

DIACONAL SUNDAY

February 23, 2014

Celebrating witness expressed through service (diakonia) and leadership offered by the ELCIC's diaconal ministers.

But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. —Matthew 5:44

Pray, Read, Worship, Study, Serve, Give, Tell

Serving our neighbours is an essential element of spiritual renewal, of life in the Church and of sharing the gospel. Internationally, the Greek word *diakonia* is used to discuss and encourage mission expressed through compassionate justice, service, advocacy and development. Along with "Theology & Dialogue" and "Holistic Mission & Relationships," "Diakonia" is one of the priorities of Lutheran World Federation. Today we pray that the Holy Spirit will inspire and renew witness expressed through service.

Diaconal Ministers are authorized by the ELCIC for a public Ministry of Word and Service. This includes skilled & faithful service to marginalized persons, and a deep commitment to equipping all the baptized for spirited discipleship. Today, we give thanks for the 29 people on the ELCIC Roster of Diaconal Ministers, and for the service and leadership they offer.

The image of Jesus washing the disciples' feet (John 13) is an example of how Jesus modelled a life of service. His command to "love your enemies" calls us to show active concern for all who are in need. Today we live out our call to be a church *In Mission for Others*.

Prayer for Diaconal Sunday

We give thanks for the many faithful saints throughout the ages who have taken to heart your call to follow the example Jesus gave us for living in the power of God's love. Merciful God, we give thanks for your unfailing love and the grace that we have received through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We give thanks for the new life we have received through our baptism enabling us to live with confidence in the knowledge that we are your beloved people. We are set free to be active co-creators with you in bringing heaven to earth, through the sharing of your extravagant love which we have received. Help and guide us to be a missional people, to love our neighbour, through our words and actions for the sake of the world. We give thanks for those who feel called to serve you in word and service as diaconal ministers whose commitment to serving you is a visible witness of your love through their lives. We ask that you would continue to reveal to us fresh and life giving ways in which we may serve your purposes of bringing about peace and justice and shalom to all creation. Help us to love as you love. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

—Prayer by Brigitte McKenzie



Hymn suggestions for Diaconal Sunday

#648 – *Beloved, God's Chosen*

#639 – *When We Are Living*

#725 – *When the Poor Ones*

#358 – *Great God, Your Love Has Called Us*

God of Life by Scott Knarr

(Scott is a candidate for Diaconal Ministry and has generously shared this hymn for Diaconal Sunday available at www.elcic.ca)

Also available at www.elcic.ca

Reflections on the lectionary texts for February 23, 2014

Bible Study on Stephen: Deacon and First Christian Martyr

Children's Sermon for Diaconal Sunday

Diaconal Sunday Resources from Previous Years

