



LUTHERAN DAY IN SPRINGFIELD 2006

“Lutherans are “theological heirs of a parish pastor [Martin Luther] who wrote over one thousand letters to civil authorities, including letters regarding their public policies. He admonished preachers to preach against public policies that thwarted the well-being of the poor.” (Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, Public Church for the Life of the World, p. 42.)



One of the goals of Diakonia is to prepare participants to be more fully a servant to

others, especially to those in need. As you can see from the quote above, Martin Luther found it important to contact legislators and let them know when they were not being servants to all of God’s people. How are we doing today? Are we serving as a voice of those who cannot speak for themselves?

lutheranadvocacy.org (formerly Lutheran Network for Justice Advocacy), one of the six sponsors of Lutheran Day in Springfield 2006, can help guide you through the process of effectively communicating with your elected officials on legislation. Through email notices, lutheranadvocacy.org alerts citizens when important legislation is coming up for a vote, provides us with background information of the proposed bill, lets us know how to contact our legislators, and gives examples of what we can base our letter or phone conversation with our elected officials.

Lutheran Day in Springfield has many different goals. The first goal is simply get to talk face-to-face with our elected officials in Springfield—identifying a face with a name. This year, the second goal was to emphasize the importance of two of the many issues that lutheranadvocacy.org is currently working on. Those two issues are increasing funding for human service providers, such as Mosaic, a Lutheran-based residential for developmentally delayed adults. The second issue involves the regressive Illinois property and income tax system—proportionally the poor pay much more than the richest citizens of this great state.

Lutheran Day in Springfield is an annual event and was held on Thursday, March 30. To find out more about this organization, and their advocacy training, log onto lutheranadvocacy.org, or contact Rev. Dan Schwick, executive director of Lutheran Advocacy.org at dan.schwick@lssi.org.

By Carolyn Doughty, 2006 graduate

TUITION INCREASE

The diakonia program will increase tuition to \$360 a year beginning September 2007. The increase is a change of \$10 a class or \$60 overall for the year. Tuition has not changed for the program in over 10 years. The tuition increase will help the program financially, but the national board feels that overall the tuition for the program is still affordable. In the ELCA, there are many lay education programs and diakonia is one of the least expensive programs available.

“BDA” SESSIONS (BEFORE, DURING, AFTER)

As a couple of Diakonians who have been attending the BDA sessions the past few months (Melanie in Glenview and Delores in Carol Stream) we thought we’d share our reflections with you about what these sessions mean to us, and why you might want to consider joining us for them.

First of all, what would people at all stages (B, D, and A) get out of these sessions?

For the “B” people, this is a wonderful chance to meet people who are currently involved in Diakonia (so you can get good answers to all of those questions about homework loads, reading, balancing your life, etc.) It’s also a great chance to meet people who have finished out the program, to find out what Diakonia has done for them, and more importantly, how they have used what they have learned and experienced in Diakonia.

The “D” folks get a chance to get together in fellowship with other Diakonians outside of the pressure of the classroom. Sure, the fellowship in class is great, but let’s admit it – sometimes you have a bit more on your mind, like the paper that’s due in a week or so, or all of that reading for Creeds and Confessions! The BDA sessions are a place to meet with your brothers and sisters in Christ without the looming anxiety of the class project that is due for the Early Church History class or the sermon or message you need to prepare for Proclamation (you can tell we’ve been there!) But seriously, it’s a chance for you to share with the “B” people what Diakonia has done for you, and to gain

some perspective from us “A” people what is out there at the end of the rainbow.

The “A” folks may appreciate the chance to reconnect with old friends, to encourage the “D” folks (‘cause we’ve all been there) and to give a sense of perspective to the “B” folks, who may focus more on the two years in the program, and not enough on what the end result of the program may be. **(We have found that articulating where we feel God has led us has helped us in our individual ministries, and has helped us to spread the word about Diakonia to others.)**

It’s also nice to have the opportunity to mentor the “D” people, who may find that they entered the program for one reason but may be feeling called in another direction now – many of us have been there and can offer guidance and counsel in these cases. For the “A” people, perhaps we can inspire them with our stories of where we have been led to serve.

But mostly, it is a chance to get together with our friends in Christ on a regular basis for fellowship, laughs, Bible study, inspiration, and prayer. The setting is a casual, relaxed one: we meet in the homes of Pastor Eric Dawson, Executive Director of the Metro Chicago Synod Diakonia Steering Committee (and if you want to know the story behind “homes,” come to a session to find out!) Pr. Dawson leads us in discussion, prayer, and fellowship, and we much appreciate his willingness to serve us in this effort.

By Melanie Chavin, class of 2002;





Delores Baldwin,
Class of 2004

WEBSITES

Diakonia has a national website and a webpage on the two synod websites:

www.thediakoniaprogram.org

www.mselca.org/diakonia/index.html

www.nisynod.org/ministries/diakonia.htm

MERCHANDISE

If you are interested in a diakonia mug, shirt, hat, or tote bag, please contact Rebecca Dahlstrom. The mugs are \$5, shirts are \$20, hats are \$12, and tote bags \$15. Shirts are available in limited sizes only.