2000 (62)	12/31/12	Toronto
Harry Dillon Crager, 2003 (69)	12/31/12	Fond du Lac
Lilly Mae Smith, 1995 (76)	1/5/13	West Missouri
Richard W. Spencer, 1998 (60)	1/11/13	New York
Fayetta VanDermark, 2001 (63)	1/12/13	Albany
Barbara C. Miller, 1991 (78)	1/15/13	Maine
Emiliano A. Amat, 2006 (66)	1/21/13	Connecticut
Alice D. A. Fay, 1995 (86)	1/25/13	Atlanta Jr
Clarice June Case, 1997 (80)	2/4/13	Mississippi
Samuel J. Hall, 1991 (94)	2/9/13	Fond du Lac

Barbara F. Longacre, 2011 (63)	2/10/13	Central Florida
Gloria E. Wheeler, 1983 (83)	3/1/13	Central Florida
Veretta L. Hoston, 1998 (80)	3/4/13	New Jersey
William E. Bailey, 2004 (81)	3/6/13	Newark
Robert Bob Brittain, 2012 (68)	3/13/13	Frederickton
Nancy B. Nichols, 1990 (74)	3/25/13	Southwest Florida
Ronald L. Ron Wynn, 2003 (84)	3/30/13	Oregon
Albert J. Magee, Jr., 1965 (90)	4/6/13	Tennessee
William Bower Deming, 1993 (82)	4/7/13	El Camino Real
Adele G. A. Stockham, 2002 (81)	4/20/13	Alabama
Guillermo Pedró, 2000 (74)	4/23/13	Puerto Rico
Orville J. Stein, 1975 (84)	4/30/13	Lexington
JoAnn Jody Tomberlin, 2009 (82)	5/10/13	W. North Carolina
William G. Bill Kirkland, 1995 (86)	5/22/13	Atlanta
Susan J. North, 1991 (59)	6/3/13	Rhode Island
Barbara B. Keeter, 1989 (59)	7/14/13	Central Florida
Bob Brooks	7/29/13	New York
Charles R. Wickman, 1984 (80)	7/21/13	Minnesota
Deacon Nancy W. Granger, 2002 (75)	9/23/13	Central Florida

Source: *The Fund for the Diaconate*

Every effort has been made to provide accurate information and we regret any errors. We appreciate being notified when a deacon has died. Please send notifications, including their diocese, date of ordination, age and date of death to [membership@episcopaldeacons.org](mailto:membership@episcopaldeacons.org).

*Two newly ordained deacons share their reflections on formation, God's call and next steps as they begin their ministry.*

## Three months into being ordained

BY DEACON LYDIA BAILEY

**T**hose discerning a call to the diaconate may wonder what it's like to be ordained. Here I am, three months into being an ordained deacon in the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio. This is my experience thus far: I have been put into something like creative flux. I have less of an idea of what I want to do now than when I began. I don't have "Next Steps" or "Action Plan" mapped out in bullet points. My diocese is not prescribing. Instead we continue to seek new directions for the diaconate. We have the vision of service as a powerful presence in all of us - the baptized- within this world that God loves so much. We are listening for inklings of how this can come about. I spoke with our Bishop, Mark Hollingsworth, on possible projects and partnerships; interests I have heard from all around. The outcome? "Lydia, step back; imagine more; keep the conversations going." So I continue, on the look-out for broader themes. This process can feel like "stalling" when I'm touched to the quick by this world and our Church. But...I am wondering...doesn't creativity come in these in-between moments, when not trying to know? Moments when just maybe we allow the mind of Christ to hold sway? I am seeing some logic in this today. The "un-prescribed" is coming at me like clean, sweet light; as opportunity of diaconal call.

I am sitting at sunrise on Saturday morning; no school bus, no commute to work. Thank you for this sunlight touching the hillside incrementally - touching the mail box; now on our front yard. I am waiting for the sun to reach me as well on this new morning. Dreams from the night before and recall of yesterday - both float off as I wait for the sun. "Seek to be a blank slate." I am with the dogs who are sitting Buddha-like on the driveway. Now the sun is quietly moving through the crabapples, and tips of the red twig dogwood are being lit. Southern air is coming out of the woods; faintest rustle of leaves -shhh!-- as I wait.

"I wait...For You to name me/ For You to write my script...In your time and your way. You always do. And it is always so much better."<sup>(1)</sup>

### REFLECTING ON COMMUNITY

After a busy period, I am indeed pausing. I've studied with the Diocese of Southern Ohio's School for Diaconal Formation over the last three years in which clergy from my own diocese taught. I've formed close bonds with my colleagues from Southern Ohio and Diocese of Pittsburgh during quarterly retreats, worship, and online study, supported by Bishop Tom Breidenthal of Southern Ohio who has given fresh emphasis to the diaconate.<sup>(2)</sup> Now the bonds are

*Continued on page 7*

## Saying "yes" for 2 years

BY DEACON DANIEL HORGAN

**A**nother June ordination has just passed, with more men and more women saying "Yes" to God's call. I am still near enough to my own ordination to remember the anticipation I felt, and the gratitude I was flush with when those hands came to rest. And almost anyone, in fact, who themselves have been through a "discernment process" appreciates the relief that is found there - not just in the consecration, though it is present there as well - but in the whispered emancipation from our wandering self-doubt.

I was reading a book recently called, *Dreams: God's Forgotten Language*, by John Sanford. And in it, the author makes the point that "working toward our wholeness is not an easy task. It involves a religious search for meaning, as well as psychological insight, a lonely separation from the collective identity, a painful look into ourselves and our own shadows, and the acceptance of a higher power to which we must submit." It's as apt a description of discernment as I have had occasion to come across.

Later in Sanford's book, the author makes the analogy of the human consciousness being like a bathysphere that is plunged deep within the sea of our unconscious. And given the author's assertion that God is present and working within the "collective unconscious," we bathe ourselves there and are brought to a never-before-discovered before wholeness, and to the "deepest realizations of our true nature in Him."

