



# Worship and Liturgical Resources

## Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

### *Evangelical Lutheran Worship: a deeper look*

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#### *Leader's Guide*

##### **Notes for Leaders**

###### ***Presenting the material***

These materials serve as a template for your presentation. You may wish to make adaptations for your specific context. The materials are presented in “script” format. Ideally, you will know the materials so well that you can present them as your own, rather than simply reading to the group. In some places you will want to augment the script with your own personal story or anecdote. Because this module is primarily presentational, it may be a good idea to divide the sections up between several presenters, so the participants are not hearing the same voice for three hours.

While there is great room for flexibility and local adaptation within the services in *ELW*, as in this presentation, it is important, when communicating information specifically about *ELW*, that a consistent message be given across the whole church. If you have a personal concern about something in the script, please discuss it with someone on the ELCA worship staff in advance.

###### ***Combination of materials***

Anyone across the church using these materials, may be using them in different combinations. Some will use one topic by itself. Perhaps, a second topic will fall later in the year. Others may present two topics in the same day. Since all the topics relate to one another, there is a certain amount of cross referencing in these materials. Leaders will want to know if any modules are being presented and, if so, when, so they can adapt the scripts to reflect this and inform participants in their specific locale.

Make participants aware of the other modules being presented in your synod/area or are available from the church. If questions come up, you will want to be prepared to redirect the conversation back to the content of this module. Perhaps, they might also want to let folks know that the subjects that they bring up are available in another module.

“That is a really good point. We don't have enough time to go into detail about that today. If there is interest, the ELCA has another module entitled. . . that our church/synod/conference/etc. could offer.”

### ***Organization of this module***

The first half of this module explores nine “deep issues” that are present in the *ELW* liturgical material. The second part peruses the services, identifying examples of the deep issues in the liturgies themselves. In addition, some of the particular questions that have consistently been raised since the publication of *ELW* are briefly addressed. Most of this time is spent on the primary service of Holy Communion. The rest of the services are addressed very briefly. You may need to pick and choose from those materials, as time allows. Knowing local concerns, you may also need to augment some specific area. Be in conversation with someone from the ELCA worship staff. They can help you with this.

### **Resource Review**

Before facilitating this module, it may be helpful to review the following resources:

*The Use of the Means of Grace: A Statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament* (1997) available online at <http://www.elca.org/worship/worship/sacraments/umg.html>  
Pay particular attention to Part I: Proclamation and the Christian Assembly.

*Renewing Worship 2: Principles for Worship* (2002) available online at [http://www.elca.org/worship/renewing\\_worship/principles\\_for\\_worship/index.html](http://www.elca.org/worship/renewing_worship/principles_for_worship/index.html) or for \$15.00 at [www.augsburgfortress.com](http://www.augsburgfortress.com). *The Use of the Means of Grace* is an appendix in this volume.

*Central Things: Worship in Word and Sacrament* by Gordon Lathrop (2005). Available as part of the Worship Matters series for \$9.99 at [www.augsburgfortress.com](http://www.augsburgfortress.com).

*Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Introductory Kit. These materials were mailed to all ELCA congregations and rostered people in September 2006. Most of the contents are still available at: <http://archive.elca.org/worship/ELW/intro/kit.html>

In addition, leaders will want to acquaint themselves with the resources suggested on the reproducible handout (see page 46).

### **Questions**

If you have questions about the content or presentation of this module, contact Scott Weidler, Associate Director for Worship and Music, 773.380.2554, [Scott.Weidler@elca.org](mailto:Scott.Weidler@elca.org).

## GETTING STARTED

1. Begin with worship, such as:
  - Song and prayer
  - Responsive Prayer (ELW page 328) [perhaps with scripture and a song]
  - Morning or Evening PrayerBe contextual and show flexibility and freedom with forms.
  
2. Continue with introductions & logistics for the day, including:
  - Introduction of leaders and organizers
  - Thank local hosts
  - Information about registration
  - Restrooms
  - Meal or break information
  
3. Get to know who is present: pastors, musicians, lay, worship committees, others. . .



## *Evangelical Lutheran Worship: a deeper look*

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### *Presentation text*

*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, in print and electronic forms,  
was made available to the church in October of 2006.

Over the next 8 months, over 40,000 people attended  
one of 306 day-long introductory events.

At those events, participants had a chance to page through the book,  
sing examples of liturgical music, hymns, and songs,  
and get an overview of the services, texts and patterns.

Perhaps you attended one of these events.

Today is part of the next step –  
a result of the requests following those events.

Today, rather than paging through the book in a linear fashion,  
we will explore some foundational principles and overarching issues  
that were instrumental in shaping these materials.

Then we'll look at examples of these principles at work in the material.

Today we are focusing on liturgical texts and patterns.  
Where music plays into those patterns, they'll be discussed,  
but we are not focusing on the music in *ELW* at this time.

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*Leaders' note* You may need to nuance this information  
if you are including music in some way.

*This module is entirely presentational.  
It does not include opportunity for questions and conversation.  
Hopefully, you know the dynamics of your participants  
and can determine if you should just say this up front,  
let it unfold as it will, or extend the time and/or  
allow another opportunity for conversation.*

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Today, we'll talk about "inside out" a great deal.

ELW itself is an example.

The "book" is a core – it's not the whole thing.

The word "book" is not even in the title,

because the book is a tangible sign of something bigger than itself:  
worship that is "evangelical" and "Lutheran."

This is a fundamentally different way of understanding our primary worship resource from previous generations.

Even if, for very valid reasons, such as hospitality,

a worshiping community chooses not to use the book in hand,

it is important to know that the book is still a collection of the church's treasures.

It is still the book of the Church – of the people.

And that book, will be our "text" for the session today.

Let's think for just a moment about the title.

Three words that carry a lot of weight:

- Evangelical
- Lutheran
- Worship

### ***Evangelical***

"Worship can be called *evangelical* when it is centered on the gospel of Jesus Christ – the *evangel*, the good news of his life-giving death and resurrection – and when it is genuinely interested in continually welcoming people into this gospel."

*From The Sunday Assembly (the first of the "Using ELW" volumes)*

Hopefully, it is clear that the liturgical resources in ELW

are about making Christ known and present in clear and intentional ways – that they are *evangelical*, in the absolute best understanding of that word.

## *Lutheran*

“Faithful *Lutheran* worship is thus marked by –

- Trinitarian faith; (that is faith in the Triune God)
- trust that God’s gift of the world is good and is to be cared for;
- the knowledge that all of us are sinners but that God has acted in Christ to save us;
- the reliable centrality of the word and sacraments that proclaim these things;
- a diversity of local ceremonial practice;
- a strong willingness to receive the patterns of worship that have been used by the church down through the ages;
- the use of song, richly varied in forms and genres, as one principal way that all the people are invited to participate in the whole service; and thus by
- a participating, singing assembly drawn together by the Spirit of Christ in the word and the sacraments and sent into the world to serve.

