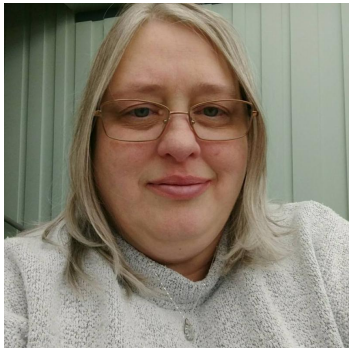




Check out our website at www.diakoniausa.org!



Part 1 of 2: 6 Questions with...Site Coordinators



This month: Meet Lynn Harmening-Marlowe

Tell us a little about yourself: I grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. I was baptized and confirmed in the same Lutheran church where my father had been baptized and confirmed. From the age of 15, I was often teased that I should just put a cot in the church since I spent the majority of my waking hours there. In 1997, when I met my wife at church, we found we both had the dream of living in Florida. In 2005, we decided to abandon cold winters, make that dream a reality, and move to sunny Florida.

I always felt I was called to ministry and during the diakonia "Visitation" class my main excuse was dissolved. I had been using the excuse of having severe arthritis to not begin seminary. In the "Visitation" class we had a speaker who was a quadriplegic chaplain. Right then and there I knew I was out of excuses and applied for Candidacy. I now attend Luther Seminary through the Distributive Learning (DL) program. The DL program allows me to live in Florida and take most of my classes online as I prepare for the ministry.

How did you come to know about diakonia? I was attending the Florida Bahamas Synod Assembly when I stumbled upon the diakonia booth during a break. There I met Kathy Richardson. Kathy was quite enthusiastic about the program and that excitement was contagious. I soon found myself enrolled in the diakonia program.

Why did you decide to be a site coordinator? I found myself so excited about the diakonia program that I began to share information about the program with everyone. After offering to work the diakonia booth at the next Synod Assembly, I was given the opportunity to become the Assistant Coordinator for the First Coast Conference (Jacksonville). Then sadly, the current coordinator became ill and requested that I take over the position full-time. I was honored to become the Jacksonville Site Coordinator and to share with others what the diakonia classes could do for them. Now I could walk beside the students watching their growth. I left the position of Site Coordinator in September 2017 due to the demands of seminary, but I still share information about the program whenever possible.

What are the three most important observations you can share about diakonia classes?

- I observed how students change over the two years of classes. It is wonderful to watch a person grow confident in sharing their beliefs. Even a shy person begins to speak up more and volunteer more within their church.
- Another observation is that the discussions become deeper than you could've ever imagined. In the small classroom atmosphere, the students become close to one another. This allows the students to feel comfortable while discussing difficult subjects and beliefs.
- The last observation I would like to share is the way these classes challenge you. Your beliefs will be challenged and you will grow through the class subjects and discussions. Throughout this challenge you will become more confident in your beliefs and in your ability to explain why you believe what you believe.

What is your favorite class and why? Introduction to New Testament. This was the first class I took and at first it felt overwhelming. But over the five weeks this class opened my mind to reading and researching the Bible in new ways. The class increased my understanding and increased my thirst for deeper study.

What is one thing about you that would surprise us? Accepting God's will for my life has never come easy for me. Much like Jonah, my first reaction is to run away!

How can we pray for you? Please pray that as I continue my seminary studies I will find and accept God's will for my life.

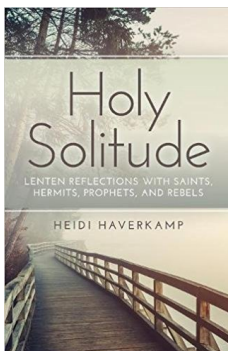


You are invited to register for the
2018 diakonia retreat
"Non-Violence as a Way of Life"
Saturday, March 3
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Mt. Hope Lutheran Church,
8633 W. Becher
West Allis, Wisconsin

\$10 Registration fee includes:
Continental breakfast
Soup and sandwich lunch (Vegetarian options available)
All retreat materials

Scholarships available upon request ([email Diane](#))

Register [here](#).



Good Reads

Title: Holy Solitude: Lenten Reflections with Saints, Hermits, Prophets and Rebels

Author: Heidi Haverkamp

Our faith is full of heroes who experienced God powerfully in solitude. From Hagar and the Hebrew prophets to Jesus in the wilderness to Francis of Assisi and Catherine of Siena, see through this [book](#) how escape from the toil and temptations of daily life can open our eyes, ears, minds, and hearts to the still, small voice of God.

[The Leadership Initiative](#) encourages all of us to seek out and inspire gifted people in our congregations and communities to consider a call to the ministry of the gospel. If you know someone who shows a gift for



ministry, help mentor and foster them. Together – pastors, deacons, lay people – we can bring the word of God to the world.

[Watch](#) "How Will You Lead?"

We Need You!

Are you interested in being featured in or submitting a **Servant Story** for a future issue of **TheTool Box**? Are you an instructor who would like to share a bit of yourself in "Instructor Focus?" Are you a site coordinator who would like to give us a peak into your program? Do you have observations to share from your a class?

We can all learn from each other's journeys before, during and after the program.

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