### LEARNING TRUST

So, too, in the ordination process, we accede to the angel's voice which laps at each of us; and in response, we put ourselves through a process which challenges, a process that forces us to look critically at our own motivations and understandings. And then we peel away and go deeper, deeper toward our inner core, toward our inner spirit and toward God - with a group of fellow travelers that we've hardly known till that time. But in the fire of that research, we catalog both our light and our shadow as they've been welded and fashioned by a true master's hand. And we learn trust: trust in one another, and in God's plan for our lives.

Even now, I don't pretend to understand how it all works, or how it all comes together; and like E.B. White's witticism regarding humor, it's difficult to dissect its components accurately: "We can dissect it like a frog; but in the process, the thing dies; and the innards are discouraging to all but the pure scientific mind."

The original bathysphere had to be designed in the shape of a sphere in the 1920's to resist the enormous pressures that were created by the ocean's depths. And in order to place a window within its steel hull, it was designed with fused quartz that was three inches in thickness. Air and phone cables had to be accommodated;

*Continued on page 8*

forming with the handful of deacons within my own diocese as we meet regularly. During three years of diaconal study my two children have become teenagers with new lives of their own emerging at rapid pace. Thom, my dear husband, has supported my diaconal call, going with me on Sundays to a nearby parish while I did my fieldwork.

What has truly grounded me is the combination of prayer and working full-time the last seven years at a men's shelter in Cleveland. Throughout, I've heard the "whisper of wholeness and meaning and mercy"<sup>(3)</sup> at the base of all these individuals who are homeless, and with those I am serving in the Church, and at the heart of all creation. My connection to other people finds progressively deeper roots in this loving God who so completely understands and loves us.

Pausing now, are any themes surfacing? Is there one thing that this sunlight, slanting through the crabapple trees is confirming now?

Community, I think. Community is a constant in all this diaconal learning. It's the primary theme of my fieldwork in parishes; seeing people in pews aching to reach out more intentionally to those who are homebound; aching to reach out to people very different from themselves, but scared and clumsy and consumed with their busy lives. And I hear good questions with understandable reservations about "radical hospitality" between the Church and the world.

Just so, community is central to those who are homeless in Cleveland where I feel the weight of splintered community; people who say they feel shunned or invisible. One man who is homeless, Ralph Pack Williams, describes: "I hear there are all these good people who want to help. I see more church meals opening up. But hunger was never the big issue anyway. You can get a can opener and a can of beans and you won't starve. But where are the people who actually talk with us? It's like we're from Mars." Looking around inside the shelter he reflects, "This is a subculture here – and the gap is growing wider to the outside world."

Community is perhaps even a stronger need for those who have bottomed out; who have nothing left but each other. A good sense of humor is like gold, and kindness takes



Lydia with residents from the Cleveland Men's Shelter

on extra weight. "The longer I live, the more I value kindness," says Ralph. But real kindness is guarded behind mirror sunglasses and tough exterior. And when it's one's fortune to get an apartment, the person who was homeless often returns to the shelter to check in with those he knew. Snippets of conversation often indicate situations of physical isolation, cinder block basement apartments; fear of stepping outside at any hour.

### COMMUNITY IN A MEN'S SHELTER

A man who volunteers at the shelter tells me poverty is much worse in India where his family still lives. He describes how small bands of people live together outside. But given the choice of whether to live alone in an apartment or remain outside with this loosely formed

network, he says they wouldn't think twice about staying with this family. Community is that powerful.

Ralph Pack has it right when he reflects on the "gap." NBC News announces the gap between rich and poor is wider in the United States than it's been in decades. The need for community, to bridge the gap looms heavy, and made all the more visceral to me through prayer. We are - all of us - a part of creation; human beings God so deeply loves. The sunlight is confirming this to me today.

What I know in prayer is lived out in reciprocal relationships I've found in community - my spiritual stability depends on this! When I have pockets of community in different locales and churches, I feel so thoroughly grateful...like the "Kindom"<sup>(4)</sup> has come very close. Community is the one theme that has surfaced in this period of listening.

For those discerning a call, these interim periods of not knowing direction are anything but wasted. What can be operative is the Christian concept, Kenosis<sup>(5)</sup> which sometimes can remain so abstract. Dying and rising in Christ is formidable stuff, but I see it happening in people all around me, and now I see it as part of my ordination; a vital part of discerning next steps for you as it is for me.

As I set out as an ordained deacon, I am yearning for God's presence to be more fully in my actions. I'm trusting in this creative God who stirs us to action. I am pulling back in a listening mode rather than falling in step with my own and others' expectations. I hope I won't too hastily surrender this stance before it's time - that is, God's time! "Next Steps?" Continuing to talk with those in the Church and world; continuing to pray. "I wait for you to write the script..." Thank you, Lord, for this new day.

---

Lydia Bailey is on the staff at Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry's Men's Homeless Shelter in Cleveland, Ohio. She works with over 3,000 volunteers annually. Over 3,420 men who are homeless moved through this shelter in 2012, many involved in programming toward independence. Lydia is the creator of Portraits of Homelessness - 45 photographs and stories of men who have resided at the shelter. The collection travels the region, portraying individuals who are homeless through the eyes of one who sees the glimmer of God in each. Visit [www.portraitsofhomelessness.com](http://www.portraitsofhomelessness.com).



