

Warmest Greetings from Diaconal Ministries Canada!

I'm not sure about you but I've been finding much comfort in the psalms lately, and more particularly, Psalm 62. There's a lovely chorus that runs through it:

*Truly my soul finds rest in God; my salvation comes from him.  
Truly He is my rock and my salvation; He is my fortress, I will never be shaken.*

The Message puts it this way:

*God, the one and only—I'll wait as long as he says.  
Everything I hope for comes from him, so why not?  
He's solid rock under my feet, breathing room for my soul,  
An impregnable castle: I'm set for life.*

What comfort for these days we're living in!

Resting in the knowledge of our heavenly Father's presence in our lives, Diaconal Ministries Canada continues to work with deacons all across Canada - to equip and support them in the work they do in their own contexts. And this has never been truer than in these recent months during the Covid-19 crisis.

From the earliest weeks of the shut-down, Diaconal Ministries wanted deacons to know they are not alone as they serve and equip their churches during these challenging times. [Our Diaconal Coaches and Field Staff](#) spent many hours reaching out to every single CRC diaconate in Canada - to check in and offer support. Coaches also hosted regional Zoom calls over the past months to help deacons connect with one another and to offer support and resources. Here's what one deacon shared with us recently:

*"We feel very supported by our Coach and others who provide workshops and information. It was really great to be able to see each other on Zoom and to hear how other churches in our classis are reacting to and serving their communities during the Covid-19 Pandemic. [Our gathering] was well focused and I especially appreciated the opportunity to be part of this discussion while staying at home. I feel blessed. I am finishing my term as Deacon soon, but thought this was one of the best meetings I have been a part of....keep going!!"*

(Karen Haveman, Ontario deacon)

A [Covid-19 Resource Page](#) was placed on our website, filled with practical tips and best practices. We also partnered with our friends at World Renew Canada to offer Covid-19 Grants to churches who longed to do diaconal work during this time but lacked the resources. So far **seventeen (17) churches** have received funding for community initiatives! We have also co-led four (free) webinars to educate deacons and ministry

leaders in the areas of mental health issues and the effects of inequality during Covid-19 and to encourage and equip them to reach out both locally and globally.

While we have much to celebrate and we continue to trust in our Heavenly Father, we also acknowledge the challenges that have come during the pandemic. Like many churches, we have experienced substantial financial constraints. As you can imagine, all of the above new initiatives take extra time, money, and staff. Our primary funding comes from annual Diaconal Ministry Shares and our NewGround Offering (held in May). Because churches were not gathering in their usual ways, our NewGround Offering was only able to bring in approximately 10% of our budgeted revenue. As well, when ministry share giving is down, ministry suffers.

In spite of this, we continue to be grateful. As we read on in Psalm 62, verse 8 tells us: *“Trust in Him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to Him, for God is our refuge.”*

And so we carry on, blessed by the ongoing support and encouragement we receive from churches and classes like yours. May God continue to bless and guide us all as we carry out the ministries He calls us to.

**For your information, here is our Board Executive for 2020-21:**

Chair – Erica Snippe-Juurakko (Thunder Bay, ON)...[erica.snippejuurakko@gmail.com](mailto:erica.snippejuurakko@gmail.com)

Vice-Chair – Martin Slofstra (Toronto, ON).....[martinslofstra9@gmail.com](mailto:martinslofstra9@gmail.com)

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Treasurer – Rose Saller (Pontypool, ON)..... [rosesaller@gmail.com](mailto:rosesaller@gmail.com)

We invite you to visit our website ([diaconalministries.com](http://diaconalministries.com)) to become familiar with the vast array of resources available. For more information, call us at the Burlington office (1-800-730-3490 ext. 4304) or contact one of the board members listed above.

Respectfully submitted,

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National Director, Diaconal Ministries Canada

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