Thanksgiving for the Word

The Service of the Word in Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW, p. 210) includes a time to give thanks for the saving word of God and all the gifts of God. We are then sent to share the good news we have received and care for those need.

ELW contains two options for the Thanksgiving for the Word on page 220: a longer form with assembly responses and one in the form of a collect. These prayers praise the triune God for the gift of the word — the very word proclaimed and heard earlier in the service — and pleads for the Spirit, trusting that God will continue to act through the word, as we now turn toward a world in need. This prayer is appropriately led from the place of the word. The thanksgiving prayer is followed by the Lord’s Prayer.

The supplemental prayers in this resource may be used in place of those found in ELW and may be further adapted for local use. Options for seasonal and general use are provided. Several prayers reference scriptures that have informed these prayers.

The prayer of thanksgiving may begin with the presiding minister simply saying: Let us pray. This may be followed by a brief silence before the prayer.

A longer form of the thanksgiving prayer may be introduced with a dialogue between the presiding minister and the assembly, mirroring the dialogue that precedes the Thanksgiving at the Font in Holy Baptism and the Thanksgiving for Light in Evening Prayer:

The Lord be with you
And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Some prayers have simple assembly responses that echo the presider’s words. This allows this prayer to be used without printing or displaying for the assembly. The presiding minister may simply make a gesture to the assembly to respond.
Advent

Holy God,
the Beginning and the Ending, our Hope as we wait,
we praise you for joining us to your people of old.
We bless you for your prophets who call us to righteousness
and promise a new earth with peace for all.
For the Word of your covenant, we thank you, O God. We thank you, O God.

We praise you for the coming of Jesus our Lord,
who lifts up the lowly, heals the suffering world,
and proclaims your way of mercy and truth.
For your Word who is Christ, we magnify you, O God. We magnify you, O God.

Send your Spirit on all who receive your Word.
Nurture our faith with your grace,
accompany us with your might,
and empower our zeal for your justice and joy.
For your Word through the church, we praise you, O God. We praise you, O God.

All praise to you, holy God,

Christmas

Holy God,
everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, wonderful Counselor,
at the birth of time your Word brought light into the world,
and throughout the ages, you proclaim newness of life.
For your wondrous Word, we thank you, O God. We thank you, O God.

In the fullness of time, your Word became flesh,
to shine in our world’s darkness,
to speak peace to all peoples,
and to welcome us as members of your family.
For your loving Word, we adore you, O God. We adore you, O God.

Grant us now the gift of your Spirit,
that held, nourished, and protected by your Word,
we may live as your children,
bearing your goodness throughout the world.
For your powerful Word, we praise you, O God. We praise you, O God.

All glory to you, holy God,
Advent through Epiphany of Our Lord (Incarnation Cycle)

We praise you, O God, for your creating Word!
You set the foundations of the world
and gave breath to every living thing.
There is no Rock like you.
Blessed be God, forevermore;
our hearts sing of your mercy and might!

We praise you, O God, for your liberating Word!
In your steadfast love you led the people whom you redeemed,
you guided them by your strength to the land of promise.
You have lifted up the lowly.
Blessed be God, forevermore;
our hearts sing of your mercy and might!

We praise you, O God, for your life-giving Word!
Your Word became flesh and lived among us,
full of grace and truth.
You have looked with favor on the lowliness of your servants.
Blessed be God, forevermore;
our hearts sing of your mercy and might!

Blessed be God, from this time on and forevermore,
from the rising of the sun to its setting.
With Miriam, Hannah, and Mary,
we give you thanks and praise for your
creating, liberating, and life-giving Word!
Send us forth in the power of your Spirit
to sing of your greatness and serve all people,
following Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen. (Exodus 15; 1 Samuel 2; Psalm 113; Luke 1; John 1)

We praise you, O God, for your creating, liberating, and life-giving Word! You set the foundations of the world, you lead your people into freedom, you lift up the lowly, and fill the hungry with good things. Our hearts sing of your mercy and might! Send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that our lives may witness to your glory; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.
Time after Epiphany

Holy God,
Light of the universe, Teacher of truth, Giver of goodness,
we hear your Word in the Scriptures,
proclaiming to us your wisdom
and inviting us to follow your call.
For speaking this Word, we thank you, O God. We thank you, O God.

Your Word came among us in Jesus, our brother,
who preached your righteousness, healed the sick,
and revived the brokenhearted.
For giving us this Word, we worship you, O God. We worship you, O God.

By your Spirit bless all who receive this Word,
that upheld by the mystery of the body of Christ,
we may be light for the world,
revealing the brilliance of your Son.
For sustaining us with your Word, we praise you, O God. We praise you, O God.