### Footnotes:

- (1) Excerpt from *The Naked Now: Learning to See as the Mystics See*, Richard Rohr, OFM; the Crossroad Publishing Co., 2009.
- (2) Bishop Breidenthal has suggested "priesthood and episcopacy are best viewed as specific variations on diaconal ministry, grounded in diakonia." *Anglican Theological Review*, Spring 2013 (Volume 95/ Number 2), *Exodus from Privilege: Reflections on the Diaconate in Acts*.
- (3) *Thomas Merton, A Book of Hours*, edited by Kathleen Deignan, CND; Soren Books, 2007.
- (4) Those in the Catholic Worker Community in Cleveland, as Maria Hurst reminds me, use the word 'Kindom' as Kingdom has masculine, hierarchal connotations.
- (5) Kenosis, from the Greek word for emptiness, is the "self-emptying" of one's will and becoming entirely receptive to God's divine will.

and finally, a lamp was mounted just inside the glass to provide some light in the darkness and on the life that is found there.

And our discernment and our call – they are reminiscent of Sanford's bathysphere in that they provide each of us with our one little window in our ball in the sea. And through the vows of our ordination, we shout to the others, "Lower away," and we plunge into a world of humility and of awe, the likes of which we've never seen before; and we fall to that place where we begin to recognize and accept the full measure of God's design as it was ordained from the start.

And so, reflecting on June 22nd, I invite each of us to pause and to remember – to remember the courage that it took, whether it was long

ago or just yesterday, for us to immerse ourselves in God's grace and to let go our control. And let us bid these newest arrivals a safe travel as they begin their own journeys of self-discovery and of wholeness. May they provide their own light in the darkness, and tell of the life that they see.

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*Dan Horgan is serving as a Deacon at St. John's Sandwich in the Diocese of Massachusetts. This article originally appeared in the Spring/Summer 2013 edition of the Massachusetts Episcopal Clergy Association newsletter. Republished by permission.*

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## NEWS FROM AED'S BOARD

# Transitions and moving forward

BY DEACON TINA CAMPBELL, PRESIDENT

**T**he AED Board held its Summer meeting by phone in August. As usual we began with the question: *How does what we do here involve or affect those living in poverty?* Ongoing engagement of this question has led us to note that the quality of diaconal formation impacts the quality of ministry and the way people in poverty experience deacons. We also noted that the question has helped us realize the need to develop leadership among people living in poverty.

We welcomed our new Communications Director to the conference call. Anne Pillot introduced herself and spoke of some of her ideas for the Association. She shared her plan to review our present efforts (Diakoneo, the Directory, Deacon Update) and she will be taking over the management of our website in January.

The meeting then continued with a variety of committee reports. We debriefed the June Diaconal Assembly which was well received. We discussed finances; this is an area of transition as we moved to a new Executive Director (Lori Mills-Curran) and a new Treasurer (Michael Kitt from the Diocese of Chicago). It involved a change of signatories for our accounts and credit cards. We know we are dealing with a deficit budget and we are looking closely at expenses and the stewardship of our financial resources.

Lori offered an Executive Director's report, much of which is described in her article in this Diakoneo. As she came on board she was drafting a work plan, engaging the Vocational Development and Lifelong Learning group and learning more about other AED projects like The Seven and Domestic Poverty initiative.

We are also having discussion about AED's presence in the 2015 General Convention. Over the years AED has had a legislative, liturgical, and overall diaconal presence at Convention but participation has been an expensive and labor intensive effort. The impact of the Deacon's Resolved effort in 2012 was significant and we wonder what issue may arise the next time.

An Executive Committee meeting is planned for October and another Board conference call later in the year.

This past year has been a time of extensive transition on multiple levels and I am appreciative of our Board members who work, pray, and offer their gifts to further the mission of the Association.

Tina Campbell, President

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## AED membership in "Diakonia World Federation" and "DOTAC"

BY DEACON LORI-MILLS CURRAN

AED is a member of two international associations, which gather for mutual diaconal support and learning. DIAKONIA World Federation (often referred to as "World") is an ecumenical organization which links those engaged in diaconal work worldwide. Membership consists of associations of deaconesses, deacons, diaconal ministers and other church workers. World provides

a network of mutual relationships crossing church traditions and cultural boundaries. It provides a forum for discussion of diaconal issues and organizes a world assembly every four years. Diakonia of the Americas and Caribbean (DOTAC) is the regional subset of organizations within World to which AED is assigned. DOTAC hosts regional gatherings at which community and resources are shared

throughout the Americas. The next one will be held in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in Fall 2015.

*Note: See the corresponding articles in this issue of Diakoneo from Pam Nesbit (pg. 1) and Lori Mills-Curran (p. 15).*





*Deacons receiving St. Stephen Recognition in 2013*

## 2013 Recognition of Diaconal Ministry in the tradition of St. Stephen

BY DEACON PAMELA NESBIT

**A**s we met together for Evening Prayer at the Diaconal Assembly in Williamsburg, we heard the stories of outstanding diaconal ministries in The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church in Canada. We heard stories of ecumenical ministry in Europe, ministry among First Nations peoples in Canada, ministries of advocacy, ministries to the hungry, medical missions in Africa, ministries among prisoners, the handicapped, the homeless and more. At the liturgy honoring the recipients of the Recognition of Diaconal Ministry in the Tradition of St. Stephen, we were given a picture of the breadth and depth of diaconal ministry in our churches that inspired our hearts and made us proud to be deacons.

The tradition of honoring outstanding diaconal ministries was begun in 1995 by Deacon Ted Hallenbeck, who was executive director of our association. At every diaconal assembly, deacons who were recommended by their bishops have been honored by having their stories told. Before 2013 there were 132 deacons so honored. In Williamsburg, there were a record-breaking 26 deacons whose ministries were recognized. It was particularly fitting that their certificates were given to them by Deacon Ted who instituted this way of lifting up excellence in ministry 28 years ago.

On every certificate, the deacon recipient is recognized for “having demonstrated a deep commitment to the special ministry of servanthood following the practice of St. Stephen, according to tradition the first deacon appointed by the Apostles to serve tables in Jerusalem, by making Christ’s redemptive love known through your work and example, to those among whom you live and work”.

