

Congregational Response

Leader: Loving God, in Jesus of Nazareth you have shown us how to care for people. We commend to you [Name of Candidate] who is being consecrated for the gospel ministry. Grant her grace and strength to minister to the physical and spiritual needs of whole persons.

People: In every age, you have chosen servants to speak your word and to lead and shepherd your people.

Leader: We commemorate women and men in the Bible who were faithful leaders and servants: Old Testament women and men like Deborah, Ruth, Abraham, and Moses who demonstrated their faith in Yahweh; New Testament men and women like Peter, Lazarus, Mary and Martha who showed their love for Christ; women and men of the early church like Lydia, Tabitha, and Paul who worked to spread the gospel.

People: Help us to follow their example of faith and love.

Leader: We also remember women and men in the past who lived their faith with conviction: missionaries of great vision like Lottie Moon and Annie Armstrong. We give thanks for our other faith heroes and heroines: grandparents, parents, teachers, and role models.

People: We praise you, O God, for the strength and courage of these servants.

Leader: We also remember the women and men of our own time who are serving in your name.

People: Give them the courage and grace of conviction and mission, tempered with love and compassion, that through their work your name will be glorified.

All: We now thank you for this woman whom you have called to serve you. Bless her with the presence of your Holy Spirit. Grant her grace for the work to which she has been called. Equip her with wisdom that she might preach and teach the word effectively. Fill her with compassion for a world needy for you. Give her strength in times of trial. Give her joy in the journey. Amen.

**Shared with permission from the ordination service of Elizabeth Watson-Martin.*