

## **#1: Let Justice Roll Like a River**

Listen to track 1 of *Songs of Justice and Peace*.

### **Scripture:**

“Take from me the noise of your songs... But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.” Amos 5:23-24

### **Devotions:**

As our “mission-trip-in-town,” my youth group and I wanted to help serve Thanksgiving dinner for those in need, but the Salvation Army was full of volunteers. They sent us to “Boulevard Gardens,” where a small group of African American women had been providing holiday meals for over 30 years. Miss Mary and her volunteers welcomed our help, and we shared in the best Thanksgiving meal ever.

Miss Mary and her church choir raised money all year in order to provide a feast for poor and homeless people. Miss Mary offered “eat in” and “carry out” meals. She inspired her friends, children, and even grandchildren to serve. But after 30 years, she was tired. That’s how I got hooked, on Miss Mary’s behalf, to coordinate holiday meals at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

The first year, I helped on the serving line, where the other volunteers and I sang Christmas carols right out loud. The next year, Miss Mary asked me to stand at the door to greet the guests. As a doorkeeper, I get to say the first, “Welcome” to those who are hungry.

Miss Mary introduced me to a part of town that I normally don’t see -- a great need and amazing response was happening right in my backyard! It feels good to be part of providing for immediate, physical needs of people. And, as a single woman, I have a new family at the Gardens, where I share a delicious holiday meal with other hungry people who seek company. I’m proud to be part of Miss Mary’s crew.

Last year, our community threw a big celebration for Miss Mary and her husband, for their faithful service. Enough money was raised to start a foundation to help those in need. If asked, I’ll be ready to serve the foundation, too. I believe that we can make a difference in our own community, not just in far away places. Justice and righteousness flow freely, by God’s grace and our service.

**Prayer:** Thank you, dear Lord, for bringing us together in mission. Thank you for showing us places that could use our help. Thank you for surprising us – when the ones we serve have so much to offer us. Amen.

**Reflection:** Tell about your favorite Thanksgiving meal. What made it significant for you? How could you add a service activity to your Thanksgiving celebration?

Dcs Barbara Herzinger, Michigan City, IN

*The Lutheran Deaconess Association prepares people for ministries of service to those in need in the church and the world; supports deaconesses in their varied ministries; encourages the whole people of God in their own Christian service; and assists the church in its diaconal mission.*

**Website:** [www.TheLDA.org](http://www.TheLDA.org)