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### Susanne Watson Epting made sixth recipient of Harris Award

Since 2001 the Bishop George Harris award has been given to individuals who have demonstrated outstanding service to deacons, servant ministry and the community of deacons. Previous recipients are Bp. Christopher Epting, Bp. William Swing, Deacon Ted Hallenbeck, Bp. James Kelsey and Deacon Ormonde Plater. In Williamsburg, at the diaconal assembly, this honor was awarded to Deacon Susanne Watson Epting as she steps down from the role of executive director of AED.

*Continued on page 10*

These were the words spoken at that award presentation:

“As a native Iowan you have been deeply influenced by the Mississippi River, the seasons of farming and the culture of jazz. Good times and hard work alongside baseball and Yogi Berra are in your make up.

Like many you eased into an active role in the Episcopal Church. You were ordained Deacon in 1989, growing out of your work as HIV Coordinator and Co-Director of the Iowa City Free Medical Clinic, a down to earth reality based work, with patients, professionals and volunteers. Once ordained you were asked by the Diocese of Iowa to direct its Institute of Christian Studies and be a resource for other Diocesan staff and groups. Your Bishop saw you as someone who could serve in a senior role so he appointed you Canon to the Ordinary. Your work became broad and your commitment to ministry formation, mission development and being an advocate and interpreter of the needs, hopes and concerns of the world to the church, began in earnest

As did your hero Yogi Berra, when you came to a fork in the road, you took it. In actual practice you managed to take

several forks at the same time with grace and skill. Your role as Canon in Iowa connected you to such creative total ministry groups as Living Stones, a partnership of over 25 United States and Canadian Dioceses. You became President of NAAD in 1999 at St. Olaf College in Northfield Minnesota at a special joint conference of NAAD and other organizations committed to new and creative ways of doing church. Your keynote address, Formation of Ministering Christians was published by NAAD and became a popular monograph.

In your wide-ranging career you have written with skill and authority on a wide variety of topics and ministered with many groups across the church. You have presented workshops at Church Divinity School of the Pacific, and offered the course, The Prophetic Voice of the Diaconate. The term co-facilitator describes your team approach to workshops, retreats and a wide variety of events from Maine to California. Working with the Office of Women's Ministries you facilitated gatherings and developed the Beijing Circles Resource Booklet. Serving on the Anglican Communion Task Force on Theological Education, you brought a deacon's perspective to the world wide Communion.

As you guided the North American Association for the Diaconate in maturing, broadening and strengthening, culminating in adoption of a new name Association for Episcopal Deacons, to show the inclusivity of our order. You developed new programs, always aimed at engaging the Diakonia of all believers and the fundamental belief in baptism as a radical equalizer and first call to ministry of everyone. With a focus on youth you helped create The Seven, a mentored experience in diaconal ministry for young adults, now in its second year.

The number of Deacons is growing, the as is the programming of AED. Susanne, your voice and wisdom have been clear as your non-traditional leadership has been quietly behind the scenes.

We honor you as friend and fellow servant.”

ASSOCIATION FOR EPISCOPAL DEACONS  
Engaging the Diakonia of All Believers



Recognition of Diaconal Ministry  
in the Tradition of St. Stephen

*Having demonstrated a deep commitment to the special ministry of servanthood following the practice of St. Stephen, according to tradition the first deacon appointed by the Apostles to serve tables in Jerusalem, by making Christ's redemptive love known through your word and example, to those among whom you live and work,*

Williamsburg, Virginia

June 14, 2013

*Beginning in 1995 the North American Association for the Diaconate initiated a program to provide formal recognition for the ministry and work of deacons. With about 3,281 deacons now active in the United States (2955) and Canada (326) we seek to identify the important ministries deacons do as well as the individual deacons who carry out Christ's work in our midst. Deacons are recommended by their dioceses for recognition, continued by AED.*

# “The Seven” Young Adult Mentoring Program

BY DEACON KYLE PEDERSON

2012-2013 saw AED conducting the second year of its part-time, hands-on spiritual and educational exploration program for young adults (18-30 years old). These persons spent a year engaged in meaningful work and reflection in their communities while discerning their own vocational calls in mentored relationships with Episcopal deacons. Participants served where they live and deacon mentors helped them select meaningful work and guided them in spiritual growth. Online and other interactive communication tools connected participants

and their mentors for group learning and conversation.

Program coordinator Deacon Kyle Pedersen is also hoping to develop a Seven Alumni network. One alumni member, Rachel Health, is now on AED’s Board. Another, Aaron Petry Scott, preached a riveting sermon at the Archdeacon and Deacon Director’s Conference in March 2013.

The Seven is still recruiting for our third program year, and it is anticipated that it will start soon after the first of the year and have a slightly shorter and condensed schedule.

New this year will be consideration of whether we might develop program resources so groups of deacons, or a diocese, might implement “Seven” communities at the local level. Distribution of these resources may be a project of our standing Advisory Council for Vocational Development and Lifelong Learning.

For more information on “The Seven,” or to inquire about being a mentor for a young person in your community, contact Deacon Kyle Pedersen at [kyle.pedersen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kyle.pedersen@sbcglobal.net).

