

Dotac Representative  
Report To DUCC  
Spring 2005

**DOTAC Structure:** There is one representative from each member group that is on the DOTAC Central Committee. Currently there are eleven member groups of DOTAC. In the year of the World Federation DIAKONIA conference, officers are elected and two people are named to represent DOTAC at World Federation Executive. Normally those representatives are the President of DOTAC and one other person selected by the member groups. For the past four years myself and Sr. Hildegart Hertel as co-presidents of DOTAC have been DOTAC representatives.

**DOTAC Activities:** Since DUCC's last meeting DOTAC has had two meetings. Some of the reporting in this accountability report will have been reported in Tapestry and Diaconal News. DOTAC has been focusing in the last two years on Incorporation, Names We Call Ourselves, new members, Mission Statement, DOTAC Conference, as well as redevelopment of the application form and a new brochure. In this report I will provide an overview of what has been developing since we last met.

**Recommendations for Incorporation:** It was approved after much research and faithful deliberation that DOTAC incorporate. It was also agreed after much discussion that the charter of DOTAC be approved and that we authorize its filing with the Secretary of the State of Tennessee. The questions raised by this decision were: why do we need to be incorporated, would that ruin the Spirit of DOTAC, would be too concerned about the bylaws and the Charter that we would not be creative in our work. Also why would the Charter have to be in the US, why not elsewhere and after much deliberation was decided that it would be held in Tennessee, a smaller place in the US than NY state.

**Names We Call Ourselves:** We have begun to develop a list of terms used that we are called. All our member groups have different terms for and meanings for the ministry of DIAKONIA. This is a work in progress.

**DOVE:** Diakonia overcoming violence education. The next DOVE was scheduled for the Caribbean and possibly Haiti. The situation in Haiti is presently unsure with an unstable government. It was agreed that a DOVE event will be planned for New York City in 2007. Dana Jones will be asked to be the theological reflector; will check with Alma Mathews House (Methodist House for Women In Ministry) for accommodation; and co-ordinate the planning team. A good publicity piece will need to be available at DOTAC 2006. We may need to modify the participant mix of 3 representatives from the areas.

**DOTAC Brochure:** Is now available and I sent it to the regional representatives for distribution. The brochure is in English, Spanish and Portuguese.

**DIAKONIA Bookmark:** It was agreed to put the bookmark information on the website. No cost for the bookmark, but a donation toward shipping is appreciated.

**Peace Statement:** DOTAC Central Committee calls on its member groups to strengthen our commitment to be peacemakers and peacebuilders. DOTAC is committed to supporting the Decade to Overcome Violence\* as an expression of our Christian call to peacework. Within this context DOTAC is supporting projects and experiences which focus on the theme of overcoming violence.

Sadly, the war in Iraq in 2003, has adversely affected DOTAC and its member groups, preventing full participation in DOTAC Central Committee meeting in May 2003.

The fear of traveling to the United States, refusal of visas, and the United States government war in Iraq has jeopardized DOTAC events scheduled in the US.

We ask that prayers for peace be included with those prayers offered on the 26<sup>th</sup> day of each month for DIAKONIA worldwide.

\*Decade To Overcome Violence: World Council of Churches

**Mission Statement:** DOTAC links and gathers those engaged in diakonia, is a prophetic voice for ecumenical relations and social justice, and encourages, supports and empowers the development of groups doing diakonia in the region.

At each meeting we review how we will attempt to do this Mission Statement. Following is the current thinking of DOTAC.

1. Be a prophetic voice for social justice: sponsor/promote educational programs which include social analysis and theological reflection (i.e. at conferences, regionally, locally); promote publications (videos, literature, film, dvd and audio) which educate and bring awareness to social justice issues; current postings of social justice information on the DOTAC website; publication of a DOTAC newsletter focusing on social justice issues in our region; gather and disseminate the stories of those in diakonia ministries; write letter where appropriate to elected officials.

2. Work that *diakonia* be recognized and affirmed by churches and other church-related groups: continue to invite people at higher church level to Central Committee meetings.

3. Encourage and support diakonial work in areas of new development: who is around DOTAC table and who is missing: continue to invite non-member local people Central Committee meetings and DOTAC Conference and DIAKONIA Assembly; share stories of new development work in member reports and give contact information when; assign member groups to establish a partnership with diaconal workers in new development and potential member groups; intentionally develop DOTAC chapters i.e. A CHALLENGE: have a regional gathering in your area; continue to develop a directory of diaconal workers who are without an organization; offer the Special Project Grants to member groups in rotation; to assist developing diakonia groups and individuals, offer existing online courses for formation and education or DOTAC might sponsor someone to teach a course in person or offer a scholarship to individuals. NOTE: Present online courses: UMC Deaconesses, NAAD – introduction to the diaconate, Centre for Christian Studies; explore fund raising possibilities and other financial sources.

