



Worship Resources: International Women's Day — March 8

Prayers

This petition may be added to the assembly's prayers of intercession on the Sunday closest to March 8.

Grant, O God, that on International Women's Day your holy and life-giving spirit may move every human heart; that the barriers dividing us may crumble and hatreds cease, so we might live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *(Adapted from ELW PC, p. 381)*

God of mercy,
hear our prayer.

OR

Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

The following topical prayers from ELCA worship resources may be used or adapted for worship or personal devotion.

Commerce and labor

Almighty God, your Son, Jesus Christ, dignified our labor by sharing our toil. Guide us with your justice in the workplace, so that we may never value things above people or surrender honor to love of gain or lust for power. Prosper all efforts to put an end to work that brings no joy, and teach us how to govern the ways of business to the harm of none and for the sake of the common good; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. *(ELW, p. 78)*

The human family

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son. Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred that infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and, through our struggle and confusion, work to accomplish your purposes on earth; so that, in your good time, every people and nation may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen. *(ELW, p. 79)*

O God of all, with wonderful diversity of languages and cultures you created all people in your own image. Free us from prejudice and fear, that we may see your face in the faces of people around the world; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. *(ELW OSA, p. 398)*

The oppressed

Look with mercy, gracious God, upon people everywhere who live with injustice as their constant companions. Rouse us from complacency and help us eliminate prejudice and bias wherever it is found. Strengthen those who seek equality for all. Grant that everyone

may enjoy a fair portion of the abundance of the earth; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (*Adapted from ELW, p. 79*)

Faithful living in society

Sovereign God, your Son Jesus lived within the structures of society even as he spoke truth to those in power and challenged systems of oppression. Empower us to be courageous disciples and responsible citizens. Grant that our life in the public realm be grounded in love for our neighbors, care for the most vulnerable in our midst, and respect for the common life we share, following the example of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen. (*ACS, p. 50*)

Eternal God, your Word brought forth creation, and your Spirit brings order out of chaos and confusion. You breathe upon us, and we are able to hear one another with language we can understand. Pour out your Spirit upon us now, that even when we disagree on the way forward, we may remain united in Jesus Christ, in whom we are known and accepted with a single love. Amen. (*ACS, p. 50*)

Prejudice, racism

O God, you form all humanity to bear your divine image, and you intend for everyone to live together in harmonious dignity. We pray for all people, whether ourselves or others, who suffer the cruelties of racial or ethnic prejudice. Grant your Spirit of power to all who are oppressed. Give healing to victims of violence, protection to the vulnerable and abused, better housing and worthy employment to the mistreated, courage to the fearful, a remedy for rage, strength to parents and caregivers, and hope to children and youth. Purge the privileged of their sense of superiority, and lead church and society to foster communities of equity and diversity; through Jesus Christ, our loving Savior. Amen. (*ACS, p. 50*)

Those who suffer abuse and violence

Mighty Jesus, living Word, soothe the bodies, souls, and minds of the victims of *sexual violence / domestic violence / _____*. Bring them peace, hope, comfort, and strength. Bring abusers to justice and prevent them from causing further harm. Stir up the heart of your church gathered here and around the world, that we value justice and healing over silence and shame. Show us the way to your righteousness, led by the voices of those who suffer. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. (*ACS, p. 53*)

Additional prayers can be found in ELW Pastoral Care, ELW Occasional Services for the Assembly, and All Creation Sings.






Hymns and Songs

The following suggestions for assembly song may be especially suitable for marking this day. Several hymns in All Creation Sings feature women writers and composers. For additional suggestions, explore the topical indexes in both Evangelical Lutheran Worship and All Creation Sings.

ELW 419 For All the Faithful Women
ELW 453 Baptized and Set Free

ELW 496	One Bread, One Body
ELW 532	Gather Us In
ELW 576	We All Are One in Mission
ELW 710	Let Streams of Living Justice
ELW 726	Light Dawns on a Weary World
ELW 735	Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth
ELW 843	Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness
ELW 887	This Is My Song
ACS 948	Womb of Life and Source of Being
ACS 971	Come and Seek the Ways of Wisdom
ACS 978	God Welcomes All
ACS 984	May the God of Hope Go With Us / <i>Dios de la esperanza</i>
ACS 985	Let Us Enter In
ACS 1001, 1002	Holy Woman, Graceful Giver
ACS 1003	For Such a Time as This
ACS 1036	Commonwealth Is God's Commandment
ACS 1037	Christ, Our Peace
ACS 1038	God, We Gather As Your People
ACS 1056	God Bless to Us Our Bread / <i>Bendice, Señor, nuestro pan</i>
ACS 1057	What Does the Lord Require of You?
ACS 1062	Build a Longer Table

Resources

-  *Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW)*: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Augsburg Fortress, 2006.
-  *Evangelical Lutheran Worship: Pastoral Care (ELW PC)*: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Augsburg Fortress, 2007.
-  *Evangelical Lutheran Worship: Occasional Services for the Assembly (ELW OSA)*: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Augsburg Fortress, 2007.
-  *All Creation Sings: Evangelical Lutheran Worship Supplement (ACS)*: Augsburg Fortress, an imprint of 1517 Media, publishing house of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 2020.
-  *Sundays and Seasons*: Augsburg Fortress. Available as an online subscription at www.sundaysandseasons.com.