## The Community of Deacons is grateful for the ministries of those deacons who are celebrating “landmark” ordination anniversaries in 2014

*Gracious and Loving God, strengthen and uphold your servants, that with patience and understanding they may continue to love and care for all people as deacons in your Church. Nourish them with the bread of life and the cup of salvation, that they may always be living icons of Christ the Servant. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

### 50 Years: Ordained in 1964

June 18, Sr. Priscilla Jean Wright CT, Southern Ohio

### 45 Years: Ordained in 1969

Feb. 25, Deacon Edward R. Horton, Central Florida  
June 1, Deacon Andrew W. Palmer, Oklahoma  
June 21, Deacon Kenneth W. Johnson, Massachusetts  
December 17, Deacon Robert E. Williams, El Camino Real

### 40 Years: Ordained 1974

Jan. 12, Deacon Thomas G. Smith, Chicago  
Mar. 25, Deacon Eric E. Dawson, Virgin Islands  
June 22, Deacon Josephine (Phina) Borgeson, N. California  
Sept. 30, Deacon William B. Arnold, Southwest Florida  
Nov. 1, Deacon Irvin D. West, Arkansas  
Dec. 15, Deacon Robert W. Horner, Texas  
Dec. 21, Deacon Louise H. Muenz, Georgia

### 35 Years: Ordained 1979

Jan. 25, Deacon Richard E. G. (Regs) Scheeler, Milwaukee  
May 12, Deacon Thomas W. Claggett III, Maryland  
May 12, Deacon Maria M. Fedock, Maryland  
June 6, Deacon Denise Diane Giardina, West Virginia  
June 9, Deacon Patricia Ann Jensen, Central Florida  
June 9, Deacon Sam Brown Gilkey Jr. Central Florida  
June 29, Deacon Connie Hartquist Jacobs, San Joaquin  
June 30, Deacon Arlinda W. Cosby, California

### 30 Years: Ordained 1984

Jan. 7, Deacon Patricia M. Serfes, Maine  
Jan. 25, Deacon James C. Lanning Jr., Chicago  
Jan. 25, Deacon Barbara Allen Ramnaraine, Minnesota  
Jan. 25, Deacon Clifford G. Robinson, Minnesota  
Jan. 25, Deacon Jean E. Swesey, Minnesota  
Feb. 9, Deacon Christina K. Fitch, Arkansas  
Mar. 1, Deacon Carl R. Merola, Central Florida  
Mar. 3, Deacon Shedrick E. Gilbert, Southeast Florida  
Mar. 18, Deacon Patricia J. Lynes-Tway, East Tennessee  
Apr. 1, Deacon William L (Len) Griffin, Arkansas

Apr. 7, Archdeacon Susan R. Mueller, Milwaukee  
May 1, Deacon Ann R. Parsons, Alaska  
May 20, Deacon Richard Fletcher, Kootenay, Canada  
May 20, Deacon Christine L. Ross, Kootenay, Canada  
May 20, Deacon Elizabeth Fussell, British Columbia, Canada  
June 1, Deacon Robert Anton Franken, Missouri  
June 1, Deacon Melva Gayle Bridges, Oklahoma  
June 1, Deacon Betty Lou Anthony, Alaska  
June 9, Deacon Bruce N. Gillies, Western New York  
June 9, Deacon Gay C. Walsler, Western New York  
June 18, Deacon Ann M/ Staples, Pittsburgh  
June 28, Deacon Barbara L. LaBarre, Oklahoma  
June 29, Deacon Judith P. Ain, El Camino Real  
June 30, Deacon Deacon Elaine L. Morgan, Nevada  
Aug. 1, Deacon Mary B. Husby, South Dakota  
Aug. 25, Deacon John F. Thompson, Central Florida  
Sept. 23, The Rev. Canon Robert J. Seifert, El Camino Real  
Oct. 21, Deacon Carmen L. Edwards, Minnesota  
Nov. 1, Deacon Jaelyn G. Gossard, Kansas  
Nov. 4, Deacon Evelyn V. (Lyn) Lawyer, Minnesota  
Nov. 7, Deacon Annette J. Molnar, Rio Grande  
Nov. 16, Deacon Robert M. Taylor, Northern Indiana  
Dec. 10, Deacon Nancy B. Bradley, Central Florida  
Dec. 21, Deacon Elizabeth A (Betty) Belasco, Long Island  
Dec. 27, Deacon David L. Sams, Minnesota

### 25 Years: Ordained in 1989

Jan. 5, Deacon Judy Ann. Conn, Minnesota  
Jan. 5, Deacon Janet Elizabeth H (Jan) Dougherty, Minnesota  
Jan. 18, Deacon B. Chari Mynatt, West Missouri  
Feb. 1, Deacon Gardner J. Hartling, Lexington  
Feb. 4, Deacon Eloise Neilsen, Rhode Island  
Feb. 4, Deacon Gail Wheelock, Rhode Island  
Feb. 4, Deacon Betty Lou Wright, Rhode Island  
Mar. 4, Deacon Joseph (Joe) Withrow, Western Kansas  
Mar. 9, Deacon Roy L. Chrisman, Iowa  
Mar. 13, Deacon Gretchen Good-Pankratz, Western Kansas  
Mar. 13, Deacon Lucy L. Houser, Oregon  
Mar. 14, Deacon Cara J (Jay) Calvert, Southern Ohio  
Apr. 8, Deacon Thomas L. Upton, Nebraska  
Apr. 29, Deacon Eva R. Markham, Kentucky  
Apr. 29, Deacon Barbara Jean Wagner, Western Michigan  
May 6, Deacon Paula Sue Egbert, Idaho  
May 14, Deacon Dudley Lippitt, Georgia  
May 20, Deacon Joseph L. (Larry) Holman, Bethlehem  
May 28, Archdeacon Barbara A. Hanstine, Albany  
May 28, Deacon Pamela W. Lightsey, Atlanta

