

Prayer Guide for the LCMS

Lenten Season 2025



We are all guilty of complaining or lamenting about the church. But how often have we prayed for the church? Our Lord commands us to “ask, seek, and knock.” Let us pound and plead at the door. As the first Christians devoted themselves to prayer (Acts 2:42), great movements of the Holy Spirit are accompanied by earnest pleading. Join brothers and sisters from across the country in praying for the LCMS, using this guide.

Week 1: March 5th – March 11th

Ash Wed. 3/5: The Kingdom of God and the LCMS: “Father, Thy Kingdom come.” For our church body, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. When we pray “Thy Kingdom come,” we pray it may also come among us in the LCMS. Make us useful in the advancement of your Kingdom, which is always “at hand.” If we are not useful, disband and reform us into a new vessel. But we are here now. Still see fit to use us as a reforming voice of the gospel in our land.

3/6: The Will of God and the LCMS: “Father, Thy will be done.” Give us clear vision of what your will is for our church. The road is draped in fog. We cannot see the horizon. In every step and decision, reveal your way. Show us what you want us to do. We will be obedient to your will. Only make it clear, only make it unmistakable. We wait on you . . .

3/7: Corporate Confession: Jesus, your body suffers. Some of the church’s suffering is righteous, for your name’s sake. Some is our own doing, a kind of self-sabotage. We confess corporately: our faithlessness, blasphemy, self-righteousness, vanity, and hypocrisy. Forgive us and sanctify us for holy use.

3/8: Leaders: We pray for our leaders. Conform them to your will:

For Pres. Harrison and synodical staff.

For District Presidents, in particular my District President

For the presidents, faculty, and staff of our seminaries and Concordia Universities.

For the leaders of all boards and committees of the church.

3/10: The Devil's Arrows: Rock and Refuge, defend us from the devil's arrows. If we walk the narrow way, the devil will lurk in the ditch. Guard us from the prowling wolf. He wants to kill and destroy. Be our Watchman. Deliver us from evil - our sin, the devil's temptation, forces of darkness, and death itself. If we are close to you, the evil one is nearby. Defend us.

3/11: Our Leaders and Marriage: Father, tend to the marriages of our leaders, pastors, and professional church workers. Strengthen the bond between husbands and wives. May pressure only make us stronger. Grow husbands and wives to love each other more every day. May the marriages of our denominational leaders be worthy models for all God's people.

Week 2: March 12th – March 18th

3/12: Every Congregation: Lord of the church, we pray for every congregation in our church body. By your Spirit, empower your people in every locale. Enlighten every congregation of our denomination to be a city on a hill, a light in their community. Protect us from evil and falsehood. By your Spirit's power, work conversions, baptisms, miracles, children growing and leading, your Word going out with power and not returning empty.

3/13: Small Churches: Lord who loves "little ones," help small and struggling churches in our denomination. So many are declining and dying. Many are frustrated, anxious, and dejected as their children have left and the community has changed. Yet you have said that the last will be first and the least are the greatest. No human has a good plan for this decline. We call on you to do something. Your strategic plan is best. Work mightily in the lives of small congregations that they may be the people you've called them to be.

3/14: The Overlooked and Undervalued: Lord, you've always used the least expected people in order to do your work in the world. The patriarchs, David the shepherd boy, the teenage mother of our Savior, the strange collective of men we call The Twelve. You prioritize "the alien, the fatherless, and the widow," and you bless "the poor in spirit." In this vein, raise up every day, ordinary Christians for your work. Lift up the overlooked and undervalued. Raise up more women, children, and people of color in our denomination for meaningful service to you. Make them valued voices, and important pieces of what you want to do.

3/15: Genuine Unity: Lord Jesus, you call your people as one body; you alone are the Head. We, by nature, find ways to divide and dilute. Only You can hold us together in unity. Unite us across all spectrums. "Contemporary" and "traditional," coasts and Midwest, "conservative" and "progressive," black and white, and young and old. Help us to truly love each other, different as we may be. May the diversity of our church body only be further proof of your surprising power and love. Jesus, only you can hold us together.

3/17: For the Pastor: Good Shepherd, we pray for under-shepherds today. For my pastor For my circuit visitor . . . For my District President . . . Grant wisdom, grace, and holy sustenance for the ministry you've called them to.

3/18: Workers for the Harvest: Jesus, you told us to pray for "workers in the harvest." We do not doubt you answer our prayer, yet it is hard to see. If the workers are right in front of us, give us eyes to see them. If we have hindered workers from entering the field, forgive us and open the gate for them. If there is a true void of workers, raise a miraculous crowd. It was "compassion" that prompted you to pray for more workers in the harvest. Give us that same compassion for "sheep without a shepherd." We ask you to supply more faithful lay leaders, teachers, deaconesses/deacons, administrators, musicians and leaders of worship, DCE's, chaplains, and pastors. We pray as you asked us to. Grant more workers, not for our denomination, but for your Kingdom.

