

# Servanthood



A publication of the New Jersey Diakonia Steering Committee

## “Walking with Luther and the Catechism”

**Diakonia Annual Fall Retreat for Diakonia Students and Alumni.**  
**Friday, October 21-as early as 3:00 PM with dinner at 5:30 PM to through**

**Saturday, Oct. 22, morning prayer followed by breakfast at 8:00 AM, morning and afternoon program with closing worship at 3:00 PM.**  
**Cross Roads Retreat Center, Port Murray, NJ**

Luther used the Catechism daily as the subject of meditation and conversation about God’s world. He preached on the Catechism, wrote hymns about the Catechism and had woodcuts made to illustrate the Catechism so that all might learn and love the core of God’s Word. He considered the Catechism as the foundation on which to build our faith.

For our retreat we will gather together for conversation and prayer using Luther’s “What does this mean?” to explore the Apostles Creed and the Lord’s Prayer. The words and phrases are so familiar that we may not really hear them.



Continued on page 4 “Walking with Luther”

## Pg.. ALSO INSIDE THIS EDITION

- 2 - June Graduation Celebration
- Pastor’s Corner
- 3 - On My Shelf—A Book Review
- Cross Roads Camp and Retreat Center
- 4 - Locations of Diakonia Classes
- Registration for Retreat

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Sun., Sept. 11, God’s Work, Our Hands. An ELCA dedicated day of service. (pg.3)
- Fri.-Sat., Oct. 21-22, NJ Diakonia Annual Retreat at Cross Roads, Port Murray, NJ
- Sat., Sept. 17, 10:00 AM. NJ Diakonia Steering Committee Meeting at Cross of Glory, Aberdeen, NJ
- Sat., March 4, 2017, 10:00 am Diakonia sponsors A Gathering with guest speaker, Rev. Dr. Davis Lose, Pres. LTSP

## CONTACT US

Email [diakonia@comcast.net](mailto:diakonia@comcast.net)

Visit our website

[www.njdiakonia.com](http://www.njdiakonia.com)

Please note new corrected URL



Mail: Diakonia c/o Marlene Tona  
 7 Round Valley Lane,  
 Lakewood, NJ 08701

Please advise us of your address changes.

## WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU

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

Send us pictures of your graduation or of any Diakonia gathering, either by mail or electronically.

**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.



## REFORMED AND EVER TRANSFORMING!

One of the great joys of working with Diakonia in New Jersey and across the country is hearing students’ and graduates’ stories on how the program has transformed their lives. I know how much it transformed my life and I hope it transformed yours. As Lutherans, we live with our history of being reformed and as diakonia students and graduates we are also transformed!

For the last year the diakonia Steering Committee has adopted the mantra “Reformed and Ever Reforming!” for our programming. Our journey to ever reforming and transforming continues this academic year with two very exciting events.

**DIAKONIA ANNUAL RETREAT**, which will be held on **October 21-22, 2016** at Cross Roads (see above)

**A GATHERING** will be held on **March 4, 2017**

Rev. Dr. David Lose, President of the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia will be our guest speaker.

Diakonia is sponsoring this gathering which is open to all. Dr. Lose will talk to us about preparing servants for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. More information on the location and times will be upcoming shortly.

As we prepare to celebrate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation, I hope you will take the opportunities mentioned above to continue your diakonia journey of reformation and transformation!

Ellen Lindemann, Chair, NJ Diakonia Steering Committee

## Congratulations Graduates

Saturday, June 25, 2016, Santa Isabel Lutheran Church, Elizabeth, NJ



Priscilla Carrasquillo, St. Paul, Elizabeth  
Haydee Colon, St. Paul, Elizabeth  
Sigrid Erickson, St. Paul, Teaneck  
Barbara Hines, Cross of Glory, Aberdeen  
Jennifer Murray, St Paul, Teaneck  
Barbara Osborne, Our Redeemer, Dumont  
Marisol Soto, St. Paul, Elizabeth S

Special Guest Rev. Kimberly Vaughn  
Asst. to the Bishop for Multicultural Ministry  
New Jersey ELCA



### THE PASTOR'S CORNER

Dear fellow servants:

What a joy it was, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June, to gather for our 2016 Graduation Liturgy and Celebration of Holy Communion, as the first members of the newly established Diakonia site at Santa Isabel Lutheran Church in Elizabeth graduated! It reminded me of the oft quoted reformation mantra: “Reformed, and ever reforming!” In some ways this graduation looked very much like Diakonia graduations have looked for years. In other ways, it was reformed in significant and important ways.