June 3, Deacon Anne P. Vellom, Arizona  
June 6, Deacon Mary Hartwell Brown, Maryland  
June 12, Deacon Gloria A. Taylor, Northern Indiana  
June 15, Archdeacon William O (Bill) Jones, S. Virginia  
June 16, Archdeacon Mary Martha (Molly) Solbak, Ct’ PA  
June 17, Deacon John Cozzoli, Maryland  
June 17, Deacon Jean Neylon, Maryland  
June 17, The Rev. Canon Anne L. Reed, Southern Ohio  
June 17, Deacon Jon Shematek, Maryland  
June 17, Deacon Hughes E. Wahl, Maryland  
June 17, Deacon Lauren M. Welch, Maryland  
June 17, Deacon Elizabeth Wade Grant, North Carolina  
June 17, Deacon Donald C. Whalen, Easton  
June 24, Deacon Elma J. Rosenberg, Southwest Florida  
June 24, Deacon Karen E. Thompson, Eastern Michigan  
June 24, Deacon Suzanne Tavernetti, El Camino Real  
July 1, Deacon Dana G. Wilson, Fort Worth  
July 1, Deacon Louis F. Garcia, East Tennessee  
July 1, Deacon Kay Conner Greenshields, Oklahoma  
July 1, Deacon Norman W. Kiker, Oklahoma  
July 1, Deacon Nancy E. King, Oklahoma  
July 2, Deacon Christian Cross, New Westminster, Canada  
July 19, Deacon Marilyn H. Bamford, Minnesota  
Aug. 25, Deacon Sylvia C. Landers, Nebraska  
Aug. 26, Deacon Ernest J. Gerhard, Nebraska  
Oct. 1, Deacon Charles A. Burdeshaw, Tennessee  
Oct. 21, Deacon William A. Henwood, Colorado  
Oct. 21, Deacon Mary B. Misner, Milwaukee  
Oct. 21, Deacon Marlyne J. Seymour, Milwaukee  
Oct. 21, Deacon William S. Jamieson, Jr, Western N. Carolina  
Oct. 21, Deacon Marie L. Webner, Arizona  
Oct. 28, Deacon George H. Smodell, Central Florida  
Oct. 28, Deacon Aleathia Dolores, Nicholson, Tennessee  
Nov. 4, Deacon Susanne Watson Epting, Iowa  
Nov. 4, Deacon Daniel Herron, Utah  
Nov. 25, Deacon Jacqueline L. Guernsey, Central Florida  
Dec. 2, Deacon Jane O’Leary, Maryland  
Dec. 2, Deacon Katherine (Cathy) Lwebuga-Mukasa, W. NY  
Dec. 2, Deacon Margaretta Y. Brown, Florida  
Dec. 2, Deacon Gwendolyn J. Dillon, Chicago  
Dec. 2, Deacon David E. Grauer, Chicago  
Dec. 2, Deacon Carol J. Kraft, Chicago  
Dec. 2, Deacon William August Maesen, Chicago  
Dec. 2, Deacon Leilani L. Nelson, California  
Dec. 9, Deacon John E. Derbyshire, Central New York

# Through the Dust

BY DEACON ORMONDE PLATER

One advantage of old age, for deacons who have been turned out to pasture, is that you can do what you want rather than what other people want you to do. Even on Sunday morning, you can go to the church you prefer rather than the church where you are assigned (should there be a difference between the two). You can wear the clothes of ordinary human beings. And you can sit where you wish among the ordinary people of God.

So it was, some months ago, that my wife and I decided to return to the church of our youth, in an old Creole neighborhood of New Orleans. (The church shall remain nameless, to protect the innocent.) The congregation has a strong commitment to social justice, and the people reflect the neighborhood, where colors, sexes, ages, and economies resemble the ingredients of a bowl of gumbo (first you make a roux, and then you toss in veggies, seafood, and other stuff). The place is Anglo-Catholic in sentiment. Mass is chanted and smoke billows here and there. In other words, just the kind of place I like to hang out.

There are a couple of unusual aspects. The music combines traditional Anglican hymns and New Orleans jazz and gospel. Mass starts out staidly Anglican and gradually gets more and more soulful, until it ends with the keyboard musician, a long-haired music professor at a local university, switching from organ to piano and banging out a song reminiscent of Professor Longhair himself.

This musical progression reminds me of the last chapter of Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*. Dilsey, the long-suffering servant in the declining Compson household, takes Benjy, the strangest of the family's progeny, with her to the "colored" church. It's Easter Sunday, and they have a visiting preacher from St. Louis, with all the snobbery and sophistication that term implies. A St. Louis preacher! He starts out like a white man, logical, organized, coolly intellectual, but as he goes along he gets blacker and blacker, soulful to the point of hysteria. Just as Benjy gets saved through spiritual worship, so do we with soul music at liturgy.

Another unusual aspect, perhaps even weirder, is that several parishioners take their dogs with them to church. I hasten to add, these dogs are well behaved. They don't bark or howl or bite. They

sit quietly with their master or mistress (owner?), and they even accompany their owner to the altar rail (but not for communion). One of these, a Boxer, a seeing-eye dog for his partially blind owner, sits calmly in the pew and stares at the people behind him. Other dogs lie calmly at human feet.

Here's another reminiscence. In the "44 Scotland Street" series of novels by Alexander McCall Smith, a dog named Cyril accompanies his owner everywhere, even into bars and coffee shops. Cyril has one floppy ear and a gold tooth in his lower jaw. He has developed a taste for coffee and beer, and he likes to wink at the ladies. The author has a lot of fun imagining how Cyril thinks.

But what do dogs think of church? Or of God? The canine world is not the same as the human world, although the two are interrelated. Dogs are centered on bones, smells, and loyalty to their owners, whose center of interest lies elsewhere. Still, it is not irrational to imagine that dogs are important inhabitants of the kingdom of God. C. S. Lewis wrote somewhere that heaven must include our pets. That's what Noah's Ark is all about, and lions lying down with lambs. So dogs must have a theology in which they experience God, and human beings must have a theology that includes dogs. (Let's leave cats and other critturs aside for the moment.)

And what does all this have to do with deacons? There is a deacon at our church who is an old friend of ours. An African-American, she is involved in several outreach ministries in the neighborhood. During mass she leads the prayers of the people forcefully from way down the aisle, behind most of our backs, and she sings the gospel sweetly (as an early biographer noted about Francis of Assisi). It's the kind of place she likes to hang out too.

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## A WORD OF THANKS!

