



CONCORDIA
DEACONESS
CONFERENCE

BLUES News

BLUES NEWS

An official publication of Concordia Deaconess Conference (CDC). Distributed six times a year, it serves our members by circulating professional submissions, devotional thoughts and articles, and member announcements.

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editor.bluesnews@concordia
deaconesslcmcs.org or
Trinity Lutheran Church
PO Box 545,
Blackwell, OK 74631-0545.

OUR CONFERENCE

Concordia Deaconess Conference is a free association of certified and LCMS rostered deaconesses, who subscribe to and live by the confessional position of the LCMS.

As a Recognized Service Organization of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, CDC works to provide opportunities for spiritual, personal, and professional growth and fellowship for deaconesses and support for diaconal service in Christ.

Donations for the work of the conference, a 501(c)(3) organization, may be mailed to

Deaconess Sara Lemon
268 Big Horn Lane
Seymour Lane, IN 47274



INTERNATIONAL WORKERS

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GOSPEL CLARITY BY PAT NUFFER (SOUTH SUDAN)

At the conclusion of St. Paul's writing on love to the Corinthians, he says: "love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues they will cease; as for knowledge it will pass away. For we know in part . . . but when the Perfect comes, the partial will pass away . . . For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known" (1Corinthians 13:8-12).

We all have a list of "when I get to Heaven, I'll ask God this....and that," and we will be so glad to fully know. So when there are times when things become clear and simple, we rejoice. Such were a few times when, as a leader of Hands of Mercy (HOM), it just became so clear. I call them "moments of gospel clarity" in my journal.

A seminary student donated many lovely t-shirts with our new logo on them, so I packed one for everyone at HOM in Yambio, South Sudan. On the back we had printed the "jars of clay" verse also from St Paul to the Corinthians: "we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not us." (2 Corinthians 4:7)

I needed to explain what it meant to the people with disabilities at HOM the morning I gave them out. Nowadays, water is drawn into yellow plastic jerricans, but even today in Yambio, you can see huge clay pots that store and "cool" water. So, on our blackboard, I drew a pot, then zigzagged a crack, then drew "ziazia toro" (Zande for Holy Spirit) coming out of the crack. They were all wide eyed when I explained that the brokenness of the crack is used by God for good—that He shines forth through that crack. And the challenge they face is to show that to the community: instead of being useless and unable, they are indispensable to God in the very disability they experience.

Well, it was a moment of clarity for me, as I reflected a lot on this trip about the "sustainability" of people with disabilities. And their laughter at my crude example did tell me they understood something.

Another such moment came while distributing our first aid/hygiene kits. We put this little wordless gospel tract in each kit; it is the result of some homemade linoleum stamps of pictures to go along with the colors of the salvation story.

The Gospel tracts fell on fertile soil: I saw evidence of that at a prison visit. Two deaconess students and a travelling South Korean evangelist, MiKong, who was staying at our church compound, came along. As I explained each picture of the tract and Mikong, fluent in Arabic, translated and added her own explanation, one of the girls quietly began to cry. We all joined around her and prayed and prayed and finally Mikong burst out in song and we all joined in. Wonderfully simple, songs in a culture of mainly spoken language are often led, line by line, so you only need to parrot back the words.

It was a moving time for all of us and cemented in me the pull of diaconal work in a setting like prison. After a long visit, we left some first aid and girls' kits, knowing full well the women might not really get to keep them, but also an English Bible and the promise of striving for Zande Bibles next time.

At the end of the day, we rest in the knowledge God's Word does not return void (Isaiah 55:11). In Him alone, we have clarity of truth.

Pat Nuffer

DEACONESS GRADUATION IN PANAMA

By Eva Rickman

I wanted to share with you that on August 25th I had the blessing of attending the graduation of the first deaconesses in Panama. After being away from Panama for five years, it was such a blessing to see the completion of the work I helped start seven years ago.

There were four ladies that graduated, but only three were present for the graduation (Ramona Villamil, Yazmina Perez and Zhaira Martinez were present and Griselda Aguilar also graduated, but was not able to attend).

We just moved to Houston in August and it is our new "home base."

Arthur is now serving as the area facilitator for Mexico, Panama, Guatemala and Belize and is in charge of theological education for the region and spiritual care of the missionaries in the region. To be added to our family newsletter as we serve in Latin America and the Caribbean, send an email message to arthur.rickman@lcmsintl.org.

Eva Rickman

NOMINATIONS OPEN

Nominations are now open for the following positions:

1. President
2. Secretary
3. Member-at-Large for Spiritual and Professional Growth

Please prayerfully consider how you can best serve your sisters in the CDC. Anyone who is interested in nominating either themselves or someone else for these positions, please email Jane Obersat, at janeamason@hotmail.com by **March 31st**.



