The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2013 under the theme, “Always being made new.” What God is doing through us here at home and around the world is worth celebrating.

In 2 Corinthians 5:17, Paul writes, “So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!” We are a church that is deeply rooted – and always being made new. Our roots are in Scripture, tradition and the Lutheran Confessions, as well as in the vibrant communities and rich histories of our congregations.

Our roots are continually nourished and sustained through worship as we gather each week as a church around word and water, wine and bread. In this experience our lives of faith are strengthened and we are made new through the grace of God.

The texts and prayers for the 25th anniversary have been prepared to enrich our worship life as we celebrate 25 years together in Christ. The prayers and texts are intended for use in all expressions of this church from synod and churchwide assemblies to local congregations and worshiping assemblies.

Within the worship texts for the 25th anniversary, phrases in italics reflect the theme, “Always being made new.” Some words or phrases are specific to a geographical location and should be modified or omitted in other locations. Other italicized texts may be used or modified as appropriate for other occasions and contexts. The Thanksgiving at the Font is intended for use in the Thanksgiving for Baptism (during the Gathering of Holy Communion), Holy Baptism or Affirmation of Baptism.

It is recommended that the Thanksgiving at the Font and the Thanksgivings at the Table not be reprinted or projected in full for reading by the assembly, but that the presiding minister cue the appropriate assembly responses.

Permission is granted for reproduction of these texts for local, non-sale use, provided the following copyright notice is included:

“Liturgical texts for the 25th anniversary of the ELCA © 2013 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Used by permission.”

If the texts are adapted for use in a local setting, please include this copyright notice:

“Liturgical texts for the 25th anniversary of the ELCA © 2013 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Adapted for use in name of congregation or setting. Used by permission.”
Thanksgiving at the Font

This Thanksgiving may be used during the Thanksgiving for Baptism, Holy Baptism or during the Affirmation of Baptism. Lines printed in italics are especially appropriate for the 25th anniversary of the ELCA in 2013. These may be adapted or omitted as appropriate for other celebrations in local assemblies and worshiping communities.

Praise and thanksgiving be to you, O God of plenteous grace,
for the waters you provide for the earth:
for snow and dew, for oceans and wells,
for the rain that nourishes plants and trees,
for the streams that enliven the animals, great and small,
for the [Allegheny, the Monongahela, and the Ohio Rivers]. [insert appropriate references]
We praise you, O God, for water.
We praise you, O God, for water.

Blessing and glory be to you, O God of abundant mercy,
for your word that flows with life-giving waters:
for the story of the fountain that gushed from the rock,
for the memory of the Jordan that immersed your Son in our sorrows,
for the living rivers that flow from the cross,
for the reconciling waters of baptism around which we gather.
We bless you, O God, for water and the word.
We bless you, O God, for water and the word.

At this font we pray:
Pour upon us yet again the Spirit of our baptism.
Our roots are dry: shower us with divine blessing.
Our fruits need moisture: renew us for vibrant growth.
Wash away the sin within us,
and drown the evil around us.
We beg you, O God, for water and the Spirit.
We beg you, O God, for water and the Spirit.

You, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
you are the Water we crave;
you, O God, are Rain and River and Fountain,
life for us all, now and forever.
Amen.
Thanksgiving at the Table, (Option 1)

A Variable Prayer of Thanksgiving

For an abbreviated prayer, use the first line (identified with an A) of each unit; for use on Sundays, add the second line (identified with a B) of each unit; for use on festivals, add an appropriate third line. Here the third lines (identified with a C) printed in italics are especially appropriate for the 25th anniversary of the ELCA in 2013. These may be adapted or omitted as appropriate for other celebrations in local assemblies and worshiping communities.

A We praise you, all-holy God,
B  our maker, our lover, our keeper,
C   nurturing our past, our present, our future;

A for the universe beyond our knowing,
B  for seas and forests and fields,
C   for the Atlantic, the Pacific, and a continent between;

A for creatures seen and unseen,
B  for animals both wild and tame,
C   for our ancestors from many cultures;

A and for the places we humans call home,
B  for cities and churches and schools,
C   for [this churchwide assembly]
   OR [the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America],
   our synods, and our congregations.

A We praise you for your covenant people,
B  for Moses and Miriam and Aaron,
C   for traditions of prayer and praise;

A and for centuries of faithful Christians,
B  for Mary Magdalene, Peter and Paul,
C   for our bishops, pastors, and all those called to ministry,
   for teachers and sponsors and all servants of the church.

A We praise you for your Son, O God,
B  who saves us from sin and from evil,
C   who continues to lead us to new life.

A In the night in which he was betrayed,
   our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
   broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
   Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
   Do this for the remembrance of me.
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

A And so we remember your Son,
B his life, his death, and his glorious resurrection,
C his word, and his presence in this meal,

and we proclaim the mystery of faith:
**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

*We shout again:*
**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

A We pray that you send your Spirit,
B your breath, your fire, your wisdom,
C your guidance everywhere in the church.

A Send your Spirit upon this bread and cup;
B inspire your people for service,
C *always be making us new;*

A and renew the world with your mercy,
B with your healing, your justice and your peace,
C *reconciling us with you and our neighbors.*

A We praise you, all-holy God,
B the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit,
C *Abba, Living Water, Breath of Life,*

A today, tomorrow and forever.
**Amen!**

*We shout again:*
**Amen!**

**Thanksgiving at the Table, (Option 2)**

**A Prayer of Thanksgiving for Church Anniversaries**

*Phrases printed in italics are especially appropriate for the 25th anniversary of the ELCA in 2013. These may be adapted or omitted as appropriate for other celebrations in local assemblies and worshipping communities. The assembly may be invited to call out names of those for whose ministries they give thanks.*
O God before time, O God at the end,
we delight in the splendor of your universe.
Daily we laud your continuing creation,
and we give thanks for the [mountains and river] that surround us. [insert appropriate references]
We glorify you, now and forever.
We glorify you, now and forever.

O God of the covenant, O God of the never-ending promise,
we hear you speaking to centuries of your people.
We come as your children to this table,
and we give thanks for your faithfulness in every generation.
We praise you, now and forever.
We praise you, now and forever.

You gave us Mary Magdalene, Peter and Paul,
Birgitta and Luther, Nikolai Grundtvig and Elizabeth Fedde,
Jehu Jones and Elizabeth Platz,
(and let us call out more names: . . .) –
pastors and teachers, musicians and friends,
who are rooted in you and nourish our growth.
We bless you, now and forever.
We bless you, now and forever.

You came in Jesus, our wisdom, our guide,
our Savior, our food, our wellspring of grace,
dying for sin, and alive for the life of the world.
We worship you, now and forever.
We worship you, now and forever.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering his death, we cry out Amen. Amen.
Celebrating his resurrection, we shout Amen. Amen.
Trusting his presence in every time and place, we plead Amen. Amen.

Come, Holy Spirit, and make here the body of Christ.
Breathe new life into us through this food.
Nourish this church/synod/congregation, that we meet the challenges around us.
Preserve what is faithful; reform what we treasure; create in us what is vital and new.
We honor you, now and forever.

We honor you, now and forever.

O God before time, O God at the end,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit:

you, O God, are the Root of all life,
you, O God, are the Tree of our life,
you, O God, are the Fruit that enlivens the world, the Leaves that heal the nations.

Glory and praise, blessing and worship,
honor and power be to you, our God, forever and ever.

Amen.

Prayer after Communion

We give you thanks, O God,
Abba, Living Water, Breath of Life,
for nourishing our roots
and creating us anew in this meal.
By the power of your Spirit, renew us to live as your body,
avive for a future of praise,
empowered for decades of witness and service,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Or

Almighty God, we give you thanks that you have fed us with this heavenly food.
In your grace and by your Spirit, help us to be what we celebrate,
the body of Christ in the world.
Send us out, renewed by this sacramental meal,
to do the work you have given us to do: to witness for Christ,
to love you with singleness of heart,
and to serve you with clarity of purpose;
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. ¹

Amen.

¹ From “Evangelical Lutheran Worship: Occasional Services for the Assembly” © Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 2009.
Dismissal

Renewed in the grace of God, let us go in peace to serve the Lord. 
Thanks be to God.

Or

Renewed in the grace of God, let us go forth to share the good news. 
Thanks be to God.

Acclamation

This acclamation can be used as part of the greeting during the Gathering of Holy Communion as well as at the beginning of a meeting or assembly.

Alleluia! The Spirit is here. 
The Spirit is here indeed. Alleluia!

Gathering dialogue

For the gathering of Holy Communion
Since Abraham and Sarah, 
since Mary and Paul, 
since Luther and Muhlenberg, 
since 1987 in Columbus: 
We gather to you, O God. 
We gather to you, O God.

Here is the word of life, 
here is the water of rebirth, 
here is the meal of mercy, 
here is the grateful assembly. 
Gather us to you, O God. 
Gather us to you, O God.

We gather, wet from the water, 
We gather, listening to the word, 
We gather, already the body of Christ. 
Come, Holy Spirit, and gather us in love. 
Come, Holy Spirit, and gather us in love.

---

2 The Constituting Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was held in Columbus, Ohio, in 1978.
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ...  
*The prayer of the day or another suitable prayer follows the greeting.*

**OR**

*For the opening of a congregational meeting:*

Since Abraham and Sarah,  
since Mary and Paul,  
since Luther and Muhlenberg,  
*since 1987 in Columbus:*

We gather to you, O God.  
**We gather to you, O God.**

Here is one body of faith,  
here is the word of hope,  
here is the Spirit of love,  
here is our mission before us.  
Gather us to you, O God.  
**Gather us to you, O God.**

We gather as members of your church.  
We gather, ready for work,  
We gather, in the unity of the Spirit,  
Come, Holy Spirit, and lead us to do your will.  
**Come, Holy Spirit, and lead us to do your will.**

The Lord be with you...  
*The prayer of the day or another suitable prayer follows the greeting.*

**Propers and Recommended Hymns and Songs**

*The Propers for the Sunday on which the anniversary is celebrated are normally used. The Prayer of the Day for the anniversary may be said following the Prayer of the Day for the Sunday. When the anniversary is celebrated in a special service apart from the primary service/s of the congregation or it is celebrated on a Sunday for which the color is green, the Propers listed below may be used.*

**Affirmation of Christian Vocation** (“Evangelical Lutheran Worship,” p. 84) may be included in the service to highlight the fact that the church being celebrated is primarily God’s people in mission.

**Prayer of the Day**

O God, you have promised through your Son to be with your church forever. We give you thanks for your faithfulness to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and for the signs of your presence in this community of believers, [name]. Increase in us the spirit of faith and love, and make our fellowship an example to all believers and to all nations. We pray through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
*Amen.*

---

3 Portions of this section were taken and/or adapted from “Evangelical Lutheran Worship: Occasional Services for the Assembly” © Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 2009.
Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! Alleluia. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Readings and Psalm

Isaiah 42:5-12 God declares new things
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b Send forth your Spirit and renew the face of the earth (104:30)
2 Corinthians 5:17-20 Everything has become new
John 15:1-17 Christ, the friend and lover

Preface

For the season, or Pentecost

Prayers of Intercession

The following petition may be included in the Prayers of Intercession. Other petitions may be written reflecting the ministries of the synod or congregation.

We give thanks to you for the members and the ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA):
for those who had the vision to begin its life together,
those who sustain its present ministry,
and those who will carry its mission forward into the future.

Blessing

Go forth in peace and with the courage of faith.
Love God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind,
and love your neighbor as yourself.
Amen.

Whatever you do in word or deed,
do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God through him.
Amen.

The God of hope fill you with joy and peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.
Amen.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hymn or Song</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baptized and Set Free</td>
<td>453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behold, How Pleasant <em>Miren qué bueno</em></td>
<td>649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built on a Rock</td>
<td>652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation</td>
<td>645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord</td>
<td>395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come Now, O Prince of Peace <em>Ososó, Ososó</em></td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw Us in the Spirit’s Tether</td>
<td>470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gather Us In</td>
<td>532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God Is Here!</td>
<td>526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God of Tempest, God of Whirlwind</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God’s Word Is Our Great Heritage</td>
<td>509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gracious Spirit, Heed Our Pleading <em>Njoo kwetu, Roho mwema</em></td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Is Thy Faithfulness</td>
<td>733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great God, Your Love Has Called Us</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heaven Is Singing for Joy <em>El cielo canta alegría</em></td>
<td>664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Here, O Lord, Your Servants Gather <em>Sekai no tomo to te o tsunagi</em></td>
<td>530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Spirit, Ever Dwelling</td>
<td>582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Come with Joy</td>
<td>482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Love to Tell the Story</td>
<td>661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Christ Called to Baptize</td>
<td>575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Christ There Is No East or West</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Me, Guide Me</td>
<td>768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lift Every Voice and Sing</td>
<td>841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word</td>
<td>517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Now We Join in Celebration</td>
<td>462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O Holy Spirit, Enter In</td>
<td>786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O Living Breath of God <em>Soplo de Dios viviente</em></td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remember and Rejoice</td>
<td>454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rise, O Church, like Christ Arisen</td>
<td>548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rise, Shine, You People!</td>
<td>665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Church’s One Foundation</td>
<td>654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United at the Table <em>Unidos en la fiesta</em></td>
<td>498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veni Sancte Spiritus <em>Holy Spirit, Come to Us</em></td>
<td>406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Are Called</td>
<td>720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Know That Christ Is Raised</td>
<td>449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Raise Our Hands to You, O Lord</td>
<td>690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We’ve Come This Far by Faith</td>
<td>633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine</td>
<td>774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where True Charity and Love Abide <em>Ubi caritas et amor</em></td>
<td>653</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>