

2019 Deaconess Assembly
“inextricably CONNECTED”
Carol Joy Holling Conference and Retreat Center
Ashland, Nebraska
September 26-30, 2019

Plenary Session 1

Friday, September 27, 2019

8:45 – 10:00 a.m.

1. Report on Registration #1

Ms. Jan Rizzo, Registrar, reported there are 44 voting members, 10 candidates, 9 guests (including 4 children) registered and present for a total of 67.

2. Welcome from the Assembly Planning Committee

Sr. Mary Arie, chair, introduced the assembly planning committees:

- Celebrations Committee: Sr. Anne Hall, Sr. Donna Font, and Sr. Joy Hovis
- Hospitality Committee: Sr. Jean Widmeyer, Sr. Kriss Buss, Sr. Ruth Ellen Rebelein, and Sr. Michelle Walka.
- Logistics Committee: Sr. Dottie Almone
- Registrar: Ms. Jan Rizzo
- Worship Committee: Sr. Becky Mastalerz, Sr. Carol Burk, Sr. Nora Frost, and Sr. Stacie Lightner
- Accountant: Ms. Yvette Newberry White
- Memorials Committee: Sr. Marilyn Stauffer and Sr. Carol Weaver
- Minutes Review Committee: Sr. Deb McClellan, Sr. Ann Shultz, and Sr. Virginia Strahan
- Pages: Sr. Karie Hamilton, Sr. Karen Norton, Candidate Cora Rose, and Candidate Mindy Shively
- Parliamentarian: Sr. Melinda Lando
- Reference and Counsel Committee: Sr. Mary Julia McKenzie, Sr. Le Brandes, and Sr. Diane Montgomery
- Recording Secretary: Ms. Gwen Edwards
- Tellers: Sr. Jennie Myers, Sr. Sally Burk, and Sr. Ruth Rebelein
- Helping Hands: those assisting with child care raised their hands
- Planning Team co-chair: Sr. Diane Solmonson

Sr. Noreen Stevens announced that the Assembly offering had been designated for the Nebraska Synod Disaster Relief Fund.

3. Affirmation of the Covenant
 Sr. Annette Langdon and Sr. Clare Josef-Maier, members of the Responsibility and Reconciliation team administered the affirmation of the Deaconess Community Covenant. They encourage attendees to read the covenant. Four signature sheets were distributed for attendees to sign to affirm their covenant. Each signature physically denotes a commitment by the signer's heart.

4. Approve Rules of Organization and Procedure
 Sr. Noreen Stevens advised who had voice and who had voice and vote. Sr. Noreen presented the Rules of Organization and Procedure.
DA19.09.01 Adopt the Rules for Organization and Procedure M/S/C

5. Consent Agenda
 The minutes from the 2018 Assembly were removed from the Consent Agenda
DA19.09.02 Adopt the Proposed Agenda and Staff/Board/Committee Reports M/S/C
DA19.09.03 Adopt the 2018 Minutes Deaconess Community of the ELCA Assembly M/S/C

6. Introduce Candidates
 Sr. Liz Colver stated there will be slides throughout the weekend to meet the candidates. DCA 19 Candidates Bingo was distributed, it is not the same as last year she stated.

7. Introduce Guests
 Sr. Noreen Stevens introduced several guests present and still yet to arrive
 - Bishop Susan Johnson, ELCIC National Bishop
 - Board Members: Rev. Dr. Ray Pickett and Ms. Aubrey Thonvold
 - Recording Secretary: Gwen Edwards
 - Family Members: Mr. and Mrs. Kathy and Gene Heskett, Mr. Jeff Sodestrom, Mr. Matt Hausken, and Rev. Jon Myers—Master Caleb, Misses Allie, Addie, and Katie Myers
 - Speaker: Dr. Cynthia Moe-Lobeda
 - Committee Members: Dr. Susan McArver and Pr. Carolyn Hellerich
 - Diaconal Minister Ted Dodd, member of the United Church of Canada, DOTAC President
 - Deacon Karen Melang LDA
 - Mr. Eric Gurley, Immanuel Senior Housing and Services

8. Report of the Nominating Committee
 Sr. Jennie Myers encouraged everyone to submit names to the committee when asked. Nominations were closed earlier for the non-deaconess position on the board of directors, there were no floor nominations. Dr. Ray Pickett was nominated to fill the vacancy on the board of a non-deaconess position.
 - Dr. Ray Pickett was elected by acclamation. Sr. Noreen Stevens declared Dr. Pickett elected.

- The Nominating Committee reported the nominations for Responsibility and Reconciliation Team closed on August 1, there will be no floor nominations. There is one vacancy.
 - Sr. Ramona Daily and Sr. Carmen Ana Ramirez were nominated
9. Report of the Mission and Vision Working Group
 Sr. Liz Colver reported on the use of working groups. The Mission and Vision Working Group began their work after the last assembly. They met monthly and sought Community feedback. She reported on the feedback and how they reached the suggested guiding principles, and proposed Mission and Vision.
- DA19.09.04 Vote on the Mission, Vision, and Guiding Principles as en bloc M/S/C**
DA19.09.05 Adopt the Mission, Vision, and Guiding Principles M/S/C

The 2019 Deaconess Assembly recessed until 2:30 p.m.