## *Worship*

A lot of ink has been spilled over trying to define “worship.”

For our purposes today, let us agree that we are focusing on “corporate worship” – that for which the Holy Spirit gathers us together with other believers and anyone seeking an encounter with the living God.

We do this together – in communion with others – it is different from individual prayer & worship.

Our deeper look at *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* will begin with several important foundational points.

Then we’ll look at some examples of these at work in the materials themselves.

# DEEP ISSUES

*that are important throughout ELW  
(but this list is not exhaustive)*

## **1 In worship, it is God that is acting**

*Evangelical Lutheran Worship* makes it clear that worship is, fundamentally, God's work.

Worship is primarily about what God does, and secondarily about what we do.

The clearest examples are the descriptors beneath each of the headings in the Holy Communion service which say:

- The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.
- God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.
- God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.
- God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

As Lutherans, we must never forget this!

## **2 Focus on mission**

From the Introduction to *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*:

“Supporting this mission of the church, which is the mission of God in Christ for the world, is an ultimate goal of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. Through liturgy and song the people of God participate in that mission, for here God comes with good news to save. And through liturgy and song, God nourishes us for that mission and goes with us to bear the creative and redeeming Word of God, Jesus Christ, to the whole world.”

It is not that previous materials were not about mission.

The point is that in this time and place in history the church must be explicit about those connections.

*ELW* seeks to boldly reclaim a Lutheran tradition of worship as mission.

### 3 All worship is prayer

Prayer is often bigger than most of us often think.

It is critical, when encountering the liturgy, to understand *prayer* as multi-dimensional.

Prayer is about relationship and connection with God.

Prayer also forms us in ways that go beyond listening and asking.

Prayer is about trust and faith that the Gospel

interacts with our lives in very real and tangible ways.

Prayer shapes our lives of faith and gives voice to the gospel

working in our lives, the community, and the world.

Prayer leads us into something else –

moves us in a particular direction which is deeper into God's saving story.

One of the more challenging aspects for Christians

is getting our minds around this Jewish understanding of prayer.

This is very important, because much of our own prayer and liturgical practices

has grown out of temple, synagogue, and Jewish domestic worship.

To grasp this we need to get out of linear, black and white, thinking.

Rather, we need to understand that . . .

- prayer can be directed *to* God and *from* God at the same time;
- prayer can be proclamation and proclamation can be prayer;
- in worship we exist outside of human time (*chronos*) and encounter God in God's own time (*kairos*) where all things are forever simultaneous.
- that "giving thanks," in Jewish understanding, is a particular way of praying, where we recall to God what God has already done – not because God needs to be told again – but because, in that sharing of those faith stories, we are present and active in them, and, more importantly, God is present and active in us.

We become part of God's story

and God is present in our own story . . .

today; now!

The psalms are full of this kind of prayer and

we'll see some examples as we move through the services of *ELW*.

This is especially true in the Great Thanksgiving

within the Holy Communion service,

which we'll look at in more detail in a bit.

#### 4 Focus on Word: in all it's forms

“In the beginning was the Word,  
and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.  
He was in the beginning with God.  
All things came into being through him,  
and without him not one thing came into being.  
What has come into being in him was life,  
and the life was the light of all people.  
The light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness did not overcome it.” (John 1:1-5)

The *Word* we encounter in worship is *Jesus*.

proclaimed  
preached  
in the sacraments  
in songs and prayers and gestures and movement  
embodied in the assembly at worship and in service in the world

An assembly at worship trusts, recognizes, and celebrates  
the presence of God in Jesus Christ – the Living Word – in our midst.  
(from Dan Erlander, *Baptized, We Live*)

## 5 Scripture and Worship

We are members of a Lutheran church – a Christian tradition which, since it's beginning, has had the Word of God at the heart of our life together.

Each generation or so, when the church prepares new worship materials, questions about the relationship between scripture and worship arise.

And the same has been true with *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.

In worship, the church has always proclaimed scripture boldly and clearly, and we continue to do that.

The church has also used scriptural language, images, and ideas in many different ways: crafting the texts of prayers and hymns and canticles and psalms . . . and we continue to do that, too.

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The brief article, Scripture and Worship, in the back of ELW, beginning on page 1154, can be very helpful.

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## 6 Baptism and Communion

*Evangelical Lutheran Worship* also continues a trajectory, begun intentionally in *Lutheran Book of Worship*, of reclaiming the Lutheran inheritance of holding the proclamation of God's Word together with the sacraments – the “means of grace” – that is, the weekly gathering around both Word and Holy Communion, the celebration of Holy Baptism within a worshiping assembly and the intentional, ongoing thanksgiving for baptism, in many ways, within the life of the community, always remembering that sacraments are tangible encounters with the living Word – Jesus.

## 7 All the senses

This encounter with the living Christ is made  
through tangible things . . .  
    through Words spoken and heard,  
    through bread and wine tasted,  
    through water touched and felt.

But God may also be known through songs sung  
(as Lutherans, we're very used to this)  
and even artwork seen.

One noticeable example of this,  
not seen too extensively in recent Lutheran worship books,  
is the presence of visual art in the book itself.

At the beginning of each major section of the liturgical material,  
you'll see a full-page work of art,  
each by a different artist with different cultural perspectives.

And throughout, at the beginning of every section,  
you'll see other, smaller examples of art.

This example of art might inspire us to think more intentionally  
about the visual aspects of worship in our own spaces and with our own assemblies.

Worship is also about things we can't see on a printed page;  
things we can't always even explain;  
sometimes they need to be experienced.

It's about human beings interacting with one another,  
gathered in relation to the things of God – with all our senses –  
engaged in participatory worship.

This is the assembly – the means by which God is at work in the world.

This is a glimpse into understanding that worship is more than just a text in a book  
that we are to follow in a proper order.

It's more than a feeling engendered in my heart.

Rather it's something that we do together in which God is at work in and through us.

Being in the presence of Christ transforms us to new life and changes things –  
it moves us to action – it pushes us into mission!

Maybe, rather than just talking about it,  
we can express this in worship by actually moving –  
with gestures, posture, movement, even dance;  
just getting out of our pews once in a while is a good start!

Most Lutherans have a long way to go in understanding  
how we might move together – as the body of Christ –  
and begin exploring how we can use all our senses in worship.

## 8 Leadership

Before 1978 when *Lutheran Book of Worship* was published,  
for many of us, worship was – literally – a one-man show!  
Of course, the congregation sang hymns and spoke or sang some responses,  
but the leadership – the person *up front* – was pretty much the pastor’s domain.

Growing out of a broader understanding of baptism and baptismal living,  
*Lutheran Book of Worship* helped us begin to see  
a more expansive vision of the  
“distinctive” roles of leadership within the liturgy,

*LBW* introduced the role of “assisting minister” –  
a specific role of leadership for someone who is not ordained,  
a representative, as it were, of the assembly of all the baptized.  
Certainly, an ordained pastor is also a member of the baptismal community,  
but, by ordination, a pastor has been given responsibility  
for a different – distinctive – role within that community as “presiding minister.”

The presiding minister role is not more important than the others.  
It is a distinctive role,  
with clearly identifiable responsibilities  
for celebration of the sacraments  
and oversight for proclamation of the Word, especially preaching.

The “assisting minister” has also been given specific roles, such as:  
proclaiming scripture in the assembly  
leading prayers of intercession for and with that unique community  
assisting the assembly in their celebration of the sacraments  
sending them into mission by speaking both a prayer after communion  
and the final words of the whole event:  
“Go in peace. Get out of here now and be about God’s mission in the world.”

Certainly, a pastor can do and say any of these things,  
but the fact that our worship books indicate a preference  
that these responsibilities be carried out by a lay person  
clearly and intentionally speaks our commitment  
to the importance of baptism and the baptized people of God.

This understanding of “ministers” in the liturgy  
should be extended to all who carry out responsibilities to make worship “happen:”  
ushers and greeters,  
altar guild members and bread bakers,  
artists and musicians,  
nursery attendants and those who provide refreshments . . . and more.

All of these are ministers of the liturgy and have their distinctive, and important, role.

However, it is important that we never lose sight that  
it is God’s *people* – gathered around the things of God –  
who are the *primary* leaders in worship.

*ELW*, picking up on language from the Lutheran confessions,  
calls this gathering of people *the assembly*.  
Saints and sinners gathered around God’s word and the sacraments,  
joining in song and gesture and prayer,  
encountering Christ in the means of grace and in one another . . .  
this is the *assembly*.

It will take a while for us all to get comfortable with that word.  
We’re used to calling this gathering *a congregation*.  
Yet, in our church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,  
a congregation is a specific expression of this church.  
Worship does indeed happen – most frequently – within the context of a congregation,  
but it happens elsewhere, as well:  
in hospitals and college chapels; in prisons and on decks of aircraft carriers.  
at synod and churchwide gatherings and at camps.  
Many congregations have multiple worshiping assemblies within themselves, as well.

Use of the word *assembly*  
also helps us focus on the worship event as a corporate gathering.  
It is the body of Christ assembled and we “do” worship together.

If, for any reason, an individual is unable to sing on a particular day,  
the assembly rises up and sings on her behalf.  
If, for any reason, an individual is unable to pray . . . the assembly prays.  
If physical reasons keep an individual from standing to welcome the Gospel,  
the assembly stands on his behalf.

It’s new language for us, but it’s more than just semantics.  
It’s an expression of a way of being church . . . together and for one another.

If this is really about all of us “in this together,”  
then we, as leaders, may need to think again about how we do some things.

Do we offer ample opportunities for our people  
to be in deep conversation about worship?

Do we include many people in a participatory way of preparing and leading worship?

Are there skills and talents available in a community  
that may be incorporated into worship in new and unique ways?

*. . . and finally . . .*

## **9 Inside out**

Every individual rite and its elements  
are fundamentally about both worship itself and mission.

For example:

The Lord’s Supper is not just about who we are, but what God is doing for the world.

Not just individualized (“*my* sins are forgiven” or “new life for *me*”)

but also about forming the community in the meal itself  
and bearing the presence of Christ into the world to feed the world  
both with food and good news of Christ.

Therefore, today, I’d challenge you to think more cyclically.

The liturgy itself is cyclical, not linear.

Each week we are gathered together,

brought into relationship with God in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit;

experiencing the presence of God;

hearing the word of God proclaimed in the midst of the assembly

and sent again to be about God’s mission in the world,

only to be gathered again,

and go through the whole process time and time again.

It’s all about God’s unfolding purpose for the world

*Evangelical Lutheran Worship* has a strong emphasis on Patterns for Worship. You will notice several pages before each section of liturgical material devoted to laying out the foundational patterns for those particular rites with comments to help illuminate your thinking, teaching, and planning.

Unfortunately, as soon as you look at it on the page, it's been converted into a linear model.

That's a limitation of human language.

Let's do our best – together – to imagine a flow, a sense of movement, that carries one element of the liturgy to the next with a gracious sense of logic, rather than just a listing of elements – or worse yet, a series of hoops that must be jumped through.

Imagine the core – the center:

Jesus  
encountered in Word and sacrament

Then imagine the spokes connecting the core to the edges, where the really messy work of mission takes place.

Let's hear from Timothy Wengert and Dirk Lange in the small book *Centripetal Worship: The Evangelical Heart of Lutheran Worship*.

All Christian worship has to do with the center and the edges – the real center of Christian faith and the edges of human existence. It is important to consider what it means that Christian worship is a centripetal force, pulling us in to the center, to the one name “given among mortals by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12), to the one about whom Paul could confess, “May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Gal. 6:4), and who admitted to another worshiping community, “I decided to know nothing among you except Christ, and him crucified” (1 Cor. 2:2). At the center of Christian worship we encounter the Trinity and, even more, Christ crucified and risen again for us. This merciful God stands at the center of our worship. And our liturgy, with its prayers and proclamation, its sacraments and song, cannot point to itself, much less force us to find that center somewhere else in life, but instead witnesses and draws the worshiping assembly to that very center.

Timothy Wengert, Introduction  
*Centripetal Worship: The Evangelical Heart of Lutheran Worship*

The temptation is always to make the “center” about us. Worship becomes about us. The Bible and its message become about us (that is, the bible agrees with everything we like and disagrees with everything we disdain.) . . . Christian worship is about the center and the edges . . . the center, Jesus Christ proclaimed as crucified and risen, can never be centripetal if it is not also at the edge. . . . The pattern of worship, the celebration of words and sacrament . . . is a “pattern” that is continually broken open. It is a center that directs us to the edges.

Dirk Lange, *Worship at the Edges: Redefining Evangelism*  
*Centripetal Worship: The Evangelical Heart of Lutheran Worship*

Therefore, I urge you – as you *think* about worship; especially as you *plan* worship – to start at the core – the really central, critical elements – and move out from there.

A handout is provided to get you thinking about planning in this way.

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*Direct them to the Building the Liturgy from the Inside Out handout*

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Please read the note carefully.

The specific items may occur in different places within the circles.

Always begin your planning with what is in the center circle – the Word, Jesus, in Word and sacrament – rather than what occurs first in the liturgy.