We gathered for worship using a setting from ELW. Nothing new there! Only, this time, the setting we used was Setting 7 which is a Spanish language setting, translated into English. This reflected the fact that among the graduates were the first graduates from our first Spanish language site. As we worshipped, Spanish and English language texts and songs were used, and I was reminded that the Church is global.

It is far too easy for the majority white members of most of our Congregations to forget that God’s Spirit is at work in communities that are not majority white. It is also easy for some to find themselves threatened by that fact. In response, there are those who resist the changes that inevitably come when a group or organization, like Diakonia makes intentional strides toward greater inclusivity and multiculturalism. And so it is with great joy that I share with you that I have not heard,

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

and did not experience in our gathering on graduation day, a single hint of such resistance! Praise be to God!

Might we as an organization be changed – you might say, “reformed” – as we continue intentionally striving toward ever greater inclusivity? Absolutely! But that’s the point, is it not, of being both reformed and ever reforming? Are we not to seek God’s face, and the guidance of God’s Spirit, in sharing the blessing that is Diakonia, and the unique opportunity Diakonia offers individuals who seek to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and in service to the world in Jesus’ name with all of God’s people?

I cannot wait to see what God will do in and through us in the days, months and years to come, as we continue to gather God’s people for intentional study and discernment, challenging one another to grow in knowledge, love and service, together, learning from one another, being challenged and changed by God’s Word coming from all corners of the Church. My hope and prayer is that God will continue to bless our work, and that we will continue to reflect, more and more, the wonderful diversity of the Church, here and around the globe.

Grace, mercy and peace be with you all, in the name of Jesus who saves us.

Pastor Matt





**On My Shelf**

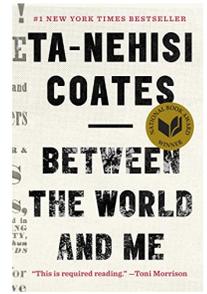
With all the chaos, conflict and confusion in the world, the most stable and calm place in my life is my bookshelf. Filled with words which I have chosen to reflect on, be led by and gain inspiration for my faith journey. I have chosen for you a book that caused me to change how I viewed the world and to wrestle with my church's position on diversity and inclusiveness. Ta-Nehsi Coates' National Book Award winning memoir, "Between the World and Me" was eye opening and disturbing. He is not afraid to tell of his experiences growing up in Baltimore and Howard University as a condemnation of racism in this country that defies our adulation of democracy.

Coates has written a series of essays and places them in a letter written to his teenage son to tell of the racial divide that still exists in this country, but has its roots in history and hierarchy. I began reading this book hoping for acknowledgment that things are better in America and that the nonviolent demonstrations of the sixties had made a significant change, but Coates

provides a litany of events and personal experiences that support the Black communities perception that the KKK has been supplanted by the police who act first and ask questions later.

I participated in an interfaith book discussion that opened my eyes and ears to my neighbors and my fellow parishioners in a way I had never anticipated. "I tell you now that the question of how one should live within a black body, within a country lost in the Dream, is the question of my life, and the pursuit of this question, I have found, ultimately answers itself." (Coates) I found consolation in the community acknowledgement that asking the questions and then really listening to each other is the beginning of grace and healing. I urge you to listen to his voice in the midst of the shouting and protests and to remember Jesus' command to love you neighbor.

Linda Walker, Associate in Ministry  
Member of NJ Diakonia Steering Committee



**CHRIST CENTER AT CROSS ROADS IS THE SITE OF DIAKONIA ANNUAL RETREAT THIS YEAR.**



**CROSS ROADS**



**CAMP AND RETREAT CENTER**

Pleasant Grove Road in Port Murray, NJ  
(908) 832-7264

<http://crossroadsretreat.com>  
[www.facebook.com/CrossRoadsRetreat](http://www.facebook.com/CrossRoadsRetreat)

Come and join our retreat at the camp's Christ Center, built specifically for adult retreat groups housing. Private bedrooms and bathrooms. Spacious meeting rooms - the main one with cathedral ceilings, comfortable sofas, a beautiful large fireplace. Take time to enjoy the outdoor decks.

Located on 250 mountaintop acres in the beautiful highlands of northwestern NJ. The retreat center and camp provide comfortable facilities, picturesque grounds, and transformational experiences for all ages.

Cross Roads is a welcoming, ecumenical camp of the NJ Synod of the ELCA and the Episcopal Diocese of Newark.



**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 for Elementary, Middle and High School. Upcoming adult events are:

**WOMEN'S RETREAT**—Sept. 30-Oct. 2 and Oct. 14-16—Two identical retreats.

Come and celebrate what it means to be made in the image of God through prayer, fellowship, scripture and song.

