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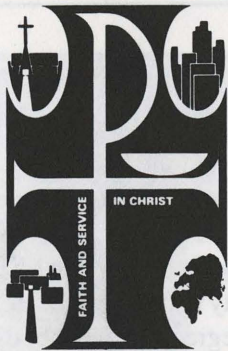
Lutheran Deaconess Association

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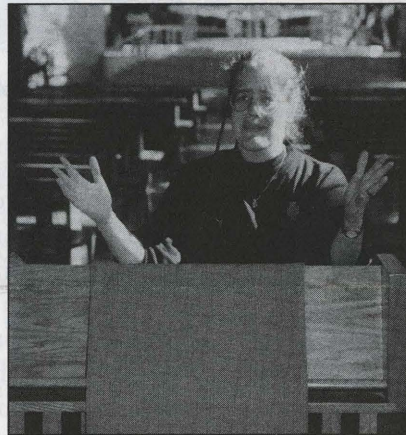
THE LDA *Today*

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A ministry of accompaniment

Deaconess Judi Tyler visits with students

The life and work of a deaconess includes many aspects of service to those in need. One of these aspects is the ministry of "accompaniment," which means supporting and "going along with" other people in their struggles. Deaconess Judi Tyler has been an example of this kind of ministry since her consecration in 1990 — in Mexico as a teacher and missionary, and in Phoenix, Arizona as a shelter director, social worker and social services director.



Deaconess Judi Tyler

During her recent visit to Valparaiso University and the Center for Diaconal Ministry, Judi spoke of how she learned the value of accompaniment in Mexico. "People would always ask me, 'May I accompany you to the store?' or 'May I accompany you to the city?' It was a sign of companionship and a way of building trust with others."

In her return to the United States, Judi quickly realized that this "spirit of accompaniment" was not emphasized as much here as in Mexico, so she experienced culture shock. After a while, however, she was able to incorporate that aspect of ministry into her new work with the elderly and severely mentally ill. "Though God is the ultimate person to accompany someone, I can be an agent of God's support and love as people go through loss and grief."

Judi's ministry of accompaniment extends into the deaconess community. She keeps in touch with many of her sister deaconesses. She says, "We e-mail each other through our life journeys. Our employment situations may change, but the constant is the deaconess community." She wears the deaconess pin as a reminder of her vocation as one who is called to serve and who also encourages others to serve.

This is the work of Deaconess Judi Tyler and so many others who are called to diaconal ministry. A ministry of service to those in need. A ministry of care, support, and "going along with." A ministry of accompaniment. ■

LDA RECEIVES MAJOR GIFT

A gift of \$100,000 has recently been received by the LDA from a donor who is a friend of the association and cares a great deal about deaconesses. The donor, who wishes to remain anonymous, has designated the gift to be used for spiritual, professional and personal renewal for deaconesses. "This generous gift will make it possible for us to offer retreats, workshops, and seminars to deaconesses for years to come," says Deaconess Louise Williams, LDA Executive Director. "Also, we will now have financial assistance for those who otherwise could not attend." The LDA gives thanks for the giver and the gift which will enrich the life and work of the deaconess community. ■

Is Becoming a Deaconess a Choice for You?

Contact Mary at the LDA office -

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From my perspective . . .

As we begin 1999, we hear a lot of talk about preparing for the new millennium. In the nearly 2000 years since Jesus walked the dusty paths of Palestine, lots of things have changed. Perhaps in your own lifetime you have seen changes that you could not have imagined. No doubt there are many changes ahead. Some we can anticipate, some that will surprise us.

Still, some things have remained the same. There are still people in need in our world — people like those Jesus reached out to with love and care. God still calls you and me — all Christians — to extend God's own love and care to hurting people. That is true now, and it will be true in the new millennium.

Deaconess ministry provides one avenue for the church to be about Jesus' service in the world. There is great need for that ministry now, and the need will be even greater in the future.

Here at the LDA our staff and board members, committees and special task forces, are trying to anticipate the changes ahead. We



Deaconess Louise Williams & Michael Cobbler

are assessing the needs and shaping deaconess education and ministry for the future.

We count on your continued partnership now and in the future. We are eager to hear your ideas. We value your assistance in sharing the story of deaconess ministry. We treasure your prayers. We need your financial support.

As we prepare for the new millennium, we welcome Michael Cobbler to

the LDA staff as Director of Development and Public Relations. He knows well the needs of the church, having served as a parish pastor and

community organizer. He understands church-related not-for-profits through his work with organizations such as Lutheran Human Relations Association and Faith Mission, a homeless shelter and support services program in Columbus, Ohio. He believes that people moved by God's spirit are ready to respond to Christ's call to service in the world — some by becoming deaconesses and others by supporting deaconess ministry. Mike is

eager to tell the LDA story and to invite you to take part in it.

I hope you have an opportunity to meet Mike. He holds degrees from Peabody Conservatory of Music and the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. He is a performing trombonist, writer and speaker. He is married to Thelma Megill-Cobbler, assistant professor of theology at Valparaiso University. They are parents of Daniel, a high school sophomore.

