



NJ DIAKONA HOSTED A GATHERING

SATURDAY, SEPT. 15, 2018,

St. Paul Lutheran Church, Beachwood, NJ

MISSION & EMPOWERMENT OF THE MARGINALIZED

Inspiring—Informative—Equipping...

These are just a few words to describe our day spent with our guest, Rev. Dr. J. Jayakiran Sebastian, Dean and H. George Anderson Professor of Mission & Cultures, United Lutheran Seminary, Gettysburg and Philadelphia



He shared his life experiences and gave us insight into how to better understand the marginalized social, economic, and cultural hierarchies and the commitment on the part of marginalized. We learned how to help and how not to help.

In addition to worshipping together, we enjoyed a delicious lunch and time for fellowship/



Supported by a Thrivent Action Team Grant

To learn more about Thrivent Action Teams, see page 4

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Visit our website
www.njdiakonia.com

Mail: Diakonia
c/o Ellen Lindemann, Chair
404 Whiton Road,
Neshanic Station, NJ 08853

Please advise us of your address changes.

Students, alumni and instructors are invited to submit a newsletter article.

Send us your photos of gatherings and graduation either electronically or mail.

MY DIACONAL MINISTRY JOURNEY

My faith journey has had many twists and turns that have led me to where I am today. The Diakonia program has been such an important part of my story that I'd like to share it with you.

In 2000, my pastor, Fred Neiderhiser mentioned to me that he was teaching a class for Diakonia. He asked me if I might be interested in taking the class. I told him I would give it a try. I'm so glad that I took that class for it turned out to be the starting point of my diaconal journey. I graduated from the Diakonia program in 2002. Like most people who finish the program I asked "So now that I finished the program, what am I going to do with the knowledge that I gained?" The Diakonia program has definitely set the foundation for the ministry that I do today.

Continued on page 2

Vision:

"to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ."
(Ephesians 4:12)

Mission:

Diakonia is an education program to provide spiritual formation to men and women desiring to deepen their understanding of the faith so they might become empowered servants of the Lord.

My Diaconal Ministry Journey Continued from Page 1

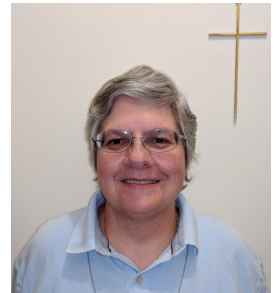
In 2005, I was working as a computer programmer but felt that I wanted to do something more satisfying. I visited Gettysburg Seminary and met with the person in charge of the Diaconal Ministry program. After speaking with her I immediately knew what I wanted to do. I wanted to attend seminary!!! I started the process of entering into the candidacy process with the NJ Synod. I left my job as a computer programmer and started taking classes at the seminary.

Initially I thought I wanted to do youth ministry but God had a different plan for me. I graduated from Gettysburg Seminary in 2007. In 2008, I was consecrated as a diaconal minister. My first call was working as a chaplain with persons with disabilities. Since that time, I have been working as a chaplain at rehabilitation and assisted living facilities. And recently I started working at my home congregation, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Somerville. I visit with homebound members and help out with Adult/Family Ministry and Social Ministry.

The Diakonia program helped me to see the talents and gifts that God has given to me. For example, the “Visitation” class provided me an opportunity to experience visiting people in a hospital setting. At the time, I wasn’t so sure that I exactly liked doing visitations. But I have come to really enjoy visiting people and hearing about their faith journeys. The “Daily Life of a Christian” is another class that has impacted my life and ministry. I learned how to live out my baptismal call by following Jesus’ example of serving others. Serving others has always been an important part of my life. Being part of the Diakonia program has helped me to be even more mindful of serving others.

**Maybe the Diakonia program can be a part of your faith journey.
Why not give it a try???**

DEACON JAMIE DUNGEY
SOMERVILLE DIAKONIA CLASS OF 2002



PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE OF DIAKONIA

I must admit that when I first heard about Diakonia I was intrigued but I was not in a hurry to sign up. There were so many other things to do; kids, work, church obligations, no time for Diakonia. Looking back now all those excuses seem so silly. I was not going to get out of joining Diakonia, I was meant to be part of it. That was ten years ago and Diakonia is still a very important part of my life.

On page 6 of this newsletter you will find a survey for Diakonia graduates which asks them to tell us how this program effected your life. We are collecting your stories to see what impact our work is having. Working with the Diakonia National Board, we will compile information on things graduates have done with their studies after graduation, such as starting a food pantry, working with home communion ministry or other activities. The Diakonia National Board is looking into ways to expand the program.

Diakonia Graduates
I would greatly appreciate you taking a moment to complete
the enclosed survey and return it via mail or email.

I am very pleased to let you know that Rev. Dr. Stephen Bouman, founder of Diakonia will be rejoining the national board to help us with our expansion efforts. Keep your eyes open for updates in future newsletters.

