

Convivial Living Together
interdiac on the move to the 10th Anniversary

Honorary Council 18th-20th September 2017

Introduction

The life and work of interdiac is founded on the need to support the members in their engagement with marginalised people and communities. The annual meeting of the members this year gathered 16 people from 14 countries to evaluate the past activities and plan for the future. The meeting welcomed new participants from Kyrgyzstan and Russia.

Starting from Engagement – Planning for the Future

The stories of the members and their reflection on joys and present challenges gave the members a basis for reflection and planning. Using different informal methods, members shared what they valued about interdiac and what they hoped for and this provided a further lively impulse for future planning. The convivial evening gave further chance to share local experiences in an informal atmosphere.

The main activities of the previous year, with several highlights, were discussed and shared. The presentations were participative, for example, Ihor Kornii, one of the students, presented the progress of the **Double Degree Programme** and the One Semester Professional Courses. A new **One Semester Course, 'Management for Change and Innovation'** is planned for spring 2018.

As well as the on-going work, interdiac has pioneered a number of new actions – the **research programme** kick off meeting, long in the planning was held in Prague earlier in 2017 and it was agreed to focus attention on.

- work with marginalised young people
- diaconia and uprooted people
- different ecclesiological and confessional understandings of diaconia

As a result of this workshop, the network has been formed and the programme will, depending on successful fundraising, begin during the next year.

A second new action is the work with the Lutheran congregation in Kiev, pioneering a diaconal church, supported through the interdiac led process: **Diaconia Creates Conviviality**. The pastor of the congregation, Ihor Shemigon, made a lively presentation and the course participants are all engaged in work before the next face-to-face workshop. Honorary Council members reflected on what this presentation meant for them, in terms of seeking conviviality.

A further exciting planned development is for a **new international training programme** for local diaconia. This will begin in spring 2018 and will include Mobile Workshops and Job Shadowing.

Other highlights of the year included the presentation by Janka and Tony of the joint LWF-interdiac process '**Seeking Conviviality – Re-forming Community Diakonia in Europe**' at the LWF Assembly in Windhoeck. The process will continue into a third phase starting in November 2017, dealing with issues of diversity and uprootedness.

In addition to these developments there will be a focus on joint ventures of **diaconal churches** in the region and the production of more learning material in Russian language. The **publications** will also include an introduction to Conviviality and the further work on the Diaconia Handbook.

Sharing & Walking Together

interdiac members are a resource to each other and to the learning programmes and using an informal method the knowledge, skills and competences of the members and member organisations were shared as important contributions to our future journey together.

A late afternoon and evening visit to one of the places where Lutherans worshipped in secret in the forest also gave space to reflect on faith and diaconal identity. During this visit, which included dinner on top of a hill (unfortunately shrouded in mist) we shared the story of the reformation in the Silesian region with an input from pastor Marek Rican. Along the way participants discussed the upcoming **interdiac 10th anniversary year** and prepared some findings which will be used in the planning process.

From Diversity to Conviviality – Save the Date: 8th-12th October 2018

Reflecting on the theme for the **10th Anniversary conference** brought together many ideas and contributions. The interdiac team, in consultation with the members will develop the final plan. It will include worship, live music, a celebration and work on some pressing issues – maybe a conference declaration. The book, which is in preparation, of people's reflection on what interdiac means for them and their work will also be launched at this event. Around the same time there will be a meeting of the interdiac research network. The conference is planned for the 8th – 12th October 2018 and the research network will meet on the 12th October 2018.

Conclusion

After such a rich sharing and common planning, the members finally discussed interdiac communication and networking as well as the use of the different tools we have such as the regular Talking Points. The final evaluation showed how greatly participants value the space that interdiac gives for learning and development and how the Council is a truly convivial and inspiring space for evaluation and planning.