1. Prophetic voice of church together: share information between member groups of specific diaconal activities and projects; encourage and support co-operative diaconal activities and projects; name places of need and response in church and society; need to implement.

2. Spirituality and worship: seek language common to all DOTAC faith communities; explore the spirit of participating faith communities; use ways of actively involving participants in worship experiences at DOTAC conferences; worship should reflect and respect style/ traditions of host place and participating faith communities; come together at the Lord's Table at the closing service; utilize inclusive language whenever possible; take time for theological reflection.

**Storytelling:** At each meeting members share their story about ministry and how they have become involved in Diaconal Ministry/Work.

**Member Reports:** Each member group brings a report and shares the work they are doing, joys and concerns.

**Theological Reflection:** At each meeting we take time to do theological reflection and for the last four years our focus has been on anti violence and our work in anti violence.

**New Member Groups:** The following two groups are the newest member groups in DOTAC. Evangelical Lutheran Church In Canada and ELCA Community of Diaconal Ministers (USA). We have been in touch with several groups, Anglican Church in Canada, Reformed Church in Canada, Lutheran and Methodist Churches in Brazil. There membership applications are still in process.

**Application for Membership:** This form is now on the web site and is in the three languages that DOTAC has chosen as their official languages.

**DOTAC Languages:** DOTAC has chosen Spanish, English and Portuguese as their official languages. DOTAC has also tired very hard to influence the languages at World Federation conferences. DOTAC has not been as successful as they would have liked. At the next World Federation conference which will be held in the DOTAC region, their will be intention to use many more languages than at the last World Federation conference. All three languages will be used at the DOTAC Conference in 2006.

**DOTAC Conference 2006:** The Wesley Diaconal Community has chosen Trinidad as the location for the Conference.

**Theme:**

We will use Micah 8 as the overarching theme with psalms as companion scripture. Psalm 10 was one suggestion. Three natural foci are: justice – taking care of ourselves – walking with God. We need to be thinking that 'justice-kindness-walk with God' is an ebb and flow. We will want to connect the theme on the Caribbean remembering that it is not just a tourist place – is a place with hurts and challenges.

We will need to keep in mind that the planning for the conference needs to be different – the Wesley Community is scattered and will need lots of support from Central Committee. Offers of support to the Wesley Community of a few UMC workers who will shortly be in the Caribbean were made as were offers from UCC who has a connection in Jamaica, and The LDA has a retired deaconess in the area as well.

**Hosting DIAKONIA:** It was agreed by consensus that DOTAC host the next DIAKONIA World Assembly. The invitation was given at the World DIAKONIA Executive meeting July 2004 and was accepted. This Assembly would take place in 2009 or 2010. The location will be determined later.

**World Federation DIAKONIA:** It was agreed by consensus to nominate Deaconess Louise Williams as President of World Federation DIAKONIA for another term. Linda Ervin will do the necessary paper work. Louise Williams agreed to let her name stand. The deadline for nominations has come and gone and Louise Williams is the only name for President for World Federation and she will be elected by acclamation.

Linda M. Ervin  
DUCC Representative to DOTAC

**REPORT TO DOTAC: February 2005**  
**WORLD FEDERATION MEETING JUNE 30-JULY 5, 2004**

First Meeting of World Federation to meet outside of Europe for an Executive meeting unattached to a World Conference.

Met with UMC Deacons who hosted us to lunch and conversation about World Federation and local Diaconal work. Also had an evening reception with local deaconesses and others related to Diaconal work in the area of Valparaiso.