ELLEN LINDEMANN
CHAIR, NJ DIAKONIA STEERING COMMITTEE
CHAIR, DIAKONIA NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THE PASTOR'S CORNER

Dear servant community:

Diakonia in New Jersey has completed its first “distance learning” class using Zoom video conferencing. We gathered a small cohort from various places around the state who needed to complete the Christian Doctrine class and who were willing to serve as our test group, including some who were quite apprehensive about the technological aspects of participation. I am happy to report that the class went very smoothly overall!

There was a “practice” session several days before the actual class began at which the teacher and the learners were able to become more familiar with the video conferencing program, and there was a slight technological glitch during the first class session, but beyond that, everything went very well! The students and

**DIAKONIA
HAS GONE
HIGH TECH!**

teacher are able to see one another and what’s on one person’s computer screen is able to be shared with others if need be. Emails further allowed for the sharing of documents, bibliographies, reading assignments and the like.

All in all the experiment worked well, verifying that

A MESSAGE FROM REV. MATTHEW CIMORELLI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE NJ DIAKONIA STEERING COMMITTEE

classes can be held in this way in situations when there are not enough students in a given location, or for those for whom travel is a difficulty or hindrance to participation. The only real draw back that the participants noted was the lack of physical connectedness – for example, the ability to give a classmate a hug if they shared a particular struggle or to find the appropriate rhythm or cadence when praying the Lord’s Prayer or speaking the Creed together during devotions. However, these were considered minor concerns when weighed against the advantages of increasing access to the learning and spiritual growth provided by participation in Diakonia classes.

Moving forward, more classes will be offered via Zoom, broadening the reach of this vital educational opportunity. So if you know of someone who has been interested in joining Diakonia but has hesitated because they haven’t been able to find a location that works for them, share the good news that Diakonia has gone high tech!

God’s richest blessing be with you all.

PASTOR MATT CIMORELLI



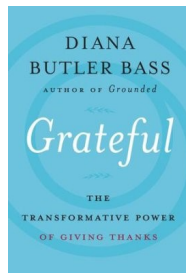
On My Shelf

“Grateful – The Transformative Power of Giving Thanks” by Diana Butler Bass is a much needed counter balance to our current culture. I needed something to give me hope and change my attitude from despair. This book has helped me to do that. Bass begins by sharing her own story of feeling unable or inept at saying ‘thank you’ whether in notes or in person. She is a writer about “faith, spirituality, history, and culture – about living purposefully, about how we gather together, and about a world of compassion, care and love, about faith and God.”

This book contains parts about the emotions and ethics of gratitude that are interwoven with faith references and Bass’ own personal story, especially the time when she was fired from her job as a college professor and had no source of income. She also shares her story of abuse as a young girl that left her struggling as an adult to find an attitude of gratefulness. The second half of the book speaks to the joy that a community can generate in acts of thankfulness and the ethics or politics that can drive the community to act. Many of us remember with

gratefulness the many acts of kindness that proliferate after a disaster or crisis.

Gratitude is not about stuff. Gratitude is the emotional response to the surprise of our very existence, to sensing that inner light realizing the astonishing sacred, social, and scientific events that brought each one of us into being. We cry out like the psalmist, ‘I am fearfully and wonderfully made!’ Psalm 139:14.” P. 43



Bass also examines several scripture references throughout the book, but she writes with insight into the story of Zacchaeus and the symbolism of the Last Supper as stories of changed hearts and the response of gratitude. Thanksgiving and the season of giving thanks is rapidly approaching. As Christians we give thanks to God for the abundance with which he has blessed us. This book, “Grateful”, can help you carry that gratitude into your everyday life and be a force for change in your heart and your community.

With thanks for all the godly wisdom illuminated at Diakonia,

DEACON LINDA WALKER

MEMBER OF NJ DIAKONIA STEERING COMMITTEE

THRIVENT ACTION TEAMS CAN HELP YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE



What is Thrivent: This is a not-for-profit membership organization of Christians with more than 100 years of helping members be wise with money and be good stewards of the gifts God has given them. Lutheran Brotherhood and Aid Association for Lutherans are part of the history that created Thrivent Financial

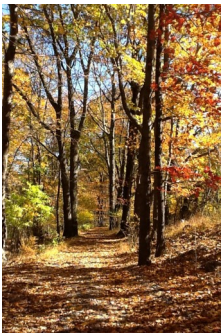
What are Action Teams: Think about an unmet need in your community and how you could help. Apply to lead your volunteer team in a one-time fundraiser, service activity or educational event that can be completed within 90 days .

Who is eligible to lead a team: . All Thrivent members are eligible to lead a Thrivent Action Team. Benefit Members are eligible for two per year and Associate Members are eligible to lead one per year.

How do I get started: It starts with an idea powered by your passion. Bring a volunteer team together to make an immediate impact on a cause you care about. Thrivent help get you started and provide . It's easy, just go to <https://www.thrivent.com/making-a-difference/living-generously/Thrivent-action-teams/>
Or Call 800-847-4836

How will Thrivent Help: Once your project is approved, you'll receive a Thrivent Action Kit, including:

- Promotional banner.
- Invitations, name tags and thank-you cards.
- Thrivent Action Team T-shirts.
- A \$250 Community Impact Card you can use as seed money to get your project off the ground and make a bigger impact..



