



Northern Illinois Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

diakonia™ Growing in Faith 2022 Annual Report

Hello, I'm Douglas Wood chairman of the Northern Illinois Synod's **diakonia™** Committee.

If you are looking for answers or to strengthen your faith, provide support and background to assist you in leadership roles in your congregation or the Synod, these courses will help you get a greater incite. If you are contemplating, Seminary, these courses could help you in the discernment process. Many ordained ministers have first found themselves in the **diakonia™** program prior to even considering the call to ministry.

The program extends for 2 years and includes twelve courses. The first year is made up of 6 Faith Formation classes covering the basics of church history, the Bible and Lutheran theology and the second 6, Road to Service classes covering practical application for using your faith in service to the church and its people. Each course is 5 weeks in length, meeting for 3 hours one night a week beginning in September and ending in May. Also graduates of **diakonia™** may audit any of the new classes that are being offered for a small fee.

During 2022 I replaced Pastor Denise Rode who served over 10 plus years as chairperson. She is still serving on the committee and offering me valuable advice. Pastor Kenn Storck and Trenton Ferro who are on the National **diakonia™** Committee have been instrumental in the development of the new curriculum for our program and instructor recruitment here in the Northern Illinois Synod. The **diakonia™** program was offered two nights for the 2022-2023 year via Zoom. Our Tuesday night classes with our new first year students took the new Faith Formation classes offered, while our returning students took the 2nd year of the original program to finish and graduate.

For the 2023-2024 year we will be offering the Faith Formation for new students and the Road to Service for our returning students. We are hoping to also offer more sites in the Synod and using a combination of Zoom and in person classes.

Through our relationship with National Committee and therefore other ELCA synods, we will be able to offer more class electives.

This coming July 6,13,20, the **diakonia™** Steering Committee will be offering a three-session study of "The Universal Christ" by Richard Rohr, led by Pastor Kenn Storck via Zoom. Email: dwood1955@hotmail.com to enroll.

If you have doubts what better way to find out answers to questions that you have on the Bible and your faith. You can check out Growing in Faith: The **diakonia™** Program at this link: <https://www.diakoniausa.org/>

diakonia™ Northern Illinois Steering Committee Members:

Doug Wood
Carol Swenson
Rev. Dr. Denise Rode
Michelle Wandersee

Rev. Dr. John Seraphine
Barb Stark
Rev. Jon Pedersen
Rev. Bob Stark
Dr. Trenton Ferro

Rev. Kenn Storck
Rev. Jen Beamsley
Rev. Dr. Doug Liston
Donna Kelly