**Presidents Report:**

advisor to ELC in America at the World Lutheran Meeting in Winnipeg, Canada  
-attended WCC in Geneva and was impressed by the youth voices speaking about faith and the future  
-attended DRAAE conference held in Beni Suef, Egypt, hosted by the Daughters of St. Mary, new group to DIAKONIA  
-attended assembly of Deaconess Community of ELCIA in Chicago, and noted that Sr. Anne Keffer is the new Directing Deaconess  
-led us through SWOT analysis of DIAKONIA's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats. (point 9.1 of DIAKONIA Minutes)  
- Asked us what award we would receive from the World Council of Churches about our work in DIAKONIA

**Minutes:** English reader reviews the minutes and two weeks later the rest of DIAKONIA Executive reviews and gives feedback and by October the minutes have approval.  
Regional Reports:

**DAP:** making connections with the many Diaconal groups in the area  
Methodist and Anglicans of New Zealand moving towards membership in DIAKONIA  
UMC Women's Desk in New York helped finance the in-service training for Methodist Deaconesses in Fiji, this Order celebrates 37 years this year

**DOTAC:** reported that our meetings are taking place outside of the US  
Attended prayer meeting for election candidates in Antigua  
Shared dates and theme for next DOTAC conference  
Noted we welcomed new member group ELCAIA to DOTAC  
Invited World Federation to have their next conference in DOTAC region, invitation was accepted.

**DRAE:** highlight was conference in Beni Surf. Seven African and eight European countries attended the conference  
Revised DRAAE constitution regarding associate members, have looked at the DOTAC constitution and By Laws as a resource for their work  
Archives: are held now officially in Kaiserswerth  
Finances: Contributions are down, fewer members in member groups, some member groups have not paid for several years, will need to have follow up to see if they are still wanting to be members.

**DIAKAID Projects:**

**Currently Funded**

-Korean Sisterhood; washer and dryer for retreat house  
-IKADIWA: Indonesia; funding for translations of books for Deaconess training  
-Methodist: Caribbean; funding for Vacation Bible School in Haiti with Sr. Janetta James  
-ECLB: Brazil; funding for Marcia Leindecker to aid her in her Master's degree, now teaching and

coordinating Diaconal Training

-Methodists: Philippines; Lemon Tree self help Project to purchase land and grow trees and sell the fruit

**New Projects:**

- IECLB: Brazil; using hip hop music to overcome violence in a favela

-Daughters of St. Mary: Egypt; support for computer equipment in a new school

-Hibberdene: South Africa; bridge building project between those with resources and the poor to develop a daycare and restore community

-Rwanda: Orphanage is developing a dairy farm for their own resources and to sell produce

**Emergency Funds:** used in South East Asia and sent through the World Council Fund called ACT

**Durham Conference:**

-Regions will all stay in same college, able to hold two meetings while in Durham, meals together  
-no large conference meal together, will have large Fair Trade Market with world foods and crafts to purchase

-Former DIAKAID recipients will be presenting workshops related to the Durham theme

-Small groups will use the Theology paper as their resource guide

-Justice workshop will be held in the conference area and be part of the worship theme at the end, focus is on the Decade To Overcome Violence

**Deficit** is expected to be about 6,000 (pounds) and will be covered by World Federation reserve funds, members are encouraged to contribute to transportation and registration costs as they are able

**Translation equipment** has been offered but at this time no word about its use has been clarified

**Presentations** are to be made using power point 2003, the conference hall is theater style seating

**President Nomination:** only one nomination has been received and that is DOTAC nomination for Louise Williams. Voting regulations have been established and voting would have happened in small booths outside the conference hall if we needed to have a Presidential vote

**Resource Paks** will be made available for all voting delegates, including: theology paper, voting style with flag, bible study and resource information on the theme

**Three World Focus Meetings** in the conference and each region will have a focus time, beginning with DRAE, then DAP and then DOTAC: focus of regions are to be on DIAKAID projects and other diaconal work DOTAC is doing. Also include invitation to DOTAC region for World event in 2009 or 2010

**DIAKONIA News:** is to be published in the spring and fall, no recent publications, not sure why, will also be on line

**Website Purpose:** communications for members and those interested in DIAKONIA, resource for members, prayer items

**DIAKONIA Brochure:** is still in production

**Letter to church Leaders:** Louise to write to all member group church leaders explaining about the work of DIAKONIA.

Submitted by Linda M. Ervin, Representative from DOTAC to World Federation DIAKONIA

## Re: DUCC REPRESENTATION TO DOTAC

### Background

At the 1997 national gathering, DUCC agreed that the term for our representative to DOTAC be four years, with eligibility to renew for two terms - a possible total of twelve years. Going beyond the four years allows for continuity which is helpful in dealing with an international organization where it takes more time to establish contacts and working relationships. It is unclear in the policy how this is to be handled (eg does "renew" mean there is an election or not?)

In order to facilitate discussion of this issue with the membership, we offer this proposal for consideration at that time. Linda's second term will conclude in 2005; she is willing to serve for a third term.

### Proposal

- (a) That there be an election for this position every four years.
- (b) That the incumbent, following the first term, may stand for election for two additional terms.