Then move outward from there, adding the elements appropriate for the specific community, occasion, and so forth.

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*Leaders' note: For participants who desire something practical, this may be it. However, don't get bogged down with this chart. You may wish to offer a separate time focusing more on the nuts and bolts of worship planning. Or an informal conversation following this presentation may allow a time to explore this more fully.*

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So, now, we look at some examples of these deep, foundational issues in the services in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.

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*Leaders' note This may be a good time for a break.*

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# DEEP ISSUES AT WORK IN *ELW*

## Holy Communion

Open to page 91 in the front of ELW

The last sentence under Pattern for Worship is core in understanding what's going on in worship:

The whole people of God are joined by the same gifts of grace, for the sake of the same mission of the gospel, into the life of the one triune God.

God is acting!

Look the major descriptors under each heading on pages 92-93.

We read them earlier, now let's look at them.

GATHERING	The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.
WORD	God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.
MEAL	God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.
SENDING	God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

Even though it does look like it when put on paper, this doesn't just present a list.

There is a flow – a logical progression from the edges of our life:

Individuals gathered together and then,  
as a community, propelled into the center of our faith:  
the saving story of Jesus Christ in Word and sacraments.

Then we are propelled back to the edges –  
back into the mission field of our own daily lives.

For the sake of time and efficiency, we proceed through the liturgy in a linear way.

Some of you may have attended a one-day introductory event for ELW; and others may have spent extensive time with the introductory kit that was mailed to every congregation and rostered person.

Those resources are still available (and you are encouraged to still use them!), so we will not spend time trying to revisit the entire introduction.

Instead, we will point look at few details

that may be examples of the deeper issues we've been exploring or, in some cases, things that simply have been identified as confusing or not clear.

## ***GATHERING***

I urge all who plan worship using *ELW* –  
in print or electronic forms (it doesn't matter) –  
to pay very close attention to the wording of the rubrics  
(italicized directions in red).

They have been crafted very carefully to allow for a variety of practice and possibilities.

Page 94

For example, just under the heading GATHERING  
*The service may begin with confession and forgiveness*  
OR *with thanksgiving for baptism.*

How many options does this provide?  
*(Hopefully they'll say two)*

Actually, three!

The word "may" indicates that you may use neither option  
and proceed directly to a Gathering Song  
(which also includes "may")  
or Prayer of the Day.

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Another module is called:

*Freedom and Flexibility in Worship.*

A PowerPoint presentation is also being developed called:

*Building the Liturgy from the Inside Out*

These materials go into greater detail  
in helping worship planners interpret all these various possibilities  
for use in their unique context,  
whether it is a contemporary service,  
or worship with children,  
a small rural or large suburban congregation.

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For now, just suffice it to say that there are many options (it can be overwhelming).  
Read the rubrics carefully to discover the possibilities  
that will work best for your assembly at a specific event or time.

An important point related to Confession and Forgiveness OR Thanksgiving for Baptism is that worship is not just for the baptized.  
There may be those who are not baptized in your assembly.  
But God's forgiveness is for them as well.  
The language has been carefully crafted for such circumstances.  
Pastoral discretion always needs to play an important role.

Throughout the services of ELW, there are optional texts of various kinds.  
Ministers using the Leader's (or Altar) edition will find all the options in place.  
Some of the options are also in the pew edition,  
such as alternate Thanksgivings at the Font (pp. 70-71)  
There are some wonderful and interesting texts. Don't overlook them!

### ***GATHERING SONG***

Top of page 98

This rubric provides so many options that it's almost overwhelming.  
Those who want to keep the historic pattern of a Kyrie and the canticle "Glory to God" will find their way in here.  
Those assemblies finding expression in a medley of contemporary song will fit here.  
Notice that the Greeting may fit anywhere within the songs planned.  
This flexibility creates a new challenge:  
communicating clearly to leaders, as well as to the assembly.

### ***PRAYER OF THE DAY***

Page 102

This is the first "linchpin" in the liturgy.  
If a very simple service, without any Gathering Song, the service may begin here –  
with a simple prayer gathering us together  
and related to the day, season, or Scripture to follow.

If the Prayer of the Day follows some Gathering Songs,  
it is the transition into the Word portion of the service.  
It is part of the Gathering *and* part of the Word.

Again, putting things on paper can't always show the fluidity of a human event.

Other linchpins – or transitions which straddle two portions of the liturgy –  
are the Peace (between Word and Meal)  
and the Prayer after Communion (between Meal and Sending)  
We'll notice them again later.

## **WORD**

As mentioned earlier, the important topic of Scripture and Worship  
is being addressed in detail in another module.

For now, let me emphasize the importance of how the readings  
are introduced and concluded.

By saying: “A reading from Ephesians”  
and concluding with either  
“The Word of the Lord”  
or “Word of God, word of life”  
we are making it explicitly clear that those particular words  
are exact words from Scripture.

There's no confusion.

Biblical images woven into the poetry of a hymn text  
may be beautiful expressions of a truth about God,  
but it's not as clear as the proclaimed Word of God.

The pattern at this point –  
within the bigger pattern of Gathering/Word/Meal/Sending –  
is important as well.

Reading – responding in song – reading – singing, and so forth...  
is an ancient pattern  
that keeps the assembly connecting to the proclamation of God's word  
in a way that simply reading three portions of scripture  
back-to-back may not do.

Therefore, the psalms are different.

They don't simply function as another reading.

They are a response to the first reading and – at its best – they are sung.

Just as speaking a hymn text isn't wrong; it just doesn't convey the fullness of the intent.

And by speaking them, the rhythm of read/sing/read/sing . . . is not present.

The psalm texts in *ELW* are a version prepared for liturgical use;  
they are not a translation.

This is being addressed more fully in the *Scripture shapes the assembly* module.

## ***CREED***

Page 104

In the leaders edition, there is an introductory line to the creed which says:

“With the whole church, let us confess our faith.”

The creeds are not Lutheran. They belong to the whole church.

They are a clear and intentional expression of what we are all about  
for newcomers to the faith.

They are a sign that you are “at home” even if far from home,  
for fellow believers who may be visiting.

We are the first major denomination to have the current ecumenical versions (from 1988)  
of the Nicene and Apostles’ Creed in our primary worship book,  
along with other liturgical texts from an ecumenical working group  
in which the predecessors to the ELCA participated

The ELW introductory materials spent some considerable time on the details.

We won’t revisit any of that here today.

---

*Leaders note*      *As you prepare to lead these materials, it may be helpful for you to  
look again at the ELW Introductory Kit and what it says about the  
translation of the Creeds.*

---

## ***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION***

Page 105

Unlike other prayers in the liturgy that are from and for the whole church,  
these are the prayers *from* the particular community and *by* the community  
gathering *around* the needs and concerns of the community

It is an important responsibility for a lay assisting minister  
to both prepare and lead the prayers of intercession.

