



ReDi Newsletter December 2018

The Berlin Conference

The General Meeting and The New Executive Board

The 1st Anders Bäckström Prize for excellent Master thesis

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Upcoming Events

Dear members and friends,

In this first newsletter since the Berlin conference we would like to offer a short summary of the conference and the General Meeting that took place during the conference.

The Biannual ReDi Conference was held in Berlin on 12-14 September, hosted by Diakonie Deutschland in Berlin. A new executive board was elected in the General Meeting. Also, the first Anders Bäckström Prize for excellent Master thesis was awarded. Last, but not least we will inform you about latest volume of the *Diaconia journal* and future events that ReDi is involved in.

The Seventh Biennial Conference for Research in Diaconia and Christian Social Practice in Berlin 12-14 September 2018

The Seventh Biennial Conference was a great success with nearly 90 participants and with interesting keynote lectures, presentations and discussions about social justice, theological perspectives and diaconia in both global and local contexts. The conference

was titled “Beyond services towards justice”. We enjoyed the well-organized event hosted by Diakonie Deutschland in Berlin and the German team led by Dr Ingolf Hübner, Diakonie Deutschland and prof. Johannes Eurich, Diakoniewissenschaftlichen Instituts, Heidelberg.

The opening lecture on *Globalisation and Justice from a Theological Perspective* was given by **Dr. Isabel Phiri**, the WCC Associate General Secretary for Public Witness & Diaconia. The second keynote lecture *Precious and precarious: Tensions and possibilities in diaconal economics* was given by **Prof. Dr. Sturla Stålsett**, Professor of Diaconia, Religion and Society, Norwegian School of Theology, Oslo. The third and final keynote lecture on *Welfare, gender and the Crisis of Care* was given by **Prof. Dr. Helma Lutz**, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main.

Six workshops with 12 presentations and eight paper sessions with 19 presentations were held during the Conference. Also a panel discussion was held with the topic of *What is the study of Diaconia? What are key challenges for the development of Diaconia? What does the study of Diaconia do in this context (critical remarks on “Beyond service towards justice”)*.

Please see the Society website for more information and to find the full conference programme and list of workshops and paper sessions, and also to find selection of photographs.

www.diaconiaresearch.org/7th-redi-conference-took-place-in-berlin/

The General Meeting and The New Executive Board

On 13th September, during the Conference, the General Meeting of the ReDi Society was held. **Prof. Ninna Edgardh** was unanimously re-elected as the chairperson of ReDi and, in effect, the chairperson of the Executive Board. Other elected members of the board are presented below with specification of role and responsibility:

Ninna Edgardh - Chairperson

Stephen Sirris / VID – Secretary

Florian Tuder / Eurodiaconia – Treasurer

Isto Peltomäki – Vice Chair, newsletter and contact person in relations to the Finnish bank and authorities

John Klaasen - Internationalization and Website

Beate Hofmann / IDM Wuppertal/Bethel – the Anders Bäckström prize

Herman Noordegraaf – Reports from practice

See our website for presentations of the elected board members:

<https://www.diaconiaresearch.org/who-we-are/>

The previous members of the Executive Board **Anette Leis-Peters**, **Nadine Bowers du Toit** and **Ulla Siirto** were warmly thanked for their contribution for the Society.

The board was unanimously given mandate to prepare to move the legal identify from Finland to Belgium. At the moment the Society is established in Finland statues in Finnish and financial assets are taken care of with a Finnish bank. The day to day running of ReDi is carried out in Brussels through the secretariat of Eurodiaconia. The intention behind the proposal is to ensure the best administrative running of the Society.

The 1st Anders Bäckström Prize for excellent Master theses

The ReDi Society is proud to award the first Anders Bäckström Prize for excellent Master theses to Mrs. Mwawi Chilongozi from Malawi, a PhD student in Theology at Stellenbosch University. Her master thesis focuses on the role of the Presbyterian Church in Malawi with regard to maternal health. For more information, please see

<https://www.sun.ac.za/english/Lists/news/DispForm.aspx?ID=5872>

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The latest issue of Diaconia Journal has been published on July 2018. Please find the Open Access Journal on our website. www.diaconiaresearch.org/diaconia-journal/

Also, we are happy to inform Anette Leis-Peters, associate professor and vice dean at the Faculty of Theology, Diaconia and Leadership Studies at VID (Norway), has been appointed as the new editor of *Diaconia Journal for the Study of Christian Social Practice*.

Upcoming events

International Conference for PhD-Students in Diaconic Science, July 19/20, 2019 in Heidelberg, German. Please see the [draft programme](#).

The CODE Forum for researchers and practitioners regarding community diakonia, February 27/28, 2019, in Helsinki, Finland. Please see for more information under [this link](#).

As an advance information, VID Stavanger has invited ReDi to host the next Biennial Conference in September 2020. More information will be provided closer to the date.

One of the aims of the newsletter is to let you know that ReDi and the field of diaconal studies is constantly developing. You can also contribute to make the development of this field visible. If you send us information about events, research, publications or other things that are happening in your realm, we would be most happy to publish them on the ReDi website or in the ReDi newsletter. Just let us know!

With best wishes for a blessed and peaceful Christmas

Ninna Edgardh
Chairperson

Isto Peltomäki
Vice Chair