**WEDNESDAY AWAY**—Oct. 5, Nov. 2, Dec. 9 and first Wednesday of month, 9:00 AM—3:00 PM

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.

**VOLLEYBALL MARATHON & INTERGENERATIONAL EVENT FOR CROSS ROADS**—

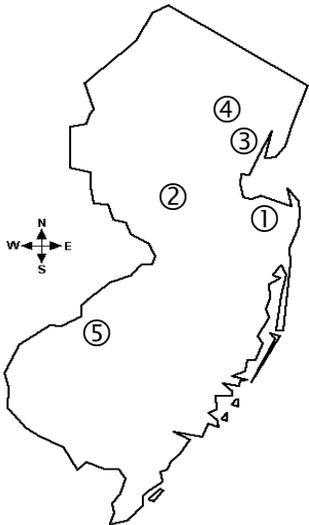
Intergenerational Retreat: October 7-9, 2016. Volleyball Marathon: October 8-9, 2016. Cost—Free

**God's work.  
Our hands.**

**SUNDAY , SEPT. 11 IS AN ELCA DEDICATED DAY OF SERVICE**

This is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor. Mark your calendars today! If your congregation cannot participate in God's Work. Our Hands. on this date, please consider another day. For info go to <https://www.elca.org/dayofservice>.

**2016-2017 diakonia classes will be offered starting in September at**



- ① Cross of Glory Lutheran Church, 95 Cambridge Drive, Aberdeen  
Classes meet on Tuesday evenings  
Contact: Walter Kain, 732-441-7049, [walter49@optonline.net](mailto:walter49@optonline.net) ,
- ② Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 300 Union Ave., Somerville, NJ  
Classes meet on Tuesday evenings  
Contact: Joan Grace, 908-526-2602, [joangrace511@optimum.net](mailto:joangrace511@optimum.net)
- ③ St. John’s Lutheran Church, 155 North Street, Jersey City NJ  
Day of week classes meet to be announced  
Contact: Rose Davis, 201-214-5300, [rosednj25@aim.com](mailto:rosednj25@aim.com).
- ④ St. Paul Lutheran Church, Teaneck, 61 Church Street, Teaneck, NJ  
Classes meet on Thursday evenings  
Contact: Sharla DeLawter, 973-304-1362, [sharladel@aol.com](mailto:sharladel@aol.com)

**Coming in 2017-2018 Semester**

- ⑤ St. Mark Lutheran Church, 409 White Horse Pike , Oaklyn  
Contact: Bill Emerson, 856-853-1277, [tymex@comcast.net](mailto:tymex@comcast.net)

If you would like to begin classes at your church. Contact Diakonia by letter, phone or email for information.

**WE ARE SEARCHING FOR A WEB MASTER**

Are you a savvy computer user? Do you enjoy connecting with others on the computer? If this is your gift, please consider being a web master for the Diakonia site. As web master you would be responsible for updating the site quarterly.

Please take a look at our new and improved website at **[www.njdiakonia.com](http://www.njdiakonia.com)**

If interested, please contact Ellen Lindemann at [diakonia@comcast.net](mailto:diakonia@comcast.net)

**“WALKING WITH LUTHER” CONT’D. FROM PAGE I**

We will have small group opportunities to explore new meanings and expressions of the Lord’s Prayer and the Creed. And we will grow stronger in our faith together to go out and serve the Lord.

Each participant will receive a copy of the new commemorative edition of the Small Catechism being published by Augsburg. In his introduction to the Large Catechism, Luther speaks lovingly of his devotion to the Catechism. “yet it is highly profitable and fruitful to read it daily and to make it the subject of meditation and conversation.”

REGISTRATION is below.

**Retreat Registration—Oct. 21-22— “Walking with Luther and the Catechism”  
For Diakonia Students and Alumni**

Name: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Two Day Staying Overnight	\$150.00
Address: _____	Incl. Three Meals, Friday Dinner, Saturday Breakfast and Lunch	
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Two-Days Commuter	\$100.00
_____	Incl. Three Meals, Friday Dinner, Saturday Breakfast and Lunch	
Phone: _____ email: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Only	\$75.00
Roommate Preference, if any: _____	Incl. Breakfast and Lunch	
<input type="checkbox"/> I need a handicapped accessible room.	<input type="checkbox"/> Friday Only	\$50.00
	Incl. Light Dinner	

All linens and towels are provided. Bring your own toiletries. Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**REGISTER BY OCTOBER 14.** Make checks payable to “diakonia” and forward registration, checks and questions to:  
Marlene Tona, Treasurer, diakonia, 7 Round Valley Lane, Lakewood, NJ 08701  
732-617-9109 or [matona@optonline.net](mailto:matona@optonline.net)