Resources like Sundays and Seasons (in print or .com) and published bulletin inserts  
may provide a helpful starting point – a model –  
but they should not be a substitute for prayers of the community.

The module on *Freedom and Flexibility* addresses this issue more fully.

## *PEACE*

page 106

The Peace is another linchpin in the liturgy: between Word and Meal.

There is a pattern from the proclamation of the Gospel to the Meal  
that moves us from “corporate” to “personal”

Sermon (listening to the Word for today)

Hymn of the Day (singing the Word and our faith together)

Creed (proclaiming our faith together)

Prayers (touching this community’s life)

Peace (touching)

Offering (giving)

The change of wording from “peace of the Lord”  
to the “peace of **Christ**” is very intentional –  
that this peace we share is from the risen Christ.

A warm hello and friendly handshake are good things,  
but this is an intense moment in the liturgy:  
we are specifically acknowledging Christ in us and in one another.

## *OFFERING*

Page 106

This series of rubrics offers a variety of ways  
to shape the offering and setting the table,  
and the musical possibilities that may or may not accompany this time.  
The Introductory Kit addressed this and the *Freedom and Flexibility* module  
is helping with these kinds of decisions in more detail.

## ***OFFERING PRAYER***

Page 107

First, notice that these prayers are optional.

But, when they are used, notice how God is the one acting:

“*you* bring forth food . . .

“*your* love endures forever. *You* bring forth bread . . .

“Through *your* goodness *you* have blessed us...”

Notice also the emphasis on mission:

“Turn our hearts toward those who hunger ...”

“...that we might be for the world signs of your gracious presence...”

“Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love...”

These prayers foreshadow the mission emphasis that is intentional in the Sending.

## ***GREAT THANKSGIVING***

Page 107

Here is the clearest example of divergent understandings of prayer.  
As mentioned earlier, much of our liturgical prayer tradition  
has been inherited from Jewish traditions.

Yet, this understanding was not known at the time of the Reformation,  
so Lutheran tradition took a different direction  
in reaction to the theological abuses present at that time.

To this day, there are at least two different ways of understanding  
a confessionally-grounded Lutheran approach to this portion of the service.

1. Luther and confessions were a new starting point for Christian faith and practice.  
Therefore, you follow closely what Luther did in his liturgical reforms, even today.

OR

2. Luther and the reforming movement were a corrective  
to a particular situation in place and time,  
such as Luther's rejection of the Roman Canon (Eucharistic Prayer) in his time.  
With this way of thinking, you're always trying to understand  
the full meaning of appropriate practices for each generation,  
which for us today, includes centuries of research and ecumenical,  
even inter-faith understanding.

---

*Leader note*      *Don't let yourself get bogged down on this point.  
Depending on the particular group gathered,  
you may want to give examples of the sections  
of the Great Thanksgiving mentioned below.*

---

What we have now are two patterns within a common tradition.

- Both patterns begin with the same dialog, setting a context of thanks and praise.
- Both patterns include the proper preface (only seen in the Leader's edition)  
which include a brief reference to a particular part of the salvation story,  
depending on the season.
- Both patterns include the singing the Sanctus (Holy, holy, holy),  
an ancient example of the church using biblical imagery  
to create a new text for liturgical use;  
in this case, it's combining the vision of angels about God's throne in Isaiah  
with the story of Jesus' entry in Jerusalem.

At this point the patterns diverge.  
Following Luther's corrective,  
the simple narrative of the institution may be spoken  
or a fuller prayer of Thanksgiving at the Table,  
following the Jewish traditions mentioned earlier, may be used.

Lutheran's now have the freedom  
to reclaim the praying of a full Eucharistic prayer  
as an evangelical appropriation  
of the long-standing Christian tradition of praying  
inherited from our Jewish ancestors.

Both patterns provide a Trinitarian context  
(*to God, through Christ, in the Spirit*)  
within the Great Thanksgiving,  
although when the shorter option is used,  
some of these connections need to be assumed,  
since they are not stated explicitly.

In our cultural context today,  
when we can't always assume  
that all worshipers in our assemblies can make the same connections  
that long-time faithful Lutherans *may* be able to do,  
the fuller prayer may provide a more explicit witness,  
because the prayer itself confesses who God is (as do the Creeds).

We could spend hours, days . . .  
well, the church has spent centuries trying to sort this out.  
For now, let's let the conversation continue  
and know that *ELW* provides two patterns within a common tradition.

page 112

With either pattern mentioned above  
the most familiar prayer of the church concludes the Great Thanksgiving.  
The lead-in line (which is in the Leaders' Edition)  
in another example of putting the prayer in an intentionally Trinitarian context:  
Gathered into one by the *Holy Spirit*,  
let us pray as *Jesus* taught us:  
Our *Father*...

---

*Leader note*      *There may be confusion about all these elements falling under the heading, GREAT THANKSGIVING, since Sundays and Seasons.com, which many may be using for worship planning, does not follow this carefully. We are working to have that corrected. At this point, it's worth noting the confusion. Try to get them to understand the value of the headings as in ELW.*

---

## ***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION***

page 114

This prayer is the final linchpin in the liturgy:  
transitioning from the Meal to the Sending.

These prayers include references to the Meal:  
“you have set before us this feast...”  
and also pushing us forward into mission:  
“...to give ourselves away as bread for the hungry...”

## ***SENDING***

page 114

The Sending is intentionally short;  
with a sense of “Get on with it! Get out of here now. Do mission!”

But, when desired, it could be extended.  
Several possibilities are mentioned:  
Sending of communion to those who are absent  
Affirmation of Christian Vocation (p. 84)

Like the Gathering, notice the flexibility in what *may* be sung and when.

New in *ELW*, is a third – extended – option for the Blessing,  
as well as four options for Dismissal.

These words, the last words of the liturgy,  
are intended to be spoken (shouted even)  
by a lay assisting minister,  
as a representative of the baptized people of God,  
sending them out into the world.

This is another short, but emphatic statement  
of the connection between liturgy and mission.

Serve the Lord.

How do we do this?

Share the good news.

Tangibly? For real? In this community?

Remember the poor.

Direct link with evangelism

Direct link with social justice and mission,  
very tangible

Christ is with you.

Not so direct of a command,  
but a clear Christological context.

## Service of the Word

Pages 210 *ff*

This service derives its pattern from the service of Holy Communion.

It provides a full service for Sunday morning  
for those assemblies still on the journey toward a weekly celebration  
that always includes both Word and sacrament.

But is also a valuable service for additional times of worship.  
More worship. More preaching. More Word.  
These are all good things.

