

### **Siyahamba ekkukhanyen' kwenkhos'—We are marching in the light of God.**

I vividly recall the first time I heard this song. It was at the 1992 DIAKONIA World Assembly in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Canada. At one point, the deaconesses from Africa sang for us and then led us in marching/dancing in a long, snaking line throughout the room while we joined in the song.

The Assembly had been scheduled for 1991 but was postponed because of the Gulf War. Now our gathering in world assembly has been postponed by a global pandemic. While we cannot gather in person, we continue to be joined in prayer and our life together in the light of God.

The song begins with “marching” and continues with other stanzas *ad lib*. These come to mind as I join you in prayer. Please add your own.

- **We are marching in the light of God.**  
Many of us around the world join in the World Council of Churches' initiative “Thursdays in Black”—“marching” for a world free of gender-based violence. All of us one way or another stand up for peace and justice.
- **We are serving in the light of God.**  
Our diaconal work is like a mosaic made of various shapes, sizes and colors to reflect the Servant Christ in this wide world which God so loves.
- **We are lamenting in the light of God.**  
The light of God exposes so much that is not right in our world today. We name especially wars and threats of war; millions of displaced persons and refugees; lack of adequate food and safe water; harm of the environment and global change; seeming irreconcilable divisions within and among peoples and nations; and much more.
- **We are grieving in the light of God.**  
Especially in these last months during the pandemic we have lost so much: friends, family, colleagues and neighbors to death; the ability to gather in the usual ways for worship and celebration; a sense of health, safety and security; and much more.
- **We are learning in the light of God.**  
Our unusual circumstances invite us to explore new ways to communicate, worship, conduct business and keep in touch with one another.
- **We are giving thanks in the light of God.**  
Through it all God continues to be faithfully present with us. God continues to call us to service and witness in the name of Christ. Our sisters and brothers throughout the world continue to respond to that call to serve faithfully day by day.
- **We are hoping in the light of God.**  
These days many are hoping for—effective and fairly-distributed vaccines; changes of heart and mind that will cause people and nations to care for the common good instead of their own welfare; and peace and prosperity for all. We steadfastly hope in the God whose promises are sure.
- **We are praying in the light of God.**  
Amen.

Deacon Louise Williams, USA, past President of DIAKONIA World Federation