

World Leprosy Day

JANUARY 29, 2017

Resources for your church

What is Leprosy?

Leprosy is a disease surrounded by fear and myths. You have probably read about Naaman in 2 Kings or those with leprosy who Jesus touched and healed (Matthew 8, Mark 1, Luke 5).

For generations leprosy has caused tremendous suffering. The severe wounds of leprosy are unsightly – literally consuming the fingers, toes and parts of the face. Children, women and men with leprosy are often pushed out of their families and communities. Many must rely on charity from strangers as they beg on street corners.

People thought for many years that the disease itself caused these unsightly deformities, but today we know that the disease attacks the nervous system, causing the extremities of the body to lose their sense of touch. As leprosy takes hold of the body, the person doesn't feel any pain. Cuts, burns and severe wounds go untreated because they cause no pain. Infection sets in and, left untreated, the person experiences bone loss. The infection may be so severe that the limb or digit requires amputation.

Today we know that leprosy can be CURED!

Yes, with the proper treatment, people can be cured of the disease and a life of disability can be avoided if medical help is received quickly. With your help, through World Leprosy Day, we can replace fear with hope for the future. A healthy, happy life beyond leprosy is possible and together, we can make it happen.

The cost to cure 1 person is \$99... How many can your congregation cure?

Who is effect:hope?

effect:hope (The Leprosy Mission Canada) is a Christian organization, caring for people who are cast aside because of disease. We seek out and care for those with leprosy and related disease that few other organizations are investing in today.

Thousands of people look to effect:hope for the compassion and knowledge to provide a better future. In working with communities of poverty, effect:hope is developing healthcare solutions and creating opportunities that will impact generations with better health, hope and happiness. As we minister in Jesus' name, we are working to heal people in body, mind and spirit while putting an end to leprosy.



www.worldleprosyday.ca



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Leprosy in the Bible

Leprosy is a very prominent disease throughout the Bible. Just as they are today, those affected by it were isolated and rejected by their communities. Throughout the Old and New Testaments, we see examples of people being ostracized because of leprosy.

But Jesus models a compassionate and dignified response to all people – regardless of their situation in life. We want to follow His example by offering care to anyone who needs us. We will not turn anyone away, even if other hospitals have refused to help or if the individual cannot afford treatment.

While speaking about World Leprosy Day with your congregation, please choose any of the following stories the Bible has told us of God's love for those with leprosy.

2 Kings 5:1-15 – Naaman is cured of leprosy.

Jeremiah 33:6 – Healing through God's abundant grace.

Matthew 10:8 – Jesus asks us to heal those with leprosy.

Luke 17:11-19 – Ten men are healed of leprosy.

Matthew 8:1-4 – A man asks if Jesus is willing.

Mark 1:40-45 – The man who couldn't keep quiet.

Thank you!

Last year's World Leprosy Day was a great success! As we come together to answer a call, we're able to accomplish so much. We are pleased to announce the following achievements from last year's events:

- 775 churches across Canada participated
- 1000's of people learned about leprosy
- \$36,000+ was raised to help care for those with leprosy
- 364 children, women and men received an early diagnosis and cure for leprosy

Prayer

*In God, whose word I praise,
in the LORD, whose word I praise—
in God I trust and am not afraid.
What can man do to me?
I am under vows to you, my God;
I will present my thank offerings to you.
For you have delivered me from death
and my feet from stumbling,
that I may walk before God
in the light of life.*

Psalms 56:10-13



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