



Lutheran Church of Australia

18TH GENERAL CONVENTION OF SYNOD

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

as the Lutheran Church of Australia prepares for General Convention of Synod

Please include these petitions in the Prayer of the Church, print them in pew bulletins, and use them in home devotions and private prayer time.

Sunday, 9 August

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the gift of the office of the public ministry by which you serve your people with your saving word and life-giving sacraments. Guide our church as we continue to study whether or not women may be ordained as pastors.

Help us, your family, to care for and encourage women and men who have become discouraged or tired, so that we can listen well to you and to each other. Give us determination to pay careful attention to your word, and show us your will through our study.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Sunday, 16 August

Heavenly Father, as people across the Lutheran Church of Australia and the Lutheran Church of New Zealand consider the question of the ordination of women, help the church listen to your word and discern your will through it. Guide our bishops, theologians, pastors and lay people as study and dialogue takes place across our church.

Keep our conversations honest and open, and build a spirit of loving care for one another, especially when our views differ. In particular give us ears to hear, eyes to recognise, and hearts to care for women and men who may feel disempowered or overlooked in our discussions.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Sunday, 23 August

Heavenly Father, help the church study your word with care and diligence as it seeks to know your will in the question of the ordination of women. Make it clear to us, so that there may be unified agreement among us.

Remove all mistaken zeal, religious pride, party spirit and divisiveness that would cloud the issue and damage your people and your witness to the world. As the body of Christ, help us to ensure that our witness honours the contribution of women in our community.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Sunday, 30 August

Heavenly Father, we pray for all those who are hurt over the question of women's ordination in the Lutheran Church of Australia, and for those who feel threatened or afraid. Give us confidence in your Son, our Saviour, and help us to walk the path of respect for each other and care for those who feel marginalised or unwelcome. Grant us grace to turn to you in humility, repentance and prayer.

Direct us so that we may walk in your paths, and help us understand and accept your will in this matter so that we may know the truth and gladly live by it as servants of Christ.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Sunday, 6 September

Heavenly Father, as the General Convention of Synod is now only a few weeks away, we ask you to keep us in the unity of the Holy Spirit. Enable us to gather with gladness in Christian fellowship each Sunday, humbly listen to your word together, and welcome each other as sisters and brothers at your table. As you gather us help us to be sensitive to each other and particularly to recognise and care for those who may feel isolated or powerless. Help us in particular to honour and respect women in our witness to each other and the world. Hold us together as your family, even while we robustly debate your word, consider what must be done, and seek your will.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Sunday, 13 September

Heavenly Father, be with our church as it studies the question of the ordination of women. Help us to welcome new things you are doing in the world, and to respect old things you keep and use. Save us from empty slogans or senseless controversy. Help us to remain faithful through the course of the debate, recognising that this is how you mysteriously guide the church into your truth. And direct our final decision so that your will may be done among us.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Sunday, 20 September

Dear Lord, protect and strengthen your church, so that your word and sacraments may nurture faith in you and love to all people. Be with all who spread the light of your truth throughout the world. Protect our pastors, and keep them faithful to you and the charge which you have given them. Be with all lay workers and all who serve in the body of Christ that by our common witness the light of Christ will shine brightly for the world. Delegates of our church will soon gather at Convention to consider once again who may be called to the holy office of preaching your word and administering your sacraments.

Grant us peace and confidence that they will make their decisions according to your good grace and direction. We pray particularly for our delegate/s [name/s] who will travel shortly to attend General Convention. We send him/her/them gladly with our blessing to participate in the convention on our behalf. Guide his/her/their hearts and minds, and grant him/her/them saving faith and a good conscience in speaking and voting.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Sunday, 27 September

Almighty God, you are good and gracious to us. We have blessings more than we can count, and you have protected us in times of trouble and difficulty, even when they are of our own making. Each day we rise to the praise of your name, and go to bed still singing your praises. Your greatest blessing is given to us in Jesus our Saviour. That you would give us your Son is more than we could ever expect or imagine. We ask you once more to protect us from mistakes and poor judgement as our church gathers in the General Convention of Synod this week.

You have been watching us, listening to us and guiding us as we have prepared for this convention, particularly as our delegates discuss and decide who may be ordained among us as pastors. We know the answer is clear to you, and you have shown us everything we need for salvation in your word. But we are often slow to understand, and even slower to act on what you tell us.

Give us, and our delegate/s at Convention ears to listen, hearts and minds to understand, and a spirit of willingness and cooperation. Forgive us, Lord, where we have thought and done wrong things. Set us straight, put us on your path, so that we may live our whole lives long in praise of you.

In Jesus' name, Amen.