CROSS  ROADS CAMP AND RETREAT CENTER

A welcoming, ecumenical camp of the NJ Synod of the ELCA and the Episcopal Diocese of Newark
Pleasant Grove Road in Port Murray, NJ, 908-832-7264

<http://crossroadsretreat.com> www.facebook.com/CrossRoadsRetreat

Located on 250 mountaintop acres in the beautiful highlands of northwestern NJ. They provide comfortable facilities, picturesque grounds, and transformational experiences for all ages. The Christ Center is built specifically for adult groups. Private bedrooms and bathrooms. Spacious meeting rooms - the main one with cathedral ceilings, comfortable sofas, a beautiful large fireplace, and outdoor decks.

CROSS ROADS IS MORE THAN CAMP

Throughout the year, Cross Roads provides a variety of opportunities for men and women, youth workers, SCS teachers, church leaders as well as retreats.

WEDNESDAY AWAY

Nov. 2, Dec. 9 and first Wednesday of month, Sept. thru June, 9:00 3:00. Join us for a time of rest and renewal, a time for prayer and conversation. A Spiritual Director will be available throughout the day. Cost of \$50.00 includes lunch.

MORE UPCOMING ACTIVITIES:

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RETREAT—Feb. 15-17, 2019

MIDDLE SCHOOL RETREAT—Marc. 8-10 and again on April 26-28, 2019

SHEPHERDS GATHERING—For those who work with children and youth in the church

RENEW-RESOLVE-REJOICE—A retreat for young adults , ages 18 to 30ish

WINTER WONDERLAND—Family Retreat—That’s right—Family = Family + Friends



Shepherds Gathering
WHERE ARE WE GOING? Nov 29 - Dec 2
Programming starts Nov 30 after dinner at 5:30. Depart as needed. Meals will be served until breakfast Dec 2. Cost: \$65
HOW DO WE GET THERE? Can't make the whole retreat. Join us for the day on December 1 from 9:30-4:00. Cost: \$10
We will join together to reflect on how we journey with children and youth on the Way of Love that Christ lays out and how we can help them navigate the road ahead.



RENEW-RESOLVE-REJOICE
A retreat for young adults, ages 18 to 30-ish
FROM JANUARY 4 - 6, 2019 WE WILL:
• RENEW OUR COVENANT WITH GOD AND ALL LIVING CREATURES



Winter Wonderland
Every season brings something new
Friends + Family Framily
January 18 - 20, 2019
Cost: Varies depending on lodging and age.
Register at:
www.CrossRoadsRetreat.com

For information and registration, go to <http://crossroadsretreat.com>



We would like to congratulate Sharla DeLawter, Diakonia graduate and Teaneck Site Manager, on her volunteer recognition award. Sharla was recognized by the Bergen County Council of Churches for her volunteer services in the Teaneck Area.

CLASSIFIEDS

WANTED: Positions Available at Diakonia

- ★ Someone with a hunger to grow in faith and knowledge.
- ★ Someone who desires to serve their faith community and the community at large, but fear they don't "know enough".
- ★ Someone to whom you would recommend participating in Diakonia.
- ★ A congregation interested in hosting Diakonia classes.

If interested, contact Diakonia via mail or internet (see pg. 1)



Would you like a Diakonia Shirt Or Canvas Bag? Use this Order Form



Diakonia Logo in Red on All Items

<u>White Short Sleeve Golf Shirts</u>	
Size S to XL	\$ 24.00
Size 2X	25.50
Size 3X	27.00
<u>White Long Sleeve Sweatshirts</u>	
Sizes S to XL	\$ 20.00
Size 2X	21.50
Size 3X	23.00

Canvas Bag
bags are neutral with red straps
Size is 12 x 13 x 5
Cost \$17.00

Make checks payable to "Diakonia"
Mail your check and this form to:
Ellen Lindemann
404 Whiton Road
Neshanic Station, NJ 08853

Date of Order: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Golf Shirt		Sweatshirt		Canvas Bag	Sub Total	Shipping	Total
Size	Qty.	Size	Qty.	Qty.			
						\$5.00	

DIAKONIA GRADUATE SURVEY

Name: _____	Site Attended: _____	Year Graduated: _____
Address _____		

What does Diakonia mean to you?:

What have you done because of Diakonia?:

Any Comments?

Is there someone you would like us to contact?

If you need additional space for your input, please use the back of this page.

In Appreciation

*Congratulations on your participation in Diakonia and your accomplishment of graduating.
Thank you for taking time to complete our survey which will help us improve and expand the program.*

Return your survey by December 1, 2018
By mail to Ellen Lindemann, Steering Committee Chair
404 Whiton Road
Neshanic Station, NJ 08853

Or convey info by email to joangrace511@optimum.net