The first part of the service is very similar to the first part of Holy Communion.

The distinctive feature in on pages 219-220  
which includes a biblical canticle with strong references to the Word  
followed by a Thanksgiving for the Word  
(similar to the Thanksgivings at the Font or Table)  
making it clear, again, that all worship is a “biblical” event –  
a “Book of Faith” experience.

Just like other similar places in ELW,  
there are two different options: one longer and one shorter.

# Holy Baptism

Page 225

In holy baptism the triune God delivers us from the forces of evil . . .  
The sacrament itself normally takes place in the midst of the worshiping assembly as a sign that in baptism we are made one with Christ and with the whole people of God. This is about water connected to the Word – God’s saving promise in Jesus Christ – is at the center of the baptismal celebration.

From *Pattern for Worship*

Although a person is baptized once,  
the gift of baptism continues throughout a Christian’s life.  
Therefore, we now have things like “Thanksgiving for Baptism”  
as a possibility at every gathering at the beginning of Holy Communion.

It is important to notice that in *ELW*  
it is no longer presumed that infant baptism is the norm.  
In an increasingly unbaptized world,  
we are to be more “evangelical” than ever –  
telling the story and calling all to the waters – from all generations.  
This is about *people* being baptized.  
First it lists an address to the one to be baptized – then the option for small children.

Bottom of page 228

Also new is an address to sponsors, specifically, --  
including them in the rite highlights their promises;  
and for the entire assembly –  
the whole community has responsibility in the shaping of new Christian lives.  
This is about more than the individual. The assembly is renewed as well.

Page 229

Also new is the three-fold renunciation  
which balances the three-fold form of the creed.

Page 230

*Thanksgiving at the Font*

Luther reminds us that it is about “water connected with the word”  
and that word is Jesus!

We too connect with the water, here now today in this place . . . every time we baptize.

Again, there are alternate prayers on pages 70-71.  
They are all in place in the Leaders Edition.

Here is a great example of our church’s new tagline:

God’s work. Our hands.

It is more than marketing language.  
It describes God’s activity using human hands.

A good example of this is an alternate baptismal formula that simply says:

“\_\_\_name\_\_\_ is baptized . . . “  
rather than: “\_\_\_name\_\_\_, I baptize you...”

This makes it clear that it is God at work in baptism.

This alternate formula is still an option (provided in the leader’s book).  
The one in the pew edition acknowledges the most common practice.

Page 231

*Welcome*

Notice that it is a “representative of the congregation”  
who gives the lighted candle  
and who leads the assembly in welcoming the newly baptized.

This may be an assisting minister, a congregational president,  
or someone else who clearly speaks on behalf of the gathered assembly.

Notice also that the wording of this welcome by the assembly  
works when either one or more than one person has been baptized.  
This was often a stumbling block with the text as it was in *Lutheran Book of Worship*.

Notice again the emphasis on *mission*:

“ . . . and into the mission we share”

“ . . . and bearing God’s creative and redeeming word to all the world.”

The service then continues with the prayers of intercession.  
In most cases, it may be easiest for the baptismal party to stay in place  
to pray with the assembly, then return during the passing of peace.

OR

The leaders' edition mentions the option of celebrating baptism  
at the very beginning of the service  
where Confession & Forgiveness OR  
Thanksgiving for Baptism might normally occur.  
In this case, the service would continue with a Gathering Song, and so forth.

## Welcome to Baptism

Page 232

This brief rite provides the church an opportunity  
to connect the Sunday assembly  
with an individual or group of individuals  
who are seeking a possible relationship to the Church.

The rite itself does not assume that the person will automatically head to the font.  
Rather, the title “Welcome to Baptism,” expresses the church’s desire.  
Baptismal preparation isn’t just about the person to be baptized and the pastor.  
It is about the community’s care and responsibility to the mission: “Go, baptize.”

This rite is entirely about mission.  
It is about meeting people where they are  
and grafting them into the community  
at their own time and comfort level.

For that reason, this rite needs careful pastoral attention and, as needed, adaptation.

You’ll notice that marking with the sign of the cross is a part of the rite.  
In the leaders’ edition, it provides a fuller version of this rite,  
where all the senses of the individual are marked with the cross of Christ.

For some, it can be a powerful experience.  
For others, it can be an overwhelming and intrusive experience.  
Pastoral discretion will dictate how and when this rite is used appropriately.

Some will recognize this as a portion of earlier rites for the catechumenate.  
Those rites are still available and used in some places.

## Affirmation of Baptism

Page 235

The introductory material on this page gives possible times for this to be used:

- “part of a process of formation in faith in youth or adulthood” (Confirmation)
- at the time of beginning one’s participation in a community of faith”  
(Reception of new members; although *membership* language is gone)
- “as a sign of renewed participation in the life of the church”  
(Restoration into membership or return to active ministry life within the congregation; again, rather than “membership” language)
- “or at the time of a significant life passage”  
(birth of a child; divorce; new job, etc.)

This is an expanded understanding of how this rite may be used.  
It’s not just for 13-year olds anymore!

An important new possibility is Affirmation by the Assembly (page 237)

This can be used anytime the entire assembly affirms their baptism, such as:

Easter Vigil

Other baptismal festivals, such as:

Baptism of Our Lord; All Saints; Pentecost, congregational anniversaries, etc.

We now have a mini version of this as an option at the beginning of Holy Communion.  
This provides a fuller possibility.

The rubrics suggest that

“a hymn, song, or psalm may be sung,  
and may be accompanied by a reminder of baptism.”

“A reminder of baptism” may be  
sprinkling the assembly with water,  
inviting them to the font to touch the water,  
make the sign of the cross, splash one another joyfully.

## Corporate Confession and Forgiveness

Because of the connections between Confession and Forgiveness with Baptism, this service appears in line with the other baptismal services.

It could, however, also be understood as another life passage, depending on the circumstances, or in conjunction with Holy Communion on a particular Sunday, during the final days of Lent, or a regularly scheduled, occasions for reconciliation of those estranged from one another the confession of sharing in corporate wrongs; a time of lament in the life of the congregation, the community, the nation, the world.

It could be adapted and incorporated into other services, like Ash Wednesday, when a fuller rite is desired (especially the confession itself; see p. 240).

The introductory material on page 238, begins with the words:  
“Washed in water and marked with the cross,  
the baptized children of God are united with Christ and,  
through him, with other believers . . . “

The challenge is that you don't have to be baptized to experience God's forgiveness.

This service, like other examples we have seen,  
needs pastoral discretion and, if needed, adaptation.

The confession itself (on page 240) includes a response:  
“Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.”

Notice that this same response may be sung during the Good Friday liturgy. Several musical settings are in the service music section.

