



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Worship Resources: World AIDS Day, December 1

Each December 1, the ELCA joins with our neighbors around the world in commemorating World AIDS Day. On this day, we remember all who have been and continue to be affected by HIV and AIDS and we recommit ourselves to raising awareness and faithfully responding to this need.

You may use the following liturgical material as part of a special service on or near December 1 or you may incorporate material on a Sunday closest to December 1.

Litanies

A litany is likely spoken as part of the gathering in a special service. It could also be used as part of an expanded set of intercessory prayers.

What will it take, O God,
for us to see the vision fulfilled in the land of the living?
What will it take, O God,
for the change to come in our community, in our lives?
What will it take, O God,
for the scattered to be gathered so all may praise and dance together?
What will it take, O God,
to faithfully accompany our siblings with HIV?
What will it take, O God,
for the dance to begin, treatments to continue, and the deaths to end?
We pray in the strong name of Jesus who lives within and among us.
Amen.

Adapted from Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance resources, [Liturgy 2014](#)

OR

Creating God, each day you are bringing health and wholeness to our lives.
As we respond to HIV/AIDS, **open our hearts.**

Healing God, you restore our bodies, minds, and souls. You bring new life to our relationships, and communities. In times of illness and separation, you remind us that it is our faith that makes us well.
As we respond to HIV/AIDS, **open our hearts.**

Saving God, nothing can separate us from your love. Journey with us in every time and season, in every trial, diagnosis, treatment or grief.
As we respond to HIV/AIDS, **open our hearts.**

Loving God, we are your beloved creation. You have called us by name and redeemed us. Daily you remind us that we are yours, that you love us, that we are precious to you.
As we respond to HIV/AIDS, **open our hearts.**

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O God, we give you thanks for your life-giving love. May we show such love to one another as we search for treatments, seek a cure, and strive for prevention.
As we respond to HIV/AIDS, **open our hearts.**

A time for silence may be kept.

God of life, we trust you give us strength to meet difficulty, endurance when the struggle is long, and hope when we are unsure of what lies ahead. For your presence in all times and circumstances, we give you thanks.

Thanks be to God. **Thanks be to God.**

OR

Litany of confession and remembrance

[On this World AIDS Day,] let us pray for all those living with and affected by HIV, confess our complicity in perpetuating stigma, and hope for a cure.

Silence is kept.

We remember before you, O God, the nearly 37 million people living with HIV across the world and the 1.1 million people living with HIV in the United States. As we commit to learning about how HIV affects communities across the country and around the world,

Hold us, God, and renew our lives.

We pray, O God, for each person living with HIV— that they know your loving presence with them always. As we call to mind those we love living with HIV and AIDS,

Hold us, God, and renew our lives.

We praise you, O God, for those in our congregation and community who care for people living with HIV. For doctors, nurses, and medical professionals who minister with medicine and with words of support, and for family and friends who give comfort and assistance through their steady presence. In our gratitude for human love and tenderness,

Hold us, God, and renew our lives.

We long for deliverance, O God, from all the powers of this world that contribute to the spread of HIV and AIDS: for an end to the evils of racism, sexism, economic inequality, and discrimination against the LGBTQIA+ community; for those with addiction; for access to health care and education where it is lacking. As we confront unjust systems in this world,

Hold us, God, and renew our lives.

We ask you to lead us, O God, into ways of living that erase the stigma around HIV and AIDS. Give us courage to speak openly and honestly, and to access prevention, testing, and treatment. Save us from judgments and fears that divide and isolate. Let your compassion take root in us as we form community. As we long for a world connected,

Hold us, God, and renew our lives.

We acknowledge, O God, that the church has too often been complicit in the silence and stigma that surround HIV. Forgive us for our inaction, for the moments we should have spoken up, and the times we've turned away. As we reckon with the harm we've done,

Hold us, God, and renew our lives.

We plead for strength, O God, for all those working toward a world without AIDS. Give wisdom to researchers, endurance to educators, and vigor to those who advocate making our response to HIV priority. As we hope for a cure,
Hold us, God, and renew our lives.

We lift up before you, O God, all those who have died of complications from HIV/AIDS, and all those who grieve the loss of someone they've loved. Give us faith that you are with us, bearing our burdens and keeping us in your love which is stronger than death. As we trust your promise of resurrection,
Hold us, God, and renew our lives.

Holy and ever-living God, you hold us in your tender embrace, and you renew our lives with your endless mercy. On this World AIDS Day, be among us with healing and hope, that we may walk with each other in truth and joy.

Amen

Prayers

A number of prayer options are provided that may be adapted and used in various worship settings.

God of hope,
all of us are affected by HIV and AIDS.
At this time of Advent hope,
as we prepare for the coming of your Son into this world,
we give thanks for signs of hope.
For growing understanding,
for medical advances,
for changing attitudes,
for greater awareness and concern in your church.
God hear us, **God graciously hear us.**

God of unity,
bind us together with strong ties of love,
that all churches will be places where everyone can find acceptance.
May our churches provide a welcome for all affected by HIV and AIDS.
May they be places where care is given and received,
especially for affected children and youth,
where stories are told and heard,
where fear is overcome by love,
where you are to be found.
God hear us, **God graciously hear us.**

God of promise,
the end of AIDS is in sight!
Give us courage to run the race set before us.
We look to you in prayer and in action.
For a day when all will have access to education and information,
for a day when all who need it can get affordable and good quality treatment,
for a day when all are affirmed, included and given care and support.
Let us shed our cynicism, and hesitance to act.
May we surprise you, as you surprise us!
God hear us, **God graciously hear us.**

adapted from Karen Plater, Presbyterian World Service and Development (Canada). [Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance, Worship resources for World AIDS Day 2014.](#)

OR

We thank you that by the life-giving power of your spirit you bestowed upon us, your people, gifts and abilities needed to respond to the needs related to HIV. Pour upon us all that we need respond and reach out with compassion, healing and hope.

O God, our strength, **give wisdom and courage.**

We pray for the leadership of those living with or affected by HIV and give thanks for the courage you give us to share our stories. We thank you that our stories raise awareness, invite solidarity and challenge us to join with one another in the struggle.

O God, our strength, **give wisdom and courage.**

We pray for your church. Be with us and guide us as we respond to the needs of persons living with or affected by HIV. We pray especially for our pastors, deacons, and lay leaders as they provide pastoral services. Inspire and empower them to provide the leadership our faith community needs to respond effectively.

O God, our strength, **give wisdom and courage.**

We pray for our public officials. Guide them in their response to HIV. Give them the skills, resources, and support so that they may create effective and just policies around access to treatment.

O God, our strength, **give wisdom and courage.**

We give you thanks, O God, that you have raised-up leaders throughout the ages - reluctant leaders, courageous leaders, surprising leaders, humble leaders, servant leaders—bestowing on each one gifts for service. Raise up among us such leaders today who will advocate for access to effective medical treatment and health care, quality education and prevention programs, strong and just public policy, and the funds and other resources needed to stop AIDS.

O God, our strength, **give wisdom and courage.**

OR

Trusting that God's healing love and mercy never ceases, we pray.

For the church, that in worship, ministry, and advocacy, we do not shy away from the challenges related to HIV, but are opened to show understanding, speak truth, and serve those in our community and around the world.

God of mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For those living with HIV, that they thrive in daily life, that support is always close at hand, and that they never doubt God's abiding love for them in all circumstances.

God of mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For family and friends, that they are strengthened as they accompany loved ones with HIV. May God's Spirit work through them, that they reveal Christ's presence in their words and actions.

God of mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For medical professionals, that wisdom and skill are used to treat all with compassion. Give researchers new insights in treatment options, and may all providers show respect and dignity to those in their care.

God of mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For those whose health is failing and death draws near, that you enfold them in your loving embrace. May they be assured of your promises and may their trust in you never be shaken.
God of mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For those who mourn loved ones, that in their remembrance they find strength to give witness to precious lives cut short, to honestly name grief, and to find wholeness and peace for the days and years ahead.
God of mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Other concerns may be named.

Merciful God, constant source of all healing,
we give you thanks for all your gifts of strength and life,
and above all we thank you for your Son,
through whom we have health and salvation.
As we wait for that day,
help us by your Holy Spirit
to be assured of your power in our lives
and to trust in your eternal love;
through Jesus Christ our Savior.
Amen.

If including one petition as part of a larger set of prayers of intercession, the following may be used or adapted as needed.

Loving God, come near to us and to all the earth on this World AIDS Day. Give strength to those who work for a cure, resolve to those who advocate for solutions, tenderness to caregivers and medical professionals, comfort to those who mourn on this day, and your bold spirit of welcome to your church.
[God of mercy, **hear our prayer.**]

Laying on of Hands, Anointing, and Bringing Your Prayers for Healing on Behalf of Another
This rite may be used as desired in a service of prayer and healing.

Those who wish to receive laying on of hands approach and, as conditions permit, they may kneel. The minister lays both hands on each person's head and may use these or similar words. The minister may also anoint the person's forehead with oil, making the sign of the cross.

I lay my hands upon you in the name of our Savior Jesus Christ, beseeching Christ to uphold you and fill you with grace, that you may know the healing power of Christ's love.
Response: **Amen.**

The laying on of hands may be accompanied by the singing of acclamations, psalms, hymns and other music.

After all have returned to their places, the assembly stands, and the minister continues.
Let us pray. Merciful Lord God, constant source of all healing, we give you thanks for all your gifts of strength and life, and above all we thank you for your Son, through whom we have health and salvation. Help us by your Holy Spirit to be assured of your power in our lives and to trust in your eternal love; through Jesus Christ, we pray.
Amen.

The service may continue with a hymn, the Lord's Prayer, and the blessing and dismissal.

Blessing of the Hands

This blessing may be used as part of the Sending. The assembly is invited to hold out their hands with their palms up.

God bless your hands with strength to support and advocate for justice.

God bless your hands with steadiness to seek the knowledge leading to better prevention and treatment, and, eventually, a cure.

God bless your hands with openness to reach through stigma with welcome and reconciliation.

God bless your hands with tenderness to care for all who mourn.

God bless your hands with other hands to hold – the journey is long, but we walk together in hope and love.

Amen.

Suggestions for Scripture and Song

Scripture Suggestions:

2 Kings 5:1-3,7-15c

2 Kings 20:1-6

Psalms 6

Psalms 23

Psalms 28

Psalms 121

Proverbs 31:8-9

Isaiah 40:1-11

Isaiah 53:4-5

Isaiah 60:19-22

Jeremiah 33:14-16

Matthew 8:1-4

Matthew 8:14-17

Matthew 22:33-40

Luke 17:11-19

John 11:17-45

Acts 3:1-10

Romans 8:28-39

Hymns:

Come By Here

Come, Ye Disconsolate

Create in Me a Clean Heart

Don't Be Afraid

Healer of Boundless Compassion

Healer of Our Every Ill

Holy God, Holy and Glorious

How Long, O God

I Want Jesus to Walk with Me

Let My Prayer Rise Up

Litany of the Saints

Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song

Lost in the Night

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O Christ, the Healer, We Have Come

O God, Why Are You Silent

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

The Spirit Intercedes for Us

There Is a Balm in Gilead

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

To Be Your Presence

Wait for the Lord

TFF 42, 43

ELW 607, TFF 186

ELW 188

John Bell, Iona Community

(available from onelicense.net)

ELW 219

ELW 612

ELW 637

ELW 698

ELW 325

ELW 232

ELW 237

ELW 808

ELW 243

ELW 257

ELW 610

ELW 703

ELW 241

ELW 180

ELW 614, TFF 185

ELW 587

ELW 546







ELW 262

We Come to You for Healing, Lord
When the Storms of Life Are Raging / Stand by Me










ELW 617
TFF 198

Additional hymns may be found in the LAMENT, HEALING, HOPE, ASSURANCE, PRAYER, and ADVENT sections of the worship resources listed above.

Additional musical resources and acclamations may be found in these resources and are available from Augsburg Fortress:

-  *Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW)*
-  *Hear Our Prayer: Sung Responses for Choir and Assembly*
-  *Music Sourcebook for Life Passages: Healing, Funeral, and Marriage*
-  *Singing in Community: Paperless Music for Worship*
-  *Singing Our Prayer: A Companion to Holden Prayer Around the Cross*
-  *This Far By Faith (TFF)*

Additional Online Resources:

-  www.worldaidsday.org
-  www.reconcilingworks.org/HIV
-  <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/@@search?SearchableText=World+AIDS+Day>
-  <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/what-we-do/ea/faith-on-the-fast-track>
-  www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/phewa/pan/
-  www.ucc.org/ucan_world-aids-day
-  www.e-alliance.ch/en/s/hivaids/world-aids-day/
-  www.textweek.com/festivals/AIDS_day.htm
-  www.unaids.org/