



## Worship Formation & Liturgical Resources: Frequently Asked Questions

### What are "Rogation Days?"

*The worship staff receives a number of similar inquiries on worship-related topics from across the church.*

*These responses should not be considered the final word on the topic, but useful guides that are to be considered in respect to local context with pastoral sensitivity.*

*The response herein may be reproduced for congregational use as long as the web address is cited on each copy.*

#### **Background**

Stewardship of creation is an ongoing ministry in the church. The creation, which God declared good, is entrusted to the care of humankind. Exercising that care is one dimension of daily Christian discipleship. Rogation Days are a way for the church to honor God for the gift of creation and to pray for the land, the gift of labor, and the needs of all people.

Rogation Days were traditionally celebrated during the fifty days of Easter on the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday before Ascension Day. The word, Rogation, has its roots in the Latin word "rogare" which means to ask or petition and it comes from the ancient introit for the Sunday preceding the Ascension. In some places, the celebrations of Rogation Days were quite elaborate and included processions from the church to and around fields while asking for God's blessing.

Churches that have maintained the practice of celebrating Rogation Days in our time now no longer mark these days specifically before Ascension. Instead, Rogation Days are celebrated at times and places that meet local needs. With an increased awareness of the need for the stewardship of creation both within the church and within contemporary culture, the themes of thanksgiving for the land and petitions for a fruitful earth may be adapted around broader cultural celebrations of Earth Day or at other times.

Although Rogation Days are agricultural celebrations, they are not solely for rural congregations. These days underscore the dependence of all people, urban and rural, on the fruitfulness of the earth and human labor. The themes of Rogation Days may be highlighted in a special worship service or in prayers of intercession in the Sunday assembly during the spring.

#### **Practice**

*Evangelical Lutheran Worship* has a set of propers to commemorate the "Stewardship of Creation" (see *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, p. 63; *Leader's Edition*, p. 137). These propers include a prayer for fruitful seasons and a prayer for the stewardship of creation.

A set of scripture readings appropriate for a Rogation service is also provided. If a service is scheduled in a rural area at a representative farm or field, the "General Order of Blessing" from the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship: Occasional Services for the Assembly* (p. 155-158) may be used or adapted. The notes on this service include suggestions for scripture readings and hymns related to stewardship of creation. Additional Hymns to mark Rogation Days might include any of the hymns under the topics of Creation or Stewardship.

## RESOURCES

### [Resources Available from Augsburg Fortress:](#)

- 📖 *Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Occasional Services for the Assembly*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2009.
- 📖 *Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Leaders Desk Edition*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2006.
- 📖 *Indexes to Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. Minneapolis; Augsburg Fortress, 2007.
- 📖 Stewart, Benjamin M. *A Watered Garden: Christian Worship and the Earth's Ecology*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2011.

*Revised January 2013*

**Copyright © 2013 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. [www.elca.org/worshipfaq](http://www.elca.org/worshipfaq).**

*This document may be reproduced for use in your congregation as long as the copyright notice appears on each copy.*