*With this article, Ormonde Plater will be retiring his pen, at least for the purposes of Diakoneo. He has written for many years, and we offer sincere thanks for his insights and comments on the history and theology of deacons and the diaconate. Ormonde will continue to moderate AED's two social media groups - Anglodeacons and Archdeacons. Thank you!*

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**"Deacon Doings in the Diocese of St. Ives" is on hiatus/sabbatical.**

This long-standing column will return in our February 2014 issue.

Do you have topics that you'd like to see addressed? Areas to explore in regard to diaconal ministry? Perhaps there are diaconal issues you're encountering? Please let us know at [communications@episcopaldeacons.org](mailto:communications@episcopaldeacons.org).



diocese  
of st. ives

# Advisory Council on Vocational Development and Lifelong Learning

BY DEACON TIMOTHY SPANNAUS

The charter of the Advisory Council is to gather, organize and make available the best resources for deacon formation and lifelong learning from dioceses throughout The Episcopal Church.

At its July meeting in Chicago, the Advisory Council reviewed its work to date and proceeded to review sets of competencies for deacons. The competencies were seen as a way to organize resources and highlight gaps. The organizing schema includes competencies, methods for assessing competencies, resources and learning activities that support attainment of the competencies. As a group we worked through competencies on scripture, developing drafts of all sections. This section will serve as an example for further development.

To identify additional promising resources we created a one question

survey, asking respondents to “Describe one thing you learned or experienced in your preparation to become a deacon which has helped you to be effective in ministry.” We sent the survey to selected dioceses and have received many responses.

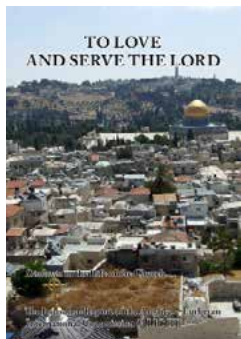
At the conclusion of the Chicago meeting, I was offered and I accepted the role as facilitator of the Advisory Council. Since most of you do not know me, let me introduce myself. I am a deacon in the Diocese of Michigan, serving at St. John’s Episcopal Church in Royal Oak, MI. I am faculty at Wayne State University in Detroit, serving as program coordinator for Instructional Technology and teaching courses in web technology, multimedia. I am also director of the Certificate in University Teaching.

## THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

# Coming soon: Theological reviews

With many theological books, papers and articles in our midst, thoughtful theological reviews can benefit us all greatly. Starting with the next issue, we’ll be inviting and sharing regular theological reviews.

**First up – Executive Director Lori Mills-Curran** will review the article by Bishop Thomas E. Breidenthal: *Exodus from Privilege: Reflections on the Diaconate in Acts*. Breidenthal is the Bishop of Southern Ohio and his article appeared in The Anglican Theological Review, Spring 2013.



### Will you write a review?

We’d like to suggest, *To Love and Serve the Lord*. This is a recent report holding up the life of *Diakonia* in the Anglican and Lutheran Churches, as well as our shared ministry. It includes photos & case studies, and is written in a readable tone.

Will you share your thoughts on this new report? Please contact the editor at [communications@episcopaldeacons.org](mailto:communications@episcopaldeacons.org) for a copy of the report and more information.

**Join AED in making theological reviews an ongoing feature of *Diakoneo*.**

## DIGITAL DIAKONEO?

# Moving to digital?

BY DEACON ANNE PILLOT, COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR

A conversation has begun in earnest, to study methods of distribution for *Diakoneo*. During these lean times, we’re exploring ways to economize in the production of all our materials. Did you know that we currently spend over \$9,000 annually for printing and mailing four issues of *Diakoneo*? That represents 10-15% of our total annual budget.

While *diakoneo* will always be available by mail in print to non-computer users, we’re discussing the pros and cons of electronic distribution for computer users. This conversation will continue with the board during the upcoming year. Our new Executive Director is also going through line items in the budget to evaluate areas for cost savings.

You can help by electing to receive *Diakoneo* electronically, as a pdf. Simply send an email to Jo Weber at [membership@episcopaldeacons.org](mailto:membership@episcopaldeacons.org). Each issue will be delivered via email, in full color, with interactive links.

**SAVE A TREE. HELP AED!**  
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Sign me up for electronic *Diakoneo*



# Discovering the diakonia of all in Brazil

BY DEACON LORI MILLS-CURRAN

In August, 2103, the Executive Committee of Diakonia of the Americas and Caribbean (DOTAC) met to plan its 2015 general assembly. As the new AED Executive Director, I attended in lieu of our representative, Deacon Pam Nesbit. The work took place at the Lutheran Church headquarters in the beautiful Centro Histórico district of Porto Alegre.

I do ministry with Brazilians in Framingham, Massachusetts, which is over one-third Brazilian.

It was a delight to finally visit Brazil. But the best part of the event was meeting all the “diaconal types” who represent their organizations in DOTAC. I learned a great deal about the incredible diversity in understandings of diaconal identity across denominations, which will stand me in good stead.

## DIACONAL IDENTITIES

Most Episcopal deacons are aware of two streams of diaconal theology, one in which deacons are lay people, and one in which deacons are ordained (as deacons, not pastors). The theological landscape is very much more complicated than that. Did you know that there are Presbyterian deacons who are ordained pastors as well? That there is a lively community of Methodist deaconesses? Many are aware that ELCA Lutherans have deaconesses and diaconal ministers, who are considered lay people. But these diaconal ministers and deaconesses may often preside over communion like our priest/pastors. The largest, youngest and fastest-growing group of Lutheran deaconesses are not set aside or ordained or consecrated by any Lutheran body at all, but educate and commission themselves. Trying to fit all these manifestations of diaconal identity into our little Episcopal categories is impossible.

