

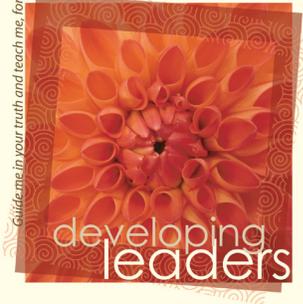
follow the leader

Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are my God and Savior. Psalm 25:5a

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You may view
or download the
Servant Resources Kit
at www.lwml.org under
Resources/Leader Helps.

Public Recognition

Here are some public recognition events and ideas:

- having a special dessert at someone's home or at church
- honoring an individual by taking her out to lunch with a group
- at convention or zone or local gatherings, verbally thanking the leaders and presenters and giving them LWML gifts
- printing a list of volunteers in the church or LWML newsletter, worship bulletin, convention manual, zone program book, or on a bulletin board
- giving verbal thanks (and applause) at large group events
- praising people in a conversation when others can hear
- having altar flowers or corsages
- allocating reserved parking spots for an event
- providing service pins or special nametags

These methods not only bring recognition to the volunteers, but they also help recruit future helpers as people see who is involved in the organization and that their time and efforts are valued.

Recognition Ideas

LWML Leaders Share Their Thoughts on Thanks and Encouragement

The holidays give us opportunities to thank those who serve with us. Why recognize volunteers? For starters, it's good old-fashioned courtesy! It is a wonderful affirmation of past service and gives encouragement for future participation. It also builds relationships with our sisters and brothers in Christ. While most individuals serve because of their love for the Lord and what He has done for them, it is always encouraging for them to know that others appreciate the work being done. A simple thank you often serves to spark new energy for the dedicated volunteer. It encourages them to use the gifts God has given them. As you plan for Christmas or the beginning of the New Year, here are some recognition ideas and resources for you to consider.

We conducted a survey of national LWML leaders to see how they recognize volunteers. The overall favorite is with a hand written note or card because it is more personal and shows you care to do a little more. A few also shared that they send birthday and Christmas cards in addition to thank you notes. One observed that in a world where texting, Twitter, Facebook, and e-mail are everyday actions, a handwritten note says, "I'm taking the time to think about you." Another suggested including a prayer of thanksgiving. E-mails are not excluded, however, as they are also a way to communicate uplifting words of encouragement and thanks frequently and when time is limited. Both handwritten notes and e-mails are relatively easy and inexpensive ways to express appreciation, even for large lists of volunteers. These personal communiqués are especially effective with people who do not particularly desire public recognition.

Unique Gifts

Many respondents shared that often a note is accompanied by a small gift. Here are some unique gift ideas:

- an LWML pot holder, pieced and quilted
- taking someone out for lunch or coffee
- a gift card which can be purchased in an amount to suit your needs
- an LWML purple mug filled with Hershey's Kisses
- bookmarks made on an embroidery sewing machine
- hand knitted purple scarves
- mini purple LWML sharpies and little laminated cards with a Bible verse on one side and on the other the saying, "May you be the kind of woman that when your feet hit the floor in the morning, the devil says ... dang, she's up!"
- a bookmark, devotional booklet, LWML purple paper clips
- a piece of gourmet chocolate

A gift given in honor of someone is another popular form of recognition. The gifts mentioned were usually to LWML, a special LWML fund, or a Lutheran entity. Most were to honor individuals, but one person noted that it also works for honoring a large group. So this method can be used for both personal and public recognition.

The LWML Servant Resource Kit was adapted and shared by Joy Dougherty. If you have any resources to share with LWML leaders please send them to deprs@lwml.org.

Honoring and Encouraging

Here are some ideas from the *Recognition Packet Materials* for use by local parishes, societies, or other organizations to aid in honoring, encouraging, and recognizing the volunteers in their midst. (Item #14197 in the LWML Catalog).

- **Send thank you notes.**

(Thankfulness Postcard #16575 in LWML catalog) A handwritten note or a holiday card with a personal note about how their service is a blessing will be most appreciated. This type of communication relays a true connection between the writer and the recipient.

- **Give a gift in their honor** to the LWML or a charity that they support (Honor Card #18100 in LWML catalog). The sentiment on the honor card reads; "The Lord used you to touch my life in a special way. In thanksgiving for your encouragement and support in my faith walk, I have given a gift in your name to support mission projects of the LWML."

- **Hold a brief recognition service** at a meeting or worship service. It could include the litany below, which is based on Romans 12:1-8 (p 8).

Recognition Litany

Leader: I implore you by God's mercy to offer yourselves to God: a living sacrifice, dedicated and fit for God's acceptance.

People: ***We celebrate today those persons in our (church/group/society) who have shown their dedication by their work as volunteers.***

Leader: Do not be conceited or think too highly of yourself. For as in a single human body there are many limbs and organs, all with different functions, so all of us, united with Christ, form one body, serving individually as limbs and organs to one another.

People: ***We celebrate the many gifts, talents, skills, and opportunities of these people who have united in the work of the church.***

Leader: The gifts we possess differ as they are allotted to us by God's grace and must be exercised accordingly. If you give to charity, give with all your heart; if you are a leader, exert yourself to lead; if you are helping others in distress, do it cheerfully.

People: ***We celebrate those persons who have given with all their hearts, have exerted themselves in leadership, and have worked cheerfully.***

UNISON: **Praise God for these people, their unique characteristics and their willingness to serve.**

More Ideas!

Other recognition ideas shared by LWML leaders included:

- an electronic card
- a plaque
- personal, private thanks and/or time together one on one
- organizing a card shower
- phone calls just for the purpose of saying thanks — no other "business" discussed
- incorporating time to share into events or meetings
- a hug and a whispered "thank you" or words of encouragement ("You go, girl!")
- nominating someone for an achievement or volunteer service award
- using resources from Christian Tools of Affirmation (www.CTAinc.com), which are inexpensive and offer greater discounts for quantities
- asking retailers for quantity discounts
- adapting a popular "survival kit" idea*

We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

—1 Thess. 1:3