Week 3: March 19th – March 25th

3/19: Courage > Fear: Almighty God, our impulse is to hide away in fear. Give us holy courage like Joshua and Caleb, to go into a land of giants and fear not. Grant our hearts brave faith to follow where you lead. No failure of nerve. Whatever you say, we'll do it. Even if it's hard. But we need courage from you to do something difficult. Otherwise, we are too weak.

3/20: The Death of Pride: God of grace, our life in the church is too often driven by selfish pride. So, grant us a spirit of humility. No rivalry or conceit. Forgive my pride and refashion my heart to be selfless. I confess that I like self-importance and attention, status and power. Kill this impulse within me and reshape my heart to love selflessly. I work, not for approval or applause, but only for you.

3/21: Crush the Serpent: Jesus, you resisted satan in the wilderness. You crushed his head at the cross. Dismantle the devil's schemes. Neuter him. Render his plans impotent. Embarrass him.

3/22: Against Abuse of Power: Dismantle the schemes of sinful men in your church. If anyone misuses power. If anyone is trying to manipulate the system or mislead the church. If there is anyone who cloaks selfish plans in pious talk. If anyone tries to take from God's people or harm His "little ones," let the millstone do its work.

3/24: Joy . . . in the LCMS . . . : Lord of the church, this family is often filled with controversy and contention. Blanket your church with a spirit of joy. Even under stress, at conventions, in the midst of tension, let us rejoice in You. In Christ, you give us all. Joy is the appropriate response. Inspire this within us, for you alone are the Source of all joy.

3/25: The Children's Children: Eternal God, we pray for a generation yet unborn. That what we do today bears fruit for them tomorrow. We pray for the faith, salvation, and blessing of our children's children, and their children. Whatever we do - in our church and our synod - make it generational in impact.

Week 4: March 26th - April 1st

3/26: Wind and Fire: Holy Spirit, you came in wind and fire, and ordinary men were given extraordinary gifts. All this, so that we might be your witnesses to the ends of the earth. Come, Holy Spirit, as you did long ago, so do in our day. Come and do miraculous work. Come and work conversions of faith, healings, miracles. Bring many to the waters of baptism. Extend the gospel of Jesus to surprising places. Our reason and strength fail us. We cannot. But you have, and you can, so come now.

3/27: Our Role in the Big Picture: Lord of the Church, we are but one corner of your whole church on earth. You have granted our little tribe great gifts. Give us a humble spirit to share what we have. Use the LCMS to grow relationships with Christian church bodies around the world. Give us humility to receive what they have to share with us. Show us what part we are to play in your global movement. Grant us to still be a reforming voice in the worldwide church.

3/28: Death of the Pharisee: Righteous God, who desires truth in the inmost place, destroy any ounce of a Pharisee's spirit within us. Purify our hearts. We have set rules, requirements, and traditions over your Word. If we put purity, piety, or liturgy above you, judge us. If we put relevance, success, or church size above you, judge us. Change us from Pharisees to children who know they are nothing without you.

3/29: Our Families: Father, you provide for our families. We pray for the families of pastors, teachers, and church workers. Provide what we need. Income. Health. Time together. Protection from evil and temptation. Christ, always be the foundation of our homes.

3/31: Universities: Lord, our teacher, we pray for Concordia Universities. Use them to raise and reach. Raise young Christian men and women for service to church and world. Reach a new generation desperate for the gospel of Jesus and in need of eternal salvation. Use our campuses as mission outposts to reach students. You know the challenges, so grant supernatural provision for our universities: Abundant financial resources. Qualified and faithful faculty. Expanded enrollment. Lord, our University system has been a backbone for our church body for decades. So we are bold to pray a wild prayer: Would you expand the reach of our Concordias? Would you open new Concordias in new cities?

4/1: Refine our Intentions: God of all wisdom, shatter all our misconceptions and overthrow our misguided schemes. Tear the veil and make known our Savior. May our sole work be to know him, love him, and make him known. Let us not confuse ourselves with our message. Christ is everything; we are nothing. Lord, be our all in all.

Week 5: April 2nd – April 8th

4/2: Seminaries: Lord, you have called some to be pastors, stewards of your mysteries. We ask your holy administration for our seminaries. We pray for the presidents and faculties of our two seminaries - Concordia Theological Seminary in Ft. Wayne and Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. We ask not only for rigorous academics, but vigorous proclamation. That what is learned is put into practice and proclaimed as you have commanded. Grant our seminaries to be responsive to the needs of your people, the church.

4/3: The Great, Ordinary Vocations: Lord of all, we ask your blessing on everyday saints. We pray for Lutheran Christians who serve you in all kinds of vocations: farmers, teachers, police officers, plumbers, salespeople, executives, business owners, mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, grandparents . . . These are the heart of your church, your beloved people. Love them in Christ. Secure them daily in the identity you bestowed at their baptism. Send them into the world in Christ's name as servants and witnesses.