# Life Passages

## Healing

Page 276

The most important thing to say is that this service is *in the pew edition*, again, highlighting it's importance as a regular part of the church's worship life.

Notice that it is encouraged that healing is set within a service of Holy Communion, the church's primary source of healing.

## Funeral

Page 279

Notice the clear connections between death and baptism in the Thanksgiving for Baptism (page 280).

The three-fold acclamation makes a clear and intentional Trinitarian connection, and allows more places for the assembly to participate.

There are notes in the leaders' edition about funerals for the non-baptized.

This is another example of a rite that requires very careful pastoral discretion. Read the rubrics carefully!

## Marriage

Page 286

The revisions in the Marriage service from *LBW* to *ELW*, reflect an ecumenical consensus with language generally more appreciated by couples and assembly members.

There is an addition of an address to the assembly (not just the couple) on the top of page 287.

The rubric at bottom of p. 288 says:

“Other symbols of marriage may be given or used at this time.”

It was included to allow for cultural-specific rites and traditions, such as jumping over the broom in African cultures, etc.

The use of a unity candle, while still popular and used in many places, is not encouraged. Holy Communion is the church’s primary expression of unity & communion. However, pastoral discretion may dictate that Holy Communion is not celebrated. If a unity candle is used, this rubric gives guidance as to where it would best fit.

One other addition is the new, more fulsome, Marriage Blessing on page 289 which, again, reflects more common ecumenical patterns and traditions.

# Daily Prayer

These services are different in character from Holy Communion or Service of the Word. They are more reflective, meditative, and devotional; less about proclamation and sacraments.

These services can be used

- Daily assembly

- Regular weekly (often midweek) assembly

- Seasonal midweek worship (often Lent or Advent)

- Family

- Committee meetings

- Individual prayer

and can be adapted, shortened or expanded in many creative ways.

---

*Leaders note*      *If planning Daily Prayer for various contexts is an important topic, an optional two-page handout is provided.*

---

## Lent and the Three Days

The one important thing to notice is that these rites are *in the pew book*, making it clear that these are primary and core rites for the church. We have a long ways to go for that understanding to become standard practice.

---

*Worship Guidebook for Lent and the Three Days*, © 2010 Augsburg Fortress, gives extensive commentary, historical and practical information about implementing the rites for these days. The companion volume, *Music Sourcebook for Lent and the Three Days*, gives many musical options.

---

## Church Year & Lectionary

The church's worship is shaped around a shared calendar and lectionary (listing of scripture readings assigned to specific days in the calendar)

The worship formation event module, *Scripture shapes the assembly*, is looking at the lectionary in greater detail.

For now, it is important for everyone to know where the resources are both for planning worship on Sundays and festivals but also to encourage members' use of these resources to shape worship at other times – even family or private devotions.

The Sunday and festival lectionary with Prayers of the Day begins on page 14.

The daily lectionary begins on page 1121 in the back of *ELW*.

This lectionary provides suggested scripture which, from Thursday through Saturday, leads to the coming Sunday's readings. From Monday to Wednesday, the readings spin out the ideas from the previous Sunday.

There is also a wealth of additional prayer resources in the front of *ELW*, beginning on page 72, that can be adapted and incorporated into all kinds of worship opportunities.

And finally, the entire collection of psalms, the church's earliest treasury of devotional material, is available in *ELW*.

They are numbered with the rest of the hymns and other assembly songs, #1 - #150.

# Wrapping it up

End your session with a time of singing and prayer.

If there is time, you could allow a space for conversation and/or written evaluations.

You may want to gather feedback for future events.

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# *Evangelical Lutheran Worship: a deeper look*