Deborah Rockrohr overlooking the Akaki River which runs past the seminary in Ethiopia.

THE MERCY WORK OF TEACHING AND LEARNING (AFRICA)

Dr. Deborah Rockrohr

When one thinks of missions, evangelization of peoples who have never heard of Christ often comes to mind. Missionary work is that, but it is also much more. Food and shelter, given in the name of Christ to those who have suffered devastation and loss, is also part of mission work. Teaching and learning is, as well. While one may debate where each of these activities falls within the witness-mercy-life together paradigm, I would suggest that each of these always at least touch on mercy work in that the life-giving words of the Gospel always show God's immeasurable mercy toward us sinners.

For about 18 months in 2012-2013 I was director of residential deaconess training at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Pretoria, South Africa. In that role, I developed the curriculum for deaconess training, taught the diakonia courses, and was housemaster for the women's residence. Together we learned about the work of the deaconess, the history of diakonia in the Church from New Testament times onward, and developed specific skills and competencies in ministry areas common to deaconess work.

Although I was able to academically assess the learning of "my" deaconess students, it was in the non-academic arena that the true fruits of teaching

were so beautifully evident. When there was not a specific assignment for altar duty at the campus church on a Sunday, one could still often find a deaconess student lending her hand where she saw the need. When our teenage son developed appendicitis while at boarding school and we hurriedly traveled over six hours by car to be with him for the surgery and a few days of recovery, I was comforted by unexpected text messages of prayers and Scripture that these same deaconess students knew I needed to hear. God's mercy came to both teacher and learner.

In God's timing and inscrutable wisdom, I was suddenly called from the task of teaching and preparing women to become deaconesses to another task in another country. My husband (Rev. Dr. Carl Rockrohr) and I have been living in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia since July. We came at the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus' (EECMY) sudden and urgent request for the LCMS to send someone to help at Mekane Yesus Seminary (MYS), its central seminary located in Addis Ababa. Carl is the Dean of Theology at MYS. I am assisting at MYS by supervising MA theses and lecturing in the thesis/research support workshops held periodically throughout the year, but my primary task through the end of May is learning Amharic, the national language of Ethiopia.

Deborah Rockrohr

Language learning has provided unique insights into the people and culture of Ethiopia. Prefixes and suffixes to verbs, adjectives, and nouns recognize the gender, plurality, and even respectful status of both the speaker and the listener; truly, relationships and communication are highly valued in this culture! The vocabulary provides additional insight. For example, the word meskel, which is a noun meaning "to hang" (like, hang a picture on the wall). What amazing symbolism is tied up in that simple word, meskel, as we think not only of the cross on which Christ died, but of Him hanging there, suffering in our place and making full payment for our sin!

Our stay and work here in Ethiopia is interesting from the standpoint that we are working with and within an established Lutheran church (with more than 6 million members) and yet the LCMS is not in fellowship with the EECMY. We are, however, here at the specific request and invitation of the EECMY to have LCMS personnel come and assist in specific tasks, and we have the opportunity thereby to provide clear Law and Gospel teaching based on Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. In this way, we do our part so that the Gospel light burn brightly, and we thank God for His mercies both to us and to those around us.



CDC President Cheryl D. Naumann pins the CDC cross on Deaconess Ashley Prothro after her commissioning at Resurrection Lutheran Church in Cambridge, England on Dec. 1, 2013. Ashley is an LCMS Globally Engaged in Outreach Missionary, deployed to work at Westfield House and Resurrection Lutheran Church, both in Cambridge.

REVIEW OF SAVING LEONARDO BY NANCY PEARCEY

The arts are a reflection of our culture. Artists, whether a painter, sculptor, writer, or musician offer a glimpse into the "collective soul" of a culture. Each generation adds something to our culture, whether in a positive or a negative aspect. As Mortimer Adler often spoke of the "Great Conversation," each civilization adds something to the exchange through its arts, science and philosophy.

I was rummaging through my local library in search of a book that discusses Christian literature, critique and recommendations instead, I found was something much more profound. I discovered *Saving Leonardo: A*

Call to Resist the Secular Assault on mind, Moral and Meaning.

Nancy Pearcey is currently the Scholar in Residence at Houston Baptist University and her book is far more encompassing than a simple critique of modern literature. Professor Pearcey systematically illustrates evolution of the modernist and postmodernist mindset and its ramifications for the arts, starting the fourteenth century with the philosophy of Descartes, moving through music, painting, and literature with a sense of duality between the Enlightenment and the Romantic, the seen and the unseen; and how religion plays a role in all.

