



The diakonia Program™

**Unlocking the Gifts
Of Lay Ministry**



The diakonia Program™ is a two year program of theological education and spiritual formation.



Why Have a **diakonia Program™**

The diakonia Program™ seeks to assist lay persons discern and develop their gifts for ministry so that the Lord's church and world will be served by skilled, well-trained disciples

AND

at the same time, provide opportunities for personal spiritual growth



diakonia's Key Biblical and Theological Concepts

- ❑ **Baptismal Vocation** – One of **diakonia's** goals is to help Christians live out their baptismal vocation by “equipping the saints for the work of ministry.” (Eph. 4:13)

While **diakonia's** primary focus is lay ministry, in synods where **The diakonia Program** operates, approximately 15% of the graduates pursue callings in the ELCA rostered leadership.

- ❑ **Christian service** – **diakonia** seeks to develop disciples whose serving is modeled after Jesus, “who came not to be served but to serve.” (Mk 10:43ff)



diakonia develops Baptismal Vocation and Christian Service by:

- ❑ Providing a basic grounding in Biblical, historical, systematic and practical theology
- ❑ Identifying gifts for ministry, encourages their use and development
- ❑ Promoting spiritual growth through worship, retreats, and a supportive community of other students, instructors, pastors and other lay leaders



What Is The diakonia Program™

- ❑ **diakonia** is a two year course of study which consists of twelve courses – six per year – normally meeting between August/September through May or June.
- ❑ Each course meets once a week for five weeks, (with breaks at holidays that are determined by each location.)
- ❑ In the two years, participants receive 180 hours of theological education and ministry training.



Courses Take a Balanced Approach

- ◆ **Providing foundational knowledge and background for each area of study**

AND

- ◆ **Relating subject matter to the student's life and ministry context (family, congregation, neighborhood, area of ministry)**



“Series A” Courses

- ◆ Introduction to New Testament
- ◆ Church History: The First 400 Years
- ◆ Practical Ministry I: Biblical Images in the Life of the Church
- ◆ Creeds and Confessions
- ◆ Practical Ministry II: Visitation
- ◆ The Daily Life of the Christian

“Series B” Courses

- ◆ Introduction to the Old Testament
- ◆ Faith in the North American Context
- ◆ Christian Doctrine
- ◆ Christian Worship
- ◆ Themes and Issues in Christian Ethics
- ◆ Practical Ministry III: Communicating the Gospel



The Process of Spiritual Growth & Formation

- ❑ Devotions at every class – led by participants
- ❑ The prayer support of the class
- ❑ Sharing of ministry experiences – both the joys and frustrations of ministry and leadership within their various ministry settings
- ❑ The Annual Retreat
- ❑ Other Continuing Education Opportunities
- ❑ Pastoral support and mentoring





What Does diakonia Cost?

- ◆ Tuition - \$360 per year
- ◆ Registration Fees: \$35
- ◆ Books – Varies from course to course but instructors are asked to keep book costs below \$40-50 per course.
- ◆ Retreats – An annual **diakonia** Retreat is sponsored by each area. Costs reflect local arrangements.

Financial Aid is available. Partnership between the student, the student's congregation, and the synod financial aid program is strongly encouraged.