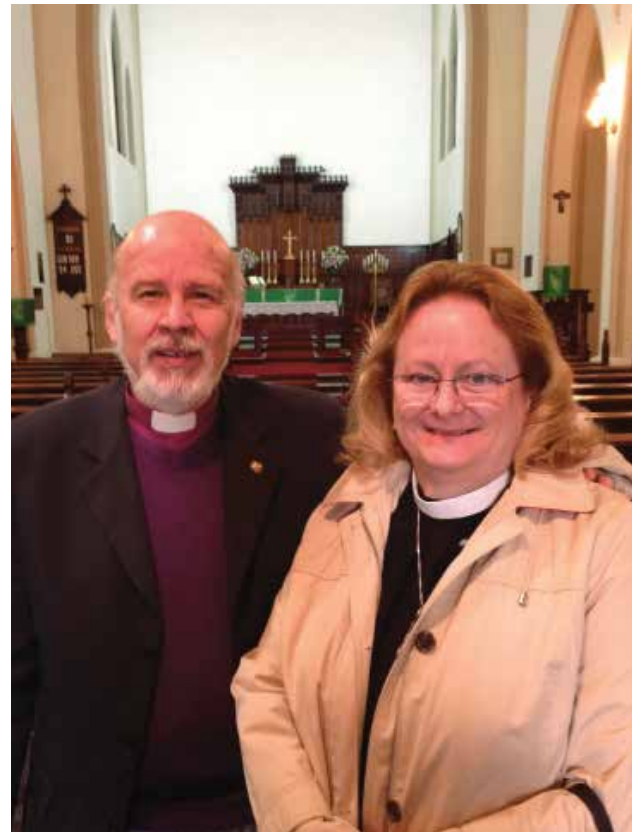
This variety of diaconal identities was refreshing. All of us could recount suffering a bit from lack of understanding in our denominations. But it was clear that what

linked us was the work. Most enlightening for me was the widespread use in other churches of the term “diakonia” to describe all the things churches do to help the world.

## ENVISIONING “DIAKONIA”

What would it mean for diaconal identity in the Episcopal Church to have all the work of Episcopal Relief and Development, United Thank Offering, and our parish mission and outreach committees be referred to as “diakonia?” While I was there, it was Brazil’s National Week of People Living with Disability. The Lutheran Church of Brazil has been a leader in disability awareness, and celebrated their “Programa Diaconia Inclusão”, which translates as Diakonia Inclusiveness Program. The widespread use of such language seemed to me to accentuate that service to others is constitutive of Christian identity, not just the task of deacons set aside especially for that work. Indeed, as we visited a diakonia site in a favela children’s center (where nearly silent 18-month-olds sat in a row against the wall, as we visitors tried to engage them), we were not told who was a deacon and who was not; helping these children was the work of all. Perhaps it was no surprise in such an environment that the Secretaria Geral, their equivalent of our Presiding Bishop, was a deacon, Ingrid Vogt.

I would encourage all deacons to consider travelling to Brazil for the DOTAC Assembly in 2015. Porto Alegre is well-served by many airlines, and while the trip was long, it was worth it. I personally have been in the affordable hotel where we will be staying. Not speaking Portuguese would be a minimal problem, since many Brazilians speak English and DOTAC meetings are conducted in three languages.



*Lori with Dom Orlando Santos de Oliveira, the former bishop of the Anglican Episcopal Church of Brazil’s Diocese Meridional (Southern Diocese). They visited the Catedral da Santíssima Trindade (Most Holy Trinity Cathedral), in Porto Alegre, Brazil.*

What can only be called the charm of the Brazilian people struck me yet again. Everywhere we went, we were greeted with overwhelming kindness. A small example would be my search for a good soccer team memento. Every big city in Brazil has two teams, with a wildly loyal fan base. (Think of the Yankees and the Red Sox both operating out of one city.) At my friends’ insistence, I have adopted the Grêmio team. My time in Porto Alegre became a search for the perfect Grêmio bumper sticker. Soon, the hotel maids, the waiters, the doormen, the sextons and all the Brazilian Lutherans were helping me search! Each day they would check in with a suggestion of another locale that might stock the perfect item.

For many years, the Lutheran Deaconess Association has been urging its members to put aside \$40 a month, so that they can afford to attend the DOTAC assembly. Consider beginning to save now for a worthwhile diaconal adventure in Brazil in 2015. DOTAC works hard to keep the prices as low as possible. Perhaps an AED contingent can travel together more affordably. *Boa viagem!*

# membership in AED

**As a member you'll receive *Diakoneo* newsletter 4 times per year, plus *Deacon Update*, our newsletter, monthly.**

**Additional benefits of membership include:**

- **Support for the ministry of deacons in the US and around the world**
- **Enable the growth of AED and the sharing of resources**
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**The Association for Episcopal Deacons is grateful to those dioceses which supported us in 2013 as Member Dioceses.**

<b>The Episcopal Church</b>	El Camino Real	Navajoland	Rhode Island	Western Michigan
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## social media

### STAY CONNECTED

Did you know that AED is on facebook? Follow this [link](#).

Visit AED's website at [www.episcopaldeacons.org/](http://www.episcopaldeacons.org/)

## JOIN 2 SOCIAL MEDIA GROUPS

Take part in conversations. Read interesting news!

### 1. Deacons in the Episcopal Church, Anglican Church of Canada and other Anglican churches

- A calendar of historic deacons & their accomplishments
- Conversations between deacons <http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/anglodeacons/conversations/messages>
- Open to all

### 2. Archdeacons in the Episcopal and other Anglican churches

- Conversations between persons in charge of deacons in a diocese. <http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/archdeacons/conversations/messages>
- Open to all.

### Do you use social media in your diaconal work?

Will you share your experiences of how you use social media, what you find valuable, engaging, informative, or confusing? Do you tweet? Blog?

We'd like to include articles that provide insight into the various ways deacons and the church are using social media in reaching out to our communities.

What has been your experience?

Contact editor Deacon Anne Pillot at [communications@episcopaldeacons.org](mailto:communications@episcopaldeacons.org).