Blessed are you, holy God, around us, with us, and in us,

Lent
(forthcoming)

Easter
(forthcoming)
Time after Pentecost

This thanksgiving prayer for general use is rooted in the Psalms, especially those used on Lectionary 23-34, Year A.
Gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, rich in love, we bless your name and give you thanks. In our need, you make haste to help us. You plant us beside streams of your wisdom, teach us in pastures greening with truth, and guide us on the path of your promise. By your Spirit awaken our faith, that, feasting on your Word, we may love you more fully and serve our neighbor more faithfully; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

This thanksgiving prayer echoes the readings used on Lectionary 24-34, Year A.
Glory to you, O God, for your creative Word:
making and mending all things,
evoking the cosmic hymn of praise,
and singing a love-song for your beloved:
your vineyard, your flock, your people.
With all creation we sing, Glory! Glory!

Blessed are you for your liberating Word:
speaking through Moses and the prophets,
encountered in the Gospels,
and proclaimed in the assembly:
your freedom, forgiveness, and life for the world.
With the whole world we say, Blessing! Blessing!

Holy are you, O God, for your living Word:
among us wherever we gather,
welcoming everyone to your feast,
and, with grace and generosity,
bringing to earth the kingdom of heaven.
With saints and angels, we cry, Holy! Holy!

Clothe us in your loving Spirit,
flowing from the Crucified and Risen One,
and keep us awake to your presence
in the people and places you call us to serve.
Glory, praise, and blessing are yours, Holy God,
now and forever. Amen. Amen
General Use

We thank you, O God, for your life-giving Word,
for calling creation into being,  
Gen. 1:3
declaring forgiveness from the cross,  
Luke 23:34
and delivering the spirit of rebirth.  
John 3:5
We praise you, O God, for your Word:  
we praise you, O God, for your Word.

Your word is a lamp lighting our path,  
Ps. 119:105
a mirror reflecting our selves,  
James 1:23
a shield providing us refuge,  
Prov. 30:5
a fire burning for justice and truth.  
Jer. 23:29
Your word is sweeter than honey:  
Ps. 119:103
it nourishes our bodies like milk,  
1 Pet. 2:2
it sustains your people like bread.  
Matt. 14:20
We receive your promises, more treasured than gold.  
Ps. 19:10
We bless you, O God, for your Word:  
we bless you, O God, for your Word.

Open our ears to your prophets, apostles, and saints,  
Eph. 2:19-20
and to all the cries of the needy.  
James 5:4
Breathe into your church the mighty Spirit of Christ,  
John 20:22
that heeding your voice of beauty and power  
Ps. 29:9
we are strengthened to serve wherever we are called.  
Rom. 16:25-26
To you, Father, Son, and Spirit – the Source, Word, and Breath --  
we offer our thanks for your life-giving Word:  
we offer our thanks for your life-giving Word.
Amen.

Glory and praise to you, O God, for your words of promise. With Abraham and Sarah,  
Moses and Miriam, Deborah and Elijah, Mary and Mary Magdalene, Peter and Paul, we receive your gospel of challenge and comfort. By your Spirit, equip us to serve those in need, faithfully following your Word, Jesus Christ, our Companion and Savior, now and forever. Amen.

O Holy One of wisdom, throughout human history and today among us here, you call us to walk the paths of justice and peace. We praise you, O God of truth, for your precious words. Grant that sheltered under their richness as under the tree of life, we live in gratitude and faithfulness, through Jesus Christ, your Word and our Wisdom, now and forever. Amen. (Prov. 3:13-18; 8:1-21)
Blessed Lord God, you have caused the holy scriptures to be written for the nourishment of your people. Grant that we may hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that, comforted by your promises, we may embrace and forever hold fast to the hope of eternal life, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. (Prayer of the Day, Third Sunday after Epiphany / Lectionary 3, Year C).

Canticle of Thanksgiving

*In addition to the canticle “Salvation belongs to our God” on ELW page 219, another appropriate hymn or song may be sung. Some appropriate options include:*  
- ELW 458 Praise and Thanksgiving Be to God  
- ELW 679 For the Fruit of All Creation  
- ELW 682 To God Our Thanks We Give / Reamo leboga  
- ELW 683 The Numberless Gifts of God’s Mercies  
- ELW 689 Praise and Thanksgiving  
- ELW 730 Lord Our God, With Praise We Come  
- ELW 783 Praise and Thanks and Adoration  
- ELW 791 We Sing to You, O God  
- ELW 829 Have You Thanked the Lord?  
- ELW 837 Many and Great, O God / Wakantanka taku nitawa  
- ELW 839, 840 Now Thank We All Our God  
- ELW 884, 885 Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

*Additional hymns and songs from All Creation Sings, the forthcoming liturgy and hymn supplement to Evangelical Lutheran Worship, will be added to this resource upon publication.*

RESOURCES

Additional information on the Service of the Word in Evangelical Lutheran Worship is found in these resources available from Augsburg Fortress: