

Servanthood



A publication of the New Jersey Diakonia Steering Committee

Congratulations



*The 2017 Graduating Class
of the New Jersey Locations of Diakonia
June 24, 2017, held at
St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Jersey City, NJ*

Back (L-R)

- Timothy John Keene, Cross of Glory, Aberdeen
- William Elmer Riley, St. Paul, Jersey City
- Marian H. Vaughn, Cross of Glory, Aberdeen
- Laurie Kathleen Noch, Cross of Glory, Aberdeen
- Samuel Roger Keene, Cross of Glory, Aberdeen

Front Row (L-R)

- Jane Hollis, St. John, Jersey City
- Denise Copeland, St. John, Jersey City
- Paige Aly, St. John, Jersey City
- Patricia Espejo, Grace, Bayonne
- Kennedy Ogowora Nyangacha, St. John, Jersey City

Patricia Espejo, recent graduate writes:
The entire Diakonia Journey was very worthwhile and rewarding. I highly recommend it to anyone who wants to learn more about their faith. With each class, I felt my faith in Jesus Christ grow. I learned more about why and what I believed. I became more self-confident when discussing my Lutheranism with others. It also whet my appetite, and made me want to learn more. *(Patricia attended classes at St. Paul in Teaneck, St. John's in Jersey City and Gustavus Adolphus in Manhattan.)*

The graduation experience was thrilling. There were students from many locations. I was able to graduate with my fellow Jersey City students and two of my classmates from Manhattan even came to the graduation service, much to my joy and sur-

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The diakonia Steering Committee will be mailing an information packet to all of the churches in the NJ Synod by the end of October.



Please do us a favor and look around your church to see if the flier gets posted.

If it does not, please inquire about it.

We are trying to get information about the program out to as many people as possible,

CONTACT US

Email diakonia@comcast.net

Visit our website
www.njdiakonia.com

Mail: Diakonia c/o Joan Grace
511 Golf Links Drive,
Bridgewater, NJ 08807

Please advise us of your address changes. Students, alumni and instructors are invited to submit a newsletter article.

Photos of gatherings and graduation can be sent either electronically or mail.

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.



By the time you read this we will have officially have entered fall. I have always loved fall... colder weather, football, back to school (yes I was one of those kids!), back to a normal schedule. So with diakonia the fall brings a great new academic year. With each new year there are changes that must be made. We are pleased to welcome the students and instructors at our newest site in Oaklyn. Work is being done to introduce diakonia to the Neptune area soon.

We are currently working to introduce an exciting new method of delivering instruction, the use of Zoom video conferencing. This "site" would require students to attend class weekly via their computer. The students would be able to see and hear each other and the instructor. Assignments would be handed in via an email attachment. You would still be required to be "in

class" at a set time each week, but you could do so from the comfort of your own home. We would like to pilot this program in the spring to make certain this is a comfortable method of delivery of instruction. Please keep your eyes open for a formal notice for when this "site" will open.

You may notice that we will not be holding our usual fall retreat this year. After a great deal of discussion the steering committee decided to forgo a retreat this year. There are a number of exciting programs being offered in October in commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. I pray that you will take part in at least one of these activities. You may find these listed on the Synod website and in Jersey Jottings.

In our next newsletter we will be giving you more information on our Spring Gathering. Enjoy the beauty of God's creation this fall!

THE PASTOR'S CORNER

Dear people of God in the *diakonia* community:

In these days of commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation I find myself reflecting on something we read in worship a couple weeks ago – Romans 12:2, where Paul writes: Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds.

Now, I don't know about you, but each time I hear this text I connect it to an earlier verse from Paul's letter – Romans 10:17 where we read: So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.

Taken together these verses seem to clearly point to a couple of central Reformation themes.

- 1) The importance of ongoing reformation, both in our lives as individual Christians and in the Church, the assembly of God's people; and
- 2) The importance of understanding that it's God's Word that is the impetus and the guide for this ongoing reforming, or to use Paul's words this ongoing renewing of the mind.

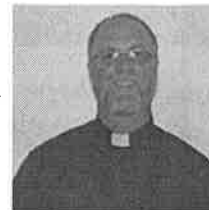
As we continue to serve Christ's people together as

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

members of this *diakonia* community in New Jersey, the centrality of attending to God's word really ought to be held strongly at the center. However, we realize that in the rapidly changing world in which we live and serve, this program must also be ever-reforming in how we make available opportunities for God's people to participate in this important activity. So we are pleased to announce in this newsletter steps that our Steering Committee have been taking to broaden our ability to reach God's people, giving them opportunities to participate in the learning and spiritual growth offered through participation in *diakonia*.

More than anything, it is my hope and prayer as the Executive Director of *diakonia* in NJ that the programing we offer, whether through distance learning or at our various class sites, would help disciples of Jesus to become ever more active servants of all, for the sake of the Gospel and the good of the world.

I give thanks to God for all who are part of this community, and especially for those who serve in leadership here. May we all continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus our Lord, and in





The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), will host a commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation on Oct. 31 at the Lutheran Church of the Reformation in Washington, D.C. The event, which will meet under the theme "Looking Back and Called Forward," will be available online via livestream for all to watch.

The event will be open to the public and available online via livestream. All are invited to participate and honor the Reformation anniversary as the ELCA bears public witness to Christ, who frees us to love and serve our neighbor, and as we look to the future to which God is calling us.



NJ Synod's Ecumenical and Interfaith Team has been meeting and working on ways to observe this significant anniversary. They will publicize local events on our website and through Jersey Jottings as we are made aware of them.

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Upcoming Local Events posted by the synod include:

- Oct. 28, 1-4 PM, Atonement, Asbury Park: Reformation Fair. Please RSVP 732-776-5727, or atonechrch@optimum.net
- Oct. 29, 4:00 PM St. Anastasia Roman Catholic Church, partnering with the Lutheran churches in Teaneck, NJ: The fourth of four conversations using the *From Conflict to Communion by the Lutheran-Roman Catholic*

FROM ELCA BLOG PAGE

REFLECTION ON VISIT TO ELIZABETH, NJ DETENTION CENTER FOR UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS

by Stephen Bouman, Exec. Dir. of ELCA Domestic Mission and Founder of Diakonia

Excerpts from July 14 post

I joined Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton in a visit to the Elizabeth, New Jersey Detention Center for undocumented immigrants. It was a convening of the many partners and allies in New Jersey who accompany civil society and its issues with the Gospel..... We came at the invitation of Pastor Ramon Collazo, pastor of Santa Isabel Lutheran Church in Elizabeth and their parish leaders. He is also chaplain at the Detention Center and has established respectful relationships with the leadership of the Center, which has opened doors for the visitation and worship Lutherans provide. (Pastor Collazo offered bi-lingual Diakonia classes at Santa Isabel.)



It was a full, emotional, troubling, hopeful day. We shared time with the young people and their leaders of the confirmation camp sharing stories about their own experience with immigrants in their family history and relationships, the issues involved, a biblical framework. We met with the leaders assembled above and their efforts to accompany those being deported where families are being ripped apart, as well as to advocate on issues of policy. Pastors talked about the challenges and opportunities of conversation with their own parishioners who have divergent views on immigration issues. The PICO community organizer spoke about keeping the issue of race front and center in dealing with immigration issues. Volunteers talked about how Saturday visitations at the Center was the best part of their week and helped give a human face to these issues in real and deepening relationships. Pastor Ramon and his leaders spoke about the life and leadership of their parish, and how they are trying to nurture and form leadership for their emerging Latino ministry.

Continue reading at <http://blogs.elca.org/disasterresponse/ammpareflection/>

If you or your congregation want to learn more and support the ministry, worship with faith community that gathers every Wednesday and Friday at the Elizabeth Detention Center or visit individuals in detention, please

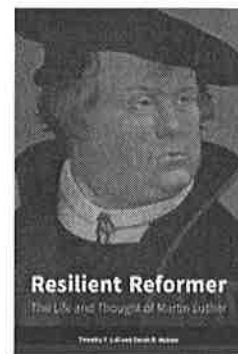


On My Shelf

When you receive this newsletter it will be October and all of Lutherland will be celebrating and remembering the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. It seems appropriate then to review a book about Martin Luther. There have been many publications recently about the Reformation and even a couple of movies about the life and global implications of the Reformation and Brother Martin, but I have chosen “Resilient Reformer – The Life and Thought of Martin Luther” by Timothy Lull and Derek Nelson and published by Fortress Press.

As a biography of Luther it progresses in chronological order beginning with his family life and ending with his death, but it is the in-between times that intrigued me most. The book illuminates how he wrestled with his own salvation and the corruption of his beloved church. It is fortuitous for the church’s history when Luther is appointed as a professor of the Bible to the young university at Wittenberg which

also had its own printing business. Luther found himself in the right place at the right time to change history and the church even when that was never his intention. It is his reading of scripture and his stand on God’s Word as the only authority of faith that brings about the dramatic personal change and condemnation of church practice and teaching.



Although this book was written by two scholarly authors, their gifts as teachers shine through in their writing style and in how the book was printed. It is enjoyable to read. The format is easy on the eyes and it tells of Luther’s life as a story worth hearing. Luther’s theology shines through especially in chapters 4, 8, and 10. There are numerous Luther quotes, but they are always placed within the historical and biographical context. I highly

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



CAMP AND RETREAT CENTER

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

<http://crossroadsretreat.com>

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

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—Oct. 14-16

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

WEDNESDAY AWAY—Nov. 2, Dec. 9 and first Wednesday of month, Feb. thru June, 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.

RALLY FOR CROSS ROADS & INTERGENERATIONAL RETREAT

Intergenerational Retreat: October 6 - 8, 2017 - Arrive: 7 pm on the 6th - Depart: 9 am on the 8th - Cost: Free

Volleyball Marathon: October 7 - 8, 2017 - Arrive: 9 pm on the 7th - Depart: 9 am on the 8th - Cost: Free

MEN’S RETREAT— October 20 - 22, 2017 - Arrive at 7:00 PM on the 20th

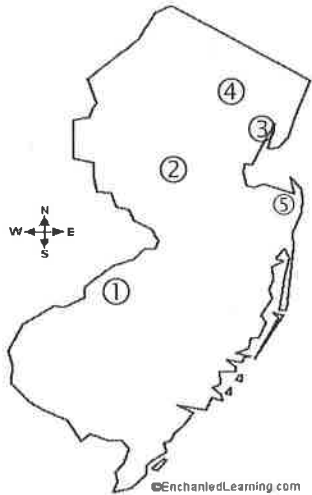
A weekend of renewal is the perfect time to get away and spend a spirit-filled weekend. We will explore together the impact of the Reformation on understandings of marriage, sex, education and the roles of men and women. Opportunities for study, worship and reflection will help participants consider the opportunities and challenges men face as we live into the ongoing reforming identity of our faith.



Rev. Roger William Spencer, entered the church triumphant on May 23, 2017. He served as pastor of Stephen's Lutheran Church in Edison, and Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Glen Rock. Pastor Spencer was a diakonia instructor and also

Diakonia Sites

We would like to welcome our newest class site, St. Mark's in Oaklyn. There are 12 students this semester in Oaklyn, with more to come! Thanks to Bill Emerson, Cindy Page and Pat Cook in Oaklyn who are working very hard to spread God's Word through diakonia.



- ① St. Mark Lutheran Church, 409 White Horse Pike , Oaklyn, NJ 08107
Contact: Bill Emerson, 856-853-1277, tymex@comcast.net
- ② Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 300 Union Ave., Somerville, NJ 08876
Contact: Joan Grace, 908-526-2602, joangrace511@optimum.net
- ③ St. John's Lutheran Church, 155 North Street, Jersey City NJ 07307
Contact: Rose Davis, 201-214-5300, rosednj25@aim.com.
- ④ Redeemer Lutheran Church, Neptune City, NJ 07753
Contact: Marlene Tona, matona@optonline.net
- ⑤ St. Paul Lutheran Church, Teaneck, 61 Church Street, Teaneck, NJ 07666
Contact: Sharla DeLawter, 973-304-1362, sharladel@aol.com

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



**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

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Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Make checks payable to “**Diakonia**”
Mail your check and this form to:
Ellen Lindemann
404 Whiton Road

| Golf Shirt | | Sweatshirt | | Canvas Bag | Sub Total | Shipping | Total |
|------------|------|------------|------|------------|-----------|----------|-------|
| Size | Qty. | Size | Qty. | Qty. | | | |
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