**Christian care Sunday**

**BACKGROUND**

After the 2018 LCA Synod, the General Church Board passed the motion from the Board for Local Missionthat General Convention support the development, resourcing and promoting of an annual Christian Care Sunday whose aim is to:

1. Provide a focus on the ministry of care provided by congregational members
2. Provide an opportunity to connect Lutheran aged care facilities with local congregations and local congregations with Lutheran aged care facilities
3. Provide an opportunity to connect Lutheran community services with local congregations and local congregations with Lutheran community services
4. Promote the ministry of care that is conducted through Lutheran aged care and community services
5. Remind us of the many vulnerable people within our communities and of the work that is done by government and non-government (including faith-based) organisations.

**DATE**

No date is set for observing Christian Care Sunday in any lectionary or calendar year; it may be observed on any Sunday convenient to the local congregation, or on any day in a Lutheran Service or Aged Care facility. When choosing a date you may like to consult the resource “How to choose a date for Christian Care Sunday” in the additional seasonal resources. Please note that the propers will be the propers for the day. The materials offered here may be used with the set propers for the day.

**LITURGY**

**OPening SentenceS**

This is what the Lord says: do what is right and just.

**Rescue the one who has been robbed, do no wrong or violence to the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow, and do not shed innocent blood.** (*Jer 22:3*)

*OR*

Stop doing wrong. Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed.

**Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.** (*Isaiah 1:16-17*)

*OR*

**He has shown you what is good. And what does the Lord require of you?**

To act justly, love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. (*Micah 6:8*)

**PRAYER OF THE DAY (COLLECT)**

(Let us pray that we are active in Christian love. *[silence]*)

Thank you, merciful God,   
for showing your love for us   
by sending your Son to live among us   
and to suffer and die.   
Lead us to reflect this love to our neighbours   
by helping them in all their needs.   
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord,   
who lives and reigns   
with you and the Holy Spirit,   
one God, now and forever.   
**Amen.**

*OR, alternative*

(Let us pray for the coming of God's kingdom. *[silence]*)

Almighty and everliving God,   
it is your will to restore all things   
in your dear Son.   
Bring together under his just and gentle rule   
all the peoples of the world,   
now divided and torn apart by sin.   
For he lives and reigns   
with you and the Holy Spirit,   
one God, now and forever.   
**Amen.**

*OR, new*

(Let us pray that we love God and our neighbour. *[silence]*)

Everliving God,   
we thank you for giving yourself in love   
through your Son Jesus.   
Lead us by your great love   
to love you with all our heart,   
soul, mind, and strength,   
and to love our neighbour as we love ourselves.   
We ask this through Christ, our Lord,   
who lives and reigns   
with you and the Holy Spirit,   
one God, now and forever.   
**Amen.**

**INTRODUCTION TO THE CONFESSION OF SINS**

This introduction to the confession of sins may be used:

Friends in Christ:   
Jesus said:   
'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.   
Love the Lord your God with all your heart   
and with all your soul   
and with all your mind and with all your strength';   
and 'Love your neighbour as yourself'.   
We have not kept this great commandment.   
Let us confess our sins to God our Father,   
and ask him to forgive us for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Then continue with the prayer of confession.

*OR*

This introduction to the confession of sins may be used in a service with a focus on domestic and family violence (LCA Hidden Hurts, Healing Hearts resource):

Today we focus especially on the gifts   
 God has given us in our families.

And we bring before God the sins   
 that we have committed against the members of our families.

We seek God’s forgiveness  
 for our failures to love and care;  
 for seeking power over one another  
 rather than compassion for one another;

Then continue with the prayer of confession.

**Readings for the day:**

*To be selected from the following:*

**Old Testament Reading:**

Deuteronomy 6:1-9

Leviticus 19:1-2 and 9-18.

**PSALM:**

23 The Lord is my Shepherd (can be sung)

Psalm 86

Isaiah 61: 1-3 and 8-11

Isaiah 63: 7-9

**Epistle**

James 2:14-26 Faith without deeds is dead

1 John 3:16-24 Let us love with actions and truth

**GOSPEL**

Luke 10:25-37The parable of the good Samaritan

Matthew 25: 31-46 The sheep