



How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news ... Isaiah 52:7

By Deaconess Lisa Scherzer Polito

Feet ... I think about feet a lot. It started when I was a young girl whose mother had beautiful shoes in all colors of the rainbow. They were stunning. One of my jobs was to match her purse to the shoes she was wearing. I thought having all those shoes was an important part of being a lady. Unfortunately, even as a young girl, I had BIG feet, and I don't remember a time when I could fit into my mother's shoes and play dress-up.

Years later, feet (without shoes!) actually became a focus of my vocation. I am a deaconess with the Lutheran Deaconess Association, and deaconesses are all about washing feet.

Maybe you've seen me, along with other deaconesses, washing feet at the LWML national conventions. I love washing feet. Some feet are beautiful, some are not. Some are rough and worn with age, others are smooth and soft. There are ugly toenails and beautifully manicured ones. There are bunions, corns, hammer toes, and calluses. During the convention, there are lots of blisters from all the walking. But no matter the shape or size, all those feet are beautiful to me because they belong to those who serve the Lord with gladness, who bring God's Good News to the world.

As a deaconess I wear a silver pin with the Chi Rho, a cross representing Christ's service for me, and a basin, a reminder that I am following Christ in service to all God's people. Christ's example is in John 13 when He takes a basin and a towel and washes His disciples' feet. But Jesus doesn't

stop there; He also commands them to wash each other's feet. Deaconesses follow Jesus' command — washing the feet of a weary world.

I was very young when I knew that God wanted me to do some kind of work in the Kingdom. As a five-year old in Mrs. Bell's Sunday School class at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Callaway, Minnesota, I first felt God's tug on my heart. Mrs. Bell taught us the love of God in Christ Jesus. We learned that this Good News was to go to all people. Yet I wasn't sure what I could do to serve. As I grew older, I knew that it was not youth work or overseas missions.

One day I learned about deaconesses, those who are called to be God's servants in a variety of "foot-washing" ministries. Some work in churches, others in hospitals or prisons, still others in overseas missions and non-profit organizations. Deaconesses are teachers, nurses, lawyers, chaplains, musicians, therapists and more. The core of our ministry is the same — faith and service in Christ.

Deaconess — the perfect fit for me and my big feet. Just like those feet that I meet at conventions, we are all different. And just like my mother's shoes, our service is a stunning rainbow of ministries!

Deaconess Lisa Scherzer Polito serves as the Executive Director of the Lutheran Deaconess Association. She is a past officer of the Pacific Southwest District LWML. The hymn quoted below is on the LDA's CD Songs of Justice and Peace, available online at www.theLDA.org.

*God of every servant heart, guide us in our joyful giving.
Wisdom, come make us a part of the circle where we're living.
In community You place us, Call us, send us and embrace us.
With your Spirit's breath and fire, come ignite our deep
desire to empower and inspire
God, we long to serve Your people, and so to serve You.*

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