Originally the great scientists, philosophers and artists saw the Creator in their vocation, but over time a shift took place, as Pearcey deftly illustrates, a synthesis

BOOK REVIEWS

of the creative minds and their divine inspiration. Later, many artist moved away from God as their inspiration for the creativity. Those who move further and further from the Truth to worship at the altar of the almighty Science. As Pearcey points out... "As Western thinkers turned away from God as the Ultimate Cause, many turned to matter" (234)

Eventually over time the arts become more and more removed from the sacred, where profane becomes profanity and apart from a few bright and shining exceptions such as the Japanese love of Bach and the works of C.S. Lewis, our culture has become completely antagonistic to God. Sadly, our addition to the Great Conversation sounds more like an expletive-laced temper tantrum. (cont. on next column)

Saving Leonardo was an eye opening experience for me. Pearcey's keen eye has truly pierced the darkness and allowed me to witness our Western culture in a new light. I have come to recognize the postmodernist worldview for what it truly is and its detrimental consequences for our society. We need artists to stand up for God's Truth of what is truly beautiful, good, and educational. This books is not a dry pedantic recitation on western civilization. Pearcey often uses contemporary anecdotes and example of our culture to illustrate how Christian should respond to a hostile culture. There is a need for Christians to understand the culture in order to better engage in outreach to the unchurched. Even the most simple of Biblical truths are becoming more and more foreign to the non-Christian culture in which we live. Jane Obersat

REVIEW OF THE HONOR CODE BY KWAME APPIAH

Appiah looks at dueling, slavery and footbinding to find out what causes moral revolutions. They were based on a set of honor codes. These codes had to change before the practices stopped.

The footbinding stopped when the Chinese travelled outside of their country and the missionaries (outsiders) made them aware how foreigners looked upon this practice. This shamed the country in the eyes of outsiders and a change began. The slavery and dueling also were caused by a shift in the honor code.

I found it interesting when he looked at the honor killing in Pakistan for example, which is still going on today. He hopes collective shaming will also stop this practice.

This book was very thought provoking and opened my eyes to new ideas.

Erna Baehr Schmid

CALENDAR

March 31st: Deadline for CDC Nominations.

April 15th deadline for May BLUES News. The theme will be sensitivity in ministry toward those who have suffered sexual or childhood abuse.



The Rickmans and three deaconesses at the deaconess graduation in Panama on August 25, 2013.

CDC OFFICERS

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Cheryl D. Naumann
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Amanda Bundy
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QUICK CONTACT INFORMATION

Spiritual Counselor:
Reverend Kevin Loughran
(loughran_kevin@yahoo.com, c: 727-612-9782)

Prayer requests can be emailed to the prayer coordinator at cdcprayers@comcast.net.

Digital pictures can go to photos.cdc@gmail.com for publication or other conference uses.

Newsletter submissions and suggestions can be sent to editor.bluesnews@concordiadeaconesslcmcs.org.

Members may purchase extra cross pins (\$10) or insignias (\$7) from Heidi Bishop at 101 N. Spring St, Elgin, IL 60120.

LWML AND CONFERENCE DISPLAYS



In 2014, there are already 30 LWML District Conventions scheduled and there will likely be more scheduled this spring. What a wonderful opportunity for deaconesses to present themselves as Concordia Deaconess Conference caregivers, teachers, administrators, and musicians.

If you have given any consideration to attending an LWML Convention—or perhaps a different convention—the Public Relations team strongly encourages you to do so.

Here is how you can make a difference:

- First, show up in your best uniform.
- Talk to ladies outside your parish about the work of the deaconess.
- If at all possible, prepare a simple display table with CDC materials (it's easy and fun!

To have an exhibitor's table

- Obtain an application for vendors or exhibitors that defines the cost and rules. **Sometimes a registered applicant can have the table fee waived.**
- Correspond with the PR committee to see if the trifold display and banner are available.
- Even if they are not, the PR committee can send brochures, note cards, chip clips, seminary and Concordia Chicago materials and a CD describing the service of a deaconess if the deaconess setting up the display has a laptop.
- The deaconess can supply candy if that is allowed by the location.
- The display table will need a nice table cloth or two (blue and white is best).

Above is a picture of Cheryl D. Naumann with the CDC display, banner and informational handouts.

The Public Relations team is standing by to answer questions and to offer support and resources.

If you have any questions, please contact a member of the Public Relations team: Doris Snashall (snashall@pacbell.net), Kimberly Fetz (deac.kimberly@gmail.com), Lois Diebel (leahdieb@hotmail.com), and ex officio member, Cheryl Naumann (cdcpresident@yahoo.com).

Thanks!