

2009–2010

Thanksgiving Service



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Women of the ELCA

2009–2010 Thankoffering Service

Women of the Lutheran church have been gathering in the setting of Thankoffering services since the early 1900s. It is a tradition grounded in our celebration of community. We come together as faithful women joyfully giving thanks and praise for what God has given us.

Gathering

Thanksgiving for Baptism *ELW*, p. 97

Gathering Song

Awake, My Heart, with Gladness ELW 378

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

A Kyrie may be sung.

A canticle of praise may be sung.

Prayer of the Day

Response after the prayer: **Amen.**

Word

First Reading

Exodus 16:1–12

Psalm

Psalm 138

Second Reading

Titus 3:1–8

Gospel

Luke 12:13–21

Sermon

Hymn of the Day

Christ, Be Our Light ELW 715

Apostles' Creed

ELW, p. 105



Prayers of Intercession

With the whole people of Christ Jesus, let us call upon God for the sake of the church, the world, and all who are in need of prayer.

A brief silence is kept.

Restoring God, empower us to bring about peace both near and far. May our offerings be used to strengthen those working to relieve suffering and injustice around the world.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Creating God, you have given us abundance, and we are called to be stewards of all that you have given. Help us to care for your creation, providing safe shelter, secure food, and clean water to those in need.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Comforting God, we are made equal in your image, and we pray for healing and wholeness for women and children who are abused, mistreated, and exploited. May they receive care and treatment for their bodies and their minds.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Daring God, we are called to be bold servants of your will, and this day we remember the spirited witness of Katie Luther and the many women in our lives who courageously live out their faith in Jesus Christ.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.



Women of the ELCA

For the ministries of Women of the ELCA, both in this congregation and throughout the church. May we continue to serve you and to serve others.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Other intercessions may be offered here with the response:

Your mercy is great.

All blessing, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honor, power, and might be yours, O God, through Christ the crucified and risen one.

Amen.

Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Meal

Offering

Thankofferings will be used by Women of the ELCA for the total outreach of the women's organization.

Great Thanksgiving

Communion

All Are Welcome ELW 641

I Am the Bread of Life ELW 485

All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly ELW 461

Prayer After Communion

Response after the prayer: Amen.



Sending

Blessing

Response after the blessing: **Amen.**

Sending Song

My Life Flows On in Endless Song ELW 763

Dismissal

Response: **Thanks be to God.**

Acknowledgments

Liturgical texts from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, © 2006 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. All rights reserved.



Notes for Worship Planners

This service may be used whenever Thankofferings for Women of the ELCA are received. It may be used for Sunday worship or for a weekday gathering of Women of the ELCA.

For Consideration in Planning

One or more people may plan this service, working with your worship committee, music director, and other Women of the ELCA participants. You may wish to invite other congregations to celebrate with you. Set a time to meet and discuss the service and consider how to involve young women in the planning and worship.

Thankoffering Talk

Invite a Women of the ELCA participant to explain the significance of the Thankoffering and how it will be used. The Thankoffering service is an opportunity for women, with the entire congregation, if desired, to celebrate and continue that commitment to ministries of the women's organization.

Offering

Women of the ELCA Thankofferings support the total outreach of the ELCA, including congregational and global ministries, and specific programs of the women's organization. The Thankoffering service gives you the opportunity to display items, photos, and stories representing the people served by your monetary gifts.

Promote Full Participation

It is appropriate to invite the entire congregation to participate in this service. Encourage everyone to give a monetary gift to continue the ministry efforts of women.



Planning Ahead

Organize your materials four weeks ahead of time. Gather a group of people and delegate some main responsibilities:

- *scheduling* worship and music rehearsals;
- *writing* an article or bulletin insert for the church's newsletter that includes the history and tradition of Thankofferings;
- *showing* the Women of the ELCA DVD, "Created in the Image of God: A Community of Women," during an adult education hour or during fellowship time;
- *organizing* the fellowship following the service; and
- *discussing* with your pastor the possibility for a laywoman—who is able and willing—to be a guest preacher for the service.

Planning for Worship

The texts suggested in this service are optional. You may choose to create a Thankoffering service around the Lectionary's texts for a particular Sunday, especially using texts that support discipleship or stewardship themes. If you so choose, use the prayer of the day for that Sunday.

Planning for the day

One to two weeks before the service:

- Invite several women to give personal testimonies in worship or during adult education about their thankfulness for the ministry of women and outreach of Women of the ELCA.
- Contact all the people who are leading or participating in the service to review the service with them.
- Remember that with careful planning, the Thankoffering service can provide a powerful worship experience for your congregation and wider community.



Create Your Own Thankoffering Devotion

As a disciple of Jesus Christ who is committed to the practice of stewardship, creating your own Thankoffering devotion can help you (and the women in your group) grow in faith and spirit. It is a way to express how God is active in your life and ministry, and it provides a tangible recognition of God's abundant blessings through the Thankoffering given.

Take time to make a list of the many ways women gather and connect in your congregation. Meet to discuss the importance of spiritual development and how it relates to participation and giving. Consider how you will share these devotions with all women—those in your community and those whom you invite from another congregation to join in fellowship and ministry.

Some elements you may wish to include in your Thankoffering devotion:

- A hymn
- A litany
- Prayer
- Scripture reading
- Responsive readings
- Silent reflection or meditation

When to use your devotion:

- In your Women of the ELCA circle or Bible study group
- For personal or family devotional time
- For a committee or other business meeting
- For retreats
- For informal worship time
- At a cluster/conference or synodical women's gathering





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