



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Prayers for Times of Public Health Concern: COVID-19/Coronavirus

These prayers and prayer suggestions may be used or adapted as needed. Know that your local context may lead to additional prayers that reflect local needs and situations. The conclusion of the prayers may be easily adapted when included as part of the prayers of intercession.

God, our peace and our strength, we pray for our nation and the world as we face new uncertainties around coronavirus. Protect the most vulnerable among us, especially all who are currently sick or in isolation. Grant wisdom, patience, and clarity to health care workers, especially as their work caring for others puts them at great risk. Guide us as we consider how best to prepare and respond in our families, congregations, workplaces, and communities. Give us courage to face these days not with fear but with compassion, concern, and acts of service, trusting that you abide with us always; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For a situation in which a worship community may be advised against gathering:
Gracious God, it is good for us to gather as your beloved in community. We treasure your presence with us in word and meal, song and prayer. Be with us in these days when gathering together as often as we would like is not possible. When we must be apart for reasons of safety, we trust that you surround us with your sheltering wings. Encourage us in connecting as we are able, reaching out to our neighbors in need and being persistent in prayer. We ask this in the name of Jesus, our constant companion. Amen.

As you craft prayers for your local context, other needs to be named might include:

Hospitals, nursing homes, other health care facilities
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
The World Health Organization
Medical researchers and scientists

Schools:

Calm to children who are fearful from all they hear and see around them
Patience in times of school closures
Guidance for school administrators as they make decisions

Workplaces:

Workers who are anxious about the safety of their workplaces
Uncertainty in how work will be accomplished in the days ahead
Calm and guidance amid financial uncertainties

Government institutions and municipal agencies:

Guidance when making decisions for our communities

Houses of worship and their ministries at this time

For all who travel

For all who grieve the loss of loved ones

For other needs particular to your community

The following prayers from Evangelical Lutheran Worship may be helpful.

National distress

Eternal God, amid all the turmoil and changes of the world your love is steadfast and your strength never fails. In this time of danger and trouble, be to us a sure guardian and rock of defense. Guide the leaders of our nation with your wisdom, comfort those in distress, and grant us courage and hope to face the future; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship, p. 76*)

Time of conflict, crisis, disaster

O God, where hearts are fearful and constricted, grant courage and hope. Where anxiety is infectious and widening, grant peace and reassurance. Where impossibilities close every door and window, grant imagination and resistance. Where distrust twists our thinking, grant healing and illumination. Where spirits are daunted and weakened, grant soaring wings and strengthened dreams. All these things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship, p. 76*)

Those in civil authority

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, bless the public servants in the government of this *state/province/city/town* _____, that they may do their work in a spirit of wisdom, charity, and justice. Help them use their authority to serve faithfully and to promote our common life; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship, p. 77*)

The neglected

Almighty and most merciful God, we call to mind before you all whom it is easy to forget: those who are homeless, destitute, sick, isolated, and all who have no one to care for them. May we bring help and healing to those who are broken in body or spirit, that they may have comfort in sorrow, company in loneliness, and a place of safety and warmth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship, p. 79*)

Those in affliction

Lord Christ, you came into the world as one of us, and suffered as we do. As we go through the trials of life, help us to realize that you are with us at all times and in all things; that we have no secrets from you; and that your loving grace enfolds us for eternity. In the security of your embrace we pray. (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship, p. 84*)

The chronically ill and those who support them

Loving God, your heart overflows with compassion for your whole creation. Pour out your Spirit on all people living with illness for which there is no cure, as well as their families and loved ones. Help them to know that you claim them as your own and deliver them from fear and pain; for the sake of Jesus Christ, our healer and Lord. (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, p. 85)

Caregivers and others who support the sick

God, our refuge and strength, our present help in time of trouble, care for those who tend the needs of [*the sick*]/[*name/s*]. Strengthen them in body and spirit. Refresh them when weary; console them when anxious; comfort them in grief; and hearten them in discouragement. Be with us all, and give us peace at all times and in every way; through Christ our peace. (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, p. 85)

Health care providers

Merciful God, your healing power is everywhere about us. Strengthen those who work among the sick; give them courage and confidence in all they do. Encourage them when their efforts seem futile or when death prevails. Increase their trust in your power even to overcome death and pain and crying. May they be thankful for every sign of health you give, and humble before the mystery of your healing grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, p. 85)

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