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## *Handouts*

**Evangelical**

**Lutheran**

**Worship**

## **DEEP ISSUES**

**In worship, it is God that is acting**

**Focus on mission**

**All worship is prayer**

**Focus on Word: in all it's forms**

**Scripture and Worship**

**Baptism and Communion**

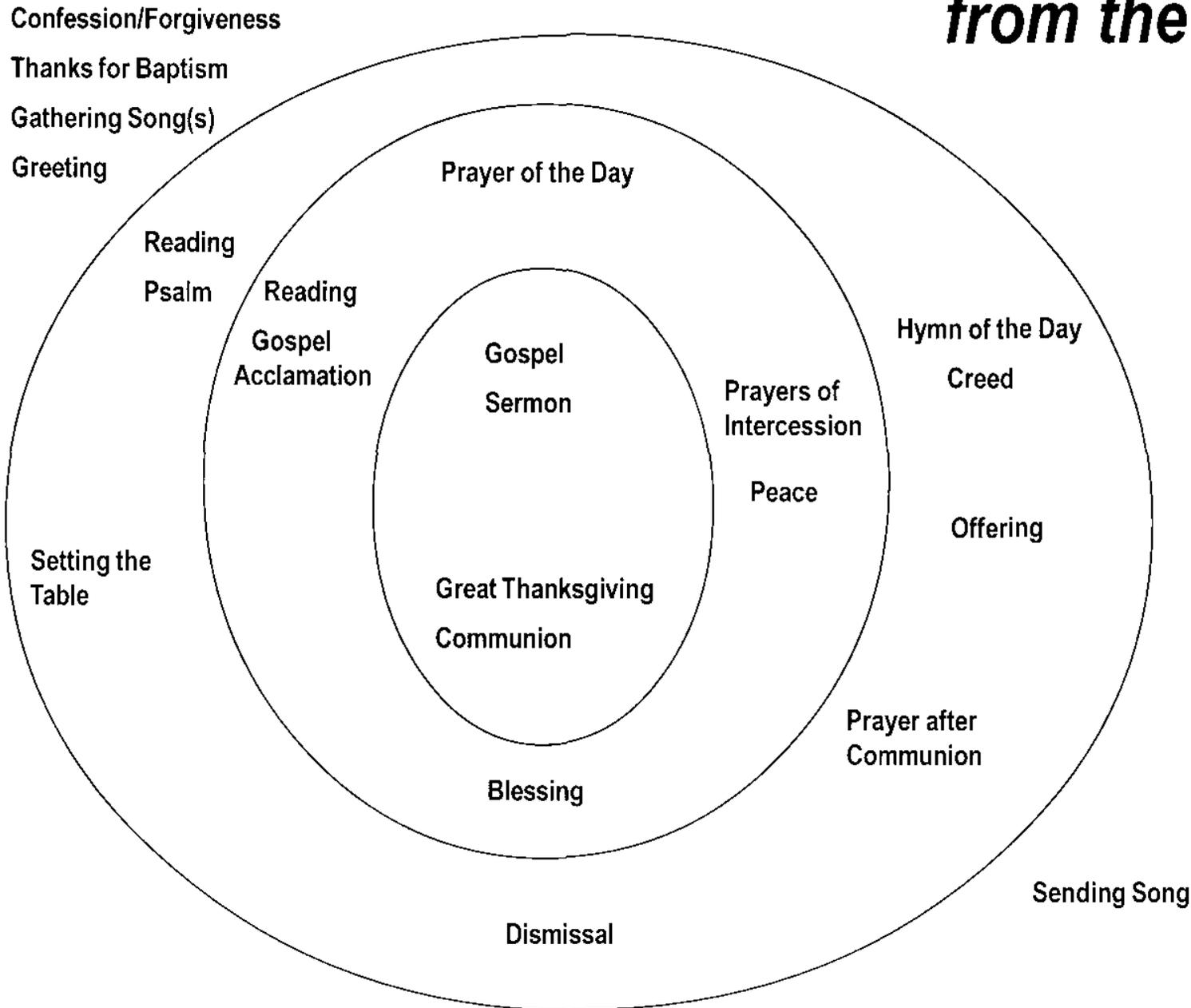
**All our senses**

**Leadership**

**Inside out**

# BUILDING THE LITURGY

## *from the inside out*



Please note:  
There is nothing "official" about the details of this chart. It is simply intended to get you thinking about what the core elements of worship are, encourage you to begin your planning with those parts, then add elements in an appropriate order for your particular context and occasion.



## *Shaping Daily Prayer for a Variety of Settings*

In scripture, we are encouraged to “pray without ceasing.” The whole Christian life is enveloped in prayer, both as individuals and with others. When joining with a community of people to pray, whether in a formal worship setting, at a retreat, before a meeting or rehearsal, or in a hospital room, our heritage has provided a treasure chest of resources from which we can draw to shape our communal prayer.

The services of Daily Prayer in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (pp. 295-331) represent one manifestation of ecumenically-received patterns. Just as Christian traditions of daily prayer have varied greatly around the world and throughout time, so are these services in *ELW* flexible and can be adapted for many circumstances. If planning a large festive worship event, the *ELW* services could be enhanced with a lot of singing and ceremony. If preparing for a simple time of prayer, perhaps at a rehearsal, meeting, or class, they can be pared down to their basic form.

The basic pattern is simple:

- Psalm
- Scripture
- Prayer

Don’t overlook silence. Reflecting on God’s word in silence is a powerful form of prayer itself. No matter the setting, allow plenty of time for silence, allowing worshipers to listen to God. It’s not entirely about us talking to God.

In *ELW*, the basic pattern is enriched with some kind of opening appropriate to the time of day, season, or occasion, additional psalms and songs, a time of reflection on the readings, various dialogues and responses, a Gospel Canticle, and a blessing. Any of these elements may be included or omitted as appropriate for the particular event.

Starting from simplest to more complex, here are some examples of possible orders:

Psalm	Psalm	Psalm	Opening
Scripture	Scripture	Hymn/Song	Psalms
Prayer	Reflection	Scripture	Hymn/Song
	Canticle	Reflection	Scripture
	Prayer	Canticle	Reflection
		Prayer	Canticle
			Prayer
			Blessing

And everything in between!

One form of prayer is included in each of the *ELW* services, but the directions say “or another form of the prayers may be used,” opening the possibilities wide open. Free prayer, chanted litanies, silence, a series of historic collects, or some combination may be incorporated. Prayer forms can be interchanged between services. For example, a litany (as in Evening Prayer) could be sung in Morning Prayer. The form within Morning Prayer (p. 304) can be used by itself or in other services. Consider creating prayers unique for your community. The form on page 304 can be useful:

Opening sentence.

A series of thanksgivings with time for silence or adding their own petitions.

A series of petitions with time for silence or adding their own petitions.

A concluding prayer.

Responsive Prayer (pp. 328-331) could be used in its entirety within one of the other services or just the portion on page 329 (commonly know as “Suffrages”) could be included, perhaps with the prayers that follow.

Responsive Prayer (with its options for various times of day and occasions) works well in some settings by itself. Adding a hymn/song or psalm and a reading from scripture before Responsive Prayer are simple ways to enhance its use.

At first glance, some of the services as they appear in *ELW* may seem a bit overwhelming since much of the text is set to music to be sung by a leader and the assembly. When planning, remember that anything set to music may be spoken (or the other way around).

It is also important to pay attention to the flexible rubrics, such as “may,” “other appropriate psalm,” “additional assembly song,” or “one or more scripture readings.” Exploring the options that are already present in the *ELW* material may open creative possibilities for you while staying connecting to the heart of the Church’s worship patterns.

If planning a service that will be sung, be aware of the diverse possibilities that are within the Service Music in the Assembly Song section of *ELW*: #224-236. Other resources offer a wealth of diverse music.

Of particular interest is a rubric in the services of Morning and Evening prayer following the reading of Scripture.

The reading of scripture is followed by silence for reflection. Other forms of reflection may also follow, such as brief commentary, teaching, or personal witness; non-biblical readings; interpretation through music or other art forms; or guided conversation among those present.

Imagine the possibilities! These suggestions could include everything from a conversation around a camp fire while on retreat to a Bach cantata; an artist creating visual interpretations while a drama unfolds reflecting on the readings; a homily or readings from the fathers and mothers of the Church from all times. This is just scratching the surface of possibilities.

# RESOURCES

## ONLINE

[www.elca.org/worship](http://www.elca.org/worship)

*Site under construction, but you can still get to a lot of materials on the old site.*

*From this site, subscribe to the **Worship E-newsletter***

[worship@elca.org](mailto:worship@elca.org)

**The Use of the Means of Grace: A Statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament**

available at

<http://archive.elca.org/worship/Resources/UMG/english.html>

**Principles for Worship**

available at [http://archive.elca.org/worship/renewing\\_worship/principles\\_for\\_worship/index.html](http://archive.elca.org/worship/renewing_worship/principles_for_worship/index.html)

## AVAILABLE FROM AUGSBURG FORTRESS

[www.augsburgfortress.org](http://www.augsburgfortress.org)

(800) 328-4648

*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

Leaders' Desk Edition

Using *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* series

**The Sunday Assembly**

**Life Passages**

**The Church's Year**

*Evangelical Lutheran Worship* Musicians Guide

Indexes to *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

*Worship Guidebook for Lent and the Three Days*

**Centripetal Worship: The Evangelical Heart of Lutheran Worship**

Edited by Timothy J. Wengert

(Part of the *Worship Matters* series)

**Central Things: Worship in Word and Sacrament**

Gordon W. Lathrop

(Part of the *Worship Matters* series)

**Inside Out: Worship in an Age of Mission**

Thomas Schattauer, General Editor

(with chapters by ELCA professors of worship)