Mike joins the rest of us on the LDA board and staff, deaconesses around the country and abroad, and students now preparing for diaconal ministry, in looking forward to the opportunities and challenges ahead. At the same time, we look back to Christ who calls us to service and shows us how.

Sharing Christ's service,

Louise Williams

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Servant Songs Now On Sale

It's not "top 40," and it isn't easy listening, rap, punk, new age or retro, either. But it is life-giving music that flows from the diaconal heart. SERVANT SONGS is the new recording made by Lutheran deaconesses that gives voice to the love of God in and through service. The recordings are available on CD (\$15.00) and audio cassette tape (\$10.00). To order one (or more), write, call or e-mail us at the Center for Diaconal Ministry for an order form. The proceeds will go towards scholarships, formation events, and educational programs for deaconesses. This recording was made possible by a grant from Aid Association for Lutherans, Appleton, Wisconsin. ■



Marleene Kretchman receives Diakonia en Christo award from Deaconess Louise Williams.

IS YOUR WILL IN YOUR WILL?

As part of our commitment to meeting the needs and wishes of our friends and supporters, the LDA has examples of will preambles to share with you as you wish. We are also willing to discuss your consideration of the LDA as a beneficiary in your estate plans. Call Mike at the LDA office if you need assistance — he will be pleased to help. ■



Gail and Karl Lutze

PHONATHON '99

Phonathon '99 is on the way! This will be the eleventh year of reaching out to our friends for support in this fashion. Our co-chairs for this year will be Karl and Gail Lutze. Be ready to respond when you receive your letter and call! ■

HOSPICE FOUNDER RECEIVES AWARD

Service in the name of Christ to those in need is extended in all stages and situations in life. It is especially important to the dying and their families.

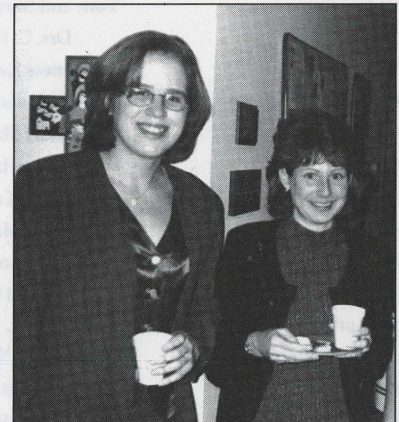
In recognition of her work in initiating hospice care in her home city of Thornhill, Ontario, Marleene Kretchman is the recipient of the 1998 the *Diakonia en Christo* (Service in Christ) award. This award, established by the Lutheran Deaconess Association to foster and honor the diaconal ministry of lay people, is given to a person who is a significant witness in serving "the least of these" in volunteer activities or daily vocation.

Marleene's service in the name of Christ went well beyond the establishment of the Thornhill, Ontario Hospice. She also recruited staff, trained volunteers, raised funds, led workshops, and served as its first director. A special aspect to Marleene's ministry was her hospitality to members of the deaconess community as they visited Eleanor Brennenstuhl, a past treasurer and dear friend of the LDA, shortly before her death last year. Marleene also cared for Eleanor in her last days.

An initial presentation of the award was made at the Lutheran Deaconess Conference banquet this past summer. A second presentation was recently made at Marleene's home congregation, St. Luke's, North York, Ontario.

Service in Christ to the dying and their families and friends is a special gift of ministry. Marleene Kretchman has exercised that gift in full measure to the glory of God and to the benefit of those in need. We honor her because she has blessed so many with that gift.

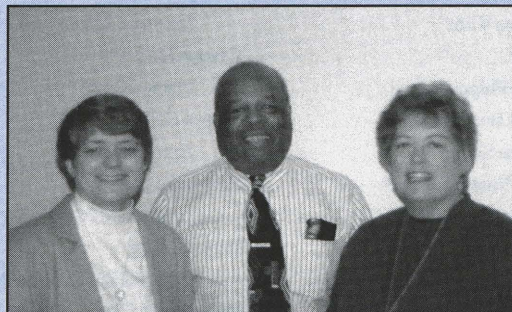
We are now receiving nominations for this year's *Diakonia en Christo* award. If you want to nominate someone, let us know. ■



Deaconess students Marla Wood and Brenda Fleagle enjoying a reception at the Center for Diaconal Ministry.

AAL MEMBER MATCHING GIFT PROGRAM

Members of Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL) can have their gifts to the LDA matched through the member gift-matching program. One gift per certificate per calendar year (from \$25 to \$100) will be matched by AAL. Parents may also make contributions on behalf of their juvenile children who are insured on an AAL certificate. If you are an AAL member and wish to have your gift matched, call or write us for a gift-matching application form. We are grateful for the strong support that AAL gives to Lutheran education! ■



LDA Board Members Carolyn Becker, Stanley Jordan and Cathy Bengson were honored for their faithful service of two full terms at the Annual Meeting of the LDA in November.

Honor and Memorial Gifts
Received June 16 to December 31, 1998

[Table with redacted content]