Plenary Session 2
 Friday, September 27, 2019
 2:30 – 5:00 p.m.

10. Call to Order
 Sr. Noreen Stevens called Plenary Session #2 to order at 2:35 p.m.
11. Celebrating Ministry
 Sr. Michelle Collins shared a story of missionaries in Kenya, a video was shown of Rendille of Kenya.
12. Partnerships
 Deacon Karen Melang, LDA and Nebraska Synod Council Secretary, brought greetings to the Assembly.
13. Report on Registration #2
 Sr. Dottie Almone, reported there are 44 voting members, 9 candidates, 11 guests (including 4 children) registered and present for a total of 64.
14. Report on Responsibility and Reconciliation Team Election
 Sr. Ramona Daily, 27 votes
 Sr. Carmen Ana Ramirez, 15 votes
 Sr. Noreen Stevens declared Sr. Ramona elected. Her term begins immediately.
15. Board of Directors Facilitated Discussion – led by Sr. Michelle Collins and Sr. Dottie Almone
 This past year the board moved through membership transition along with staff. They had the opportunity to have a facilitator to move them through an orientation and visioning conversation. Sr. Dottie shared topics discussed.

The assembly moved into Table Talks to discuss a variety of assignments to vision where do we want to be 3-5 years from now.

- Describe how the Deaconess Community fosters intentional community
- Describe how the DC fosters diaconal leadership development.

16. Shared Learning – DOTAC

Sr. Noreen Stevens shared about the event.

Sr. Virginia Strahan read Pr. Carmen Lansdowne's poem, *I'm Tired*.

The 2019 Deaconess Assembly recessed until Saturday, September 28, 10:45 a.m.

Plenary Session 3

Saturday, September 28, 2019

10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

17. Sr. Noreen Stevens started Plenary Session #3 with a few announcements and welcoming those who had arrived since Friday.

18. Sr. Liz Colver introduced three candidates.

19. Shared Learning – DOTAC

Ted Dodd, DOTAC president, shared updates and highlights of DOTAC along with sharing information regarding the Deaconess and Diaconal groups around the world.

20. Report on Registration #3

Sr. Dottie Almoney, reported there are 45 voting members, 9 candidates, 15 guests including 4 children) registered and present for a total of 69.

21. Board of Directors – Bylaw Changes

Sr. Dottie Almoney reviewed the recommended bylaws changes.

DA19.09.06 Amended to vote on the recommended bylaws edits as en bloc M/S/C

The following bylaws edit were removed from en bloc: 3.1, 3.2, 7.8, 8.2.1.a, and 12

DA19.09.07 Adopt the bylaw edits of 4.8, 5.1, 5.3.8, 5.3.9, 5.4, 5.7.1, 7.1, 7.2, and 8.2.1.f M/S/C

DA19.09.08 Adopt the following bylaw edit: 7.8 M/S/C

Motion amended: add “and through the office the National Bishop of the ELCIC” after the word ELCA in 12.3.

DA19.09.09 Adopt the amendment of the following bylaw edit: 12.3 M/S/C

DA19.09.10 Adopt the following amended bylaw edit: 12.3 M/S/C

DA19.09.11 Adopt the following bylaw edit: 8.1.1a M/S/C

DA19.09.12 Adopt the following bylaw edits: 3.1 and 3.2 M/S/C

The 2019 Deaconess Assembly recessed until Sunday, September 29, 2:30 p.m.

Plenary Session 4

Sunday, September 29, 2019

2:30– 5:00 p.m.

22. Sr. Noreen Stevens started Plenary Session #4 with a few announcements.

23. Report on Registration #4

Ms. Jan Rizzo, Registrar, reported there are 45 voting members, 9 candidates, 12 guests (including 4 children) registered and present for a total of 66.

24. Partner in Ministry

Mr. Eric Gurley, CEO, Immanuel Senior Housing and Services, shared history, updates, and highlights of Immanuel Communities, *Living the Legacy*. Eric's daughter Olivia was also present with him.

25. Report of Reference and Counsel

Sr. Mary Julia presented the report.

- Resolution 2019:1 Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival

Resolution amended: add at the end of the resolved, "The Board of Directors will compose a team to help facilitate this endorsement and partnership with an eye toward both individual and communal involvements as the Deaconess Community."

DA19.09.13 Adopt the resolution amendment M/S/C

DA19.09.14 Adopt the amended resolution 2019:1 Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival M/S/C

26. Sr. Liz Colver introduced three candidates.

27. Shared Learning – DOTAC

Sr. Donna Font shared a story about a blanket exercise.

28. Financial Report

Sr. LaDonna Olson presented the treasurer's report.

- The definition and description of the funds
- Funds invested with Boston Commons Assessment Management

- Explained the amount of monies received from the funds for the budget.
- Q&A Session

DA19.09.15 Acceptance of the Financial Report M/S/C

29. Report of the Financial Working Group

Sr. Melinda Lando shared historical background information. Items currently being worked on by the group include, not exclusive: Financial Development

- Assembly and related costs
- No Name Fund

It was recommended that the Deaconess Community of the ELCA consider the creation of a Fund (at this point, it has no name) to be implemented by the Board of Directors beginning in the 2020 budget year.

It was moved that the recommendation be tabled until the 2020 Assembly.

DA19.09.16 Table the recommendation until 2020 Assembly. M/S/C

30. Continued Business

- Good Standing

Sr. Noreen Stevens provided history on this topic of past discussions and work.

Sr. Liz Colver presented the recommendation of a change in the *Handbook* regarding the definition of Good Standing.

It was moved that this recommendation be tabled until Plenary Session 5.

DA19.09.17 Table the recommendation until Plenary Session 5. M/S/C

The 2019 Deaconess Assembly recessed until Monday, September 30, 8:30 a.m.

Plenary Session 5

Monday, September 30, 2019

8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

31. Sr. Noreen Stevens started Plenary Session #5 with a few announcements.

32. Sr. Liz Colver introduced ten candidates who included Sr. Ann Shultz with her Letter of Call and invitation to her Ordination ceremony.

33. Sr. Carmen Ana Ramirez updated the Assembly on Puerto Rico and Hurricane Maria.

34. Sr. Michelle Collins updated the Assembly on the Bahamas, Hurricane Dorian, and its relief work. See the Florida-Bahamas synod's website, www.fbsynod.com, for updates.

35. Celebrating Ministry – Advance Care Planning

Sr. Annetta Langdon shared information regarding the Information Sheets and why it should be completed. Depending on your state of residence the terminology for the forms have different titles. The Health Directive needs to be completed based on your state of residence laws.

36. Report on Registration #5

Sr. Noreen Stevens reported there are 45 voting members, 8 candidates, 10 guests (including 4 children) registered and present for a total of 63.

37. Continued Business

- Good Standing

Sr. Noreen Stevens recapped Plenary Session #4 conversation.

It was moved to amend item #4, by striking out the words “in public leadership in her neighborhood, synod, region and church-wide” and replace with “by being love and truth with all whom we meet.”

DA19.09.18 Adopt the amendment of item #4 M/S/F

It was moved to amend item #4 by adding the words “/national church as opportunities present themselves” after the word “church-wide” and add the word “/or” after the words “region and.”

DA19.09.19 Adopt the amendment of item #4 M/S/C

It was moved to amend item #5 by adding the words “thoughtful, intentional” after the words “Making a contribution,” add “finances” after the words “and/or talent,” and strikeout the words “thoughtful, intentional financial contribution.”

DA19.09.20 Adopt the amendment of item #5 M/S/C

It was moved amend item #5 by adding the words “the Deaconess Community” at the end of the sentence.

DA19.09.21 Adopt the amendment of item #5 M/S/C

It was moved to amend the bottom paragraph by striking out the words “this will be communicated to her by the Directing Deaconess” and to amend item #4 by replacing the word “public” with “diaconal.”

DA19.09.22 Adopt the amendment of the bottom paragraph and item #4 M/S/C

DA19.09.23 Adopt “Good Standing” as amended M/S/C

- Working Group Recommendation
It was moved that a working group consisting of the Leadership Team and the R & R Team create and implement a process to engage the Community in discussion and decision-making regarding membership in the Deaconess Community and for this to be brought back to the Community at the 2020 Assembly.

DA19.09.24 Adopt the working group recommendation M/S/C

- Reconciliation Lutheran Church and Clinic – South Sudan
Sr. Michelle Collins, Sr. Noreen Stevens, and Sr. Sylvia Countess updated the Assembly regarding their invitation and visit to South Sudan. Reconciliation Lutheran Church in Juba, South Sudan is asking for the conversations to continue as we learn about them, and their history.

It was moved to send a one-time gift of \$500 to the Reconciliation Lutheran Church as a word of thanks for their hospitably.

DA19.09.25 Adopt the recommendation of a one-time gift of \$500 to the Reconciliation Lutheran Church M/S/C

- Nebraska turkeys visited the Assembly by crossing the back patio of the Swanson Center.
- Sr. Noreen Stevens announced 2020 Assembly will be held November 5-9, at TBarM Retreats in New Braunfels, Texas.
- Sr. Marilyn Stauffer reported on Memorial 2019:1, Memorial of Thanksgiving.

The 2019 Deaconess Assembly adjourned at 10:36 a.m., Monday, September 30.

Respectively submitted,
Gwendolynn Edwards, Recording Secretary