4/4: Lutheran Schools: Jesus, you said, "I thank you Father that you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to little children." We pray for our Lutheran Schools as they reveal your truth to children and youth. Raise our kids in holy knowledge of your Law and Gospel. Send them out as bold witnesses. Bring new students who need to be loved and hear of Jesus. Plant faith in the hearts of our students. Not as rote obligation, but deep faith as the boy Samuel or shepherd boy David.

4/5: Margin for Mission: Lord, you once instructed Peter to retrieve a coin from a fish's mouth. So provide financial provision for your church. Remove any impulse to hoard or misuse the dollars you give. We pray for wise and generous use of money. Grant abundant provision and financial advantage for the sake of ministry. We pray for LCEF and The LCMS Foundation. We ask: More margin, more mission.

4/7: Daily Bread: Almighty God, you provide "daily bread," all that we need for this body and life. We pray for Concordia Plan Services. Bless those who lead and work at CPS. Give them wisdom, love, and a shrewd eye for the sake of your people. We ask for affordable and exceptional worker benefits for our professional church workers that we may possess health of body, mind, and soul.

4/8: The Pastor's Wife: Gracious God, you see those who are often overlooked. We pray for pastors' wives. If there are wives hurting and alone, shepherd their very hearts. Pastor

them with your tender arm. Give them friendships that bless them with love and support. Show them how you want them to lead in their congregations. Use each woman's unique gifts and personality for their particular setting.

Week 6: April 9th – April 15th

4/9: Wounded Servants: Lord, you heal the brokenhearted. Remedy the hurt for church workers who are broken, wounded, and depressed. There are many of us who are alone, despairing, and about to give up. As with St. Paul, make your grace sufficient, your power made perfect in weakness.

4/10: The Pastor's Kid: Father, we pray for pastors' kids in our synod. We especially lift to you those who are wounded, rebellious, or wandering. We know the vocation of pastoral ministry comes with burden. Relieve the burden: of extra demands, congregational scrutiny, a dad who is often gone evenings and weekends. Love them and care for them. Give these children strength to sacrifice without *being* sacrificed. Grant to the pastor's family times of joy, laughter, feasting, fun, rest, and refuge.

4/11: Miraculous Provision: Great Deliverer, you provided manna for your people in the wilderness. Provide for our church body, schools, congregations, and ministries. Give us just what we need for the day, manna every morning. Give a spirit of wise stewardship to our leaders as they use the estates, gifts, and bequests of your faithful people. Let there be no waste, only wise investment.

4/12: Sacrificial Cooperation: Lord of the church, no congregation is truly autonomous. We are all part of one another. As Paul wrote to "the church in Corinth" or "the church in Rome," help us to see ourselves as bigger than ourselves. Teach us how to work in multi-congregational partnerships. Build tangible cooperation between neighbor churches, circuits, and districts. Give us a selfless spirit to mutually sacrifice for one another.

4/14: Corporate Repentance: Christ our Redeemer, forgive the sins of our church body. We repent of our rebellious ways. Forgive us for misusing your gifts. Forgive us for not living in the unity you have won for us. Forgive us for rivalry, competition, and conceit. Forgive us for hypocrisy. Forgive us for turning your church into our idol. Forgive us for engaging in politics that demand our own way. Forgive us for hoarding your gifts and not extending them to the world. Forgive us for preoccupation with ourselves and a want of love for others. Forgive our sins, O Lord, forgive them all.

4/15: Lutheran Revival: Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on us. In the spirit of Psalm 85 we pray, "Revive us again, Lord." We pray for the revival of our hearts and minds for a new era of ministry. We pray for revival of our energy and capacity, of love and hopefulness. We pray for revival of your Word proclaimed clearly and purely, of your

sacraments enlivening your people. We pray for a revival of our witness to Christ, that “at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow and tongue confess that he is Lord.”

Week 6: April 16th – April 23rd

4/16: Hard to Love: O God, help me to love those who are hard to love in the LCMS. I get angry. Bitterness rises. I confess that I compare and compete. I confess a spirit of judgmentalism. Remove the plank in my eye so that I may see my brother or sister clearly.

4/17: The Global Church: Lord of the nations, we thank you for partner churches around the world. Open up dialogue for new fellowships, that our unity may increase. Strengthen long-standing bonds with saints around the globe. Give us a spirit of generosity to humbly share what we have and they need. Give us a spirit of humility to receive what they have and we need. Lord, the nations have come to the United States. As we have sent missionaries for generations, compel our friends to send us missionaries for a critical time in the American church.

4/18: Thank You! God of all blessings, we consider your “wondrous works.” You are righteous in all your ways and kind in all your works. We thank you for the indescribable gifts you have given - forgiveness, life, and salvation. We praise you for placing us in the family of God. We are grateful for the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod: Our history and heritage, our present blessings, our future potential. Let all that has breath praise the Lord!

4/19: Even so, Lord quickly come. Lord, you are the Alpha and Omega, the first and last. We await the Final Day. Grant us an hourly urgency to labor as if your return is at any moment. Bestow on us an eternal perspective. Reveal to us the most important things we must do, and give us the ability to let the lesser things go. Lord Jesus, come quickly.