



## **45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ordination of women in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and predecessor bodies**

*This brief order may be used as a celebration and observance of this milestone anniversary in the church. You may adapt for your particular context whether it is in a congregation or at a synod event either as a stand-alone service or as part of another worship service. Portions of this service have been part of previous anniversary observance worship resources.*

### **Gathering Hymn**

*A list of suggested hymns appears at the end of this resource.*

### **Gathering**

We gather together as children of God;  
in the name of God who creates,  
redeems and sustains.

**Amen**

### **Litany of Thanksgiving**

(adapted from Deuteronomy)

Sing a new song, O Daughters of Sarah!  
Give praise, O Sons of Abraham!

**Let us give thanks and rejoice;  
for God has done marvelous things!**

Like an eagle that stirs up its nest,  
that flutters over its young, spreading out its wings,  
**God alone did lead us.**

In the beginning, God created humankind in the divine image.  
**In the image of God humankind was created;  
male and female God created them.**

We remember Eve, the mother of all the living.  
**Blessed be God for our ancestors of faith**

We remember all those women and men  
whose deeds no one remembers,  
whose names are unrecorded,  
whose lives remain unknown.

**Blessed be God for our ancestors of faith.**

Blessed is Mary, mother of Jesus,  
who sang a song of justice  
and who believed God's promise would be fulfilled.

**Blessed is she who is called to bear the word.**

We remember women and men, active in faith  
who work for freedom  
and who struggle for justice around the world.

**Blessed are those who are called to bear the word.**

We remember Lutheran lay women who are active in ministry:  
Associates in Ministry, Diaconal Ministers, Deaconesses  
and all those whose vocational calling  
takes them to the highways and byways of service in the world.

**Blessed are those who are called to bear the word.**

On this 45th Anniversary,  
we remember especially Lutheran women ordained to the ministry of Word  
and Sacrament together with all those who helped prepare the way;  
medieval saints, reformers, suffragettes,  
women and men in predecessor bodies whose vision and faith  
inspired them to persevere.

**Blessed are those who are called to bear the word.**

Like an eagle that stirs up its nest,  
that flutters over its young, spreading out its wings,

**God alone did lead us.**

Let the rivers clap their hands  
and the mountains ring out their joy!

**Sing a new song, O Daughters of Sarah!**

**Give praise, O sons of Abraham!**

**Gospel** John 4:7-30, 39-42

**Meditation**

**Hymn of the Day**

## Prayers of Intercession

Seeing how greatly God has loved us, let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus.

God of wisdom, nurture us and call us to ministry. Throughout the ages you have raised up faithful servants to your word. We give you thanks for the many traditional ministries of women over the centuries and for those who have paved the way for new opportunities for women to minister.

God in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, born of Mary, you came close to us. We give you thanks for all the women whose lives shaped ours: our mothers and grandmothers; our mentors, teachers and sisters. We celebrate the ministries of those women who bore the word in our midst.

God in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

Holy One, you have borne us on eagles wings to this time and place. Grant that women in ministry may serve your church with faithfulness and that all your children of every color and culture, language and special gift become reconciled partners around your table.

God in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

God of our birth, as you moved over the waters in the beginning, pour over us your cleansing waters of rebirth; refashion and reform us until your image once more is mirrored.

God in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

Into your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord,

**Amen**

## Sending Hymn

### Blessing

The blessing of the God who birthed us and all creation,  
the blessing of the Son born of Mary +,  
the blessing of the Holy Spirit who broods over us as a mother with her children  
be with you all.

**Amen.**

### Sending

Go in Peace. Christ is with us.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Suggested hymns for this liturgy

### Hymn: **Stirring Up the Nest**

*(tune Ode to Joy)*

1. In our howling desert wasteland  
God encircling, hovering near.  
Bearing us upon her pinions,  
God alone did lead us here.  
Like an eagle, stirring the nest, oh,  
stir us to visionary sight,  
restless till we truly follow,  
wakened by the Spirit's might.

2. Like an eagle, mother, tender  
brooding o'er her sturdy nest,  
you our loving, strong defender  
shield us in your downy breast.  
Balance, motion, grace, strength, and beauty,  
modelled by you in wondrous flight,  
in your image formed for beauty,  
daughters called in God's delight.

3. Eagle-like you soar above us,  
vigilant, you see our sin.  
Yet, O mighty God you love us,  
calling us to start again.  
Undeserving of your persistence,  
gracious in love you lead us on,  
claiming us with your forgiveness,  
blessing us to carry on.

4. Sing a new song, Sarah's daughters!  
Praise God, sons of Abraham!  
For in our baptismal waters  
we receive a monogram.  
Cross marked servants, daily converted,  
blessed are they who bear the Word  
Cross and tomb are now deserted,  
tell the world the news we've heard!

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### Gathering Hymns

*All Are Welcome* ELW #720

*Let All Things Now Living* ELW #881

*We are Called* ELW #720

### Hymns of the Day

*For All the Faithful Women* TFF #219, ELW #419

*We All Are One in Mission* ELW #576

*Now Thank We All Our God* ELW #839, ELW #840

### Other Hymns

*Somebody Prayed for Me* TFF #246

*We've Come this Far by Faith* TFF #197, ELW #633

*Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises* TFF #158, ELW #535, LCC #420

ELW: Evangelical Lutheran Worship

LCC: Libro de Liturgia y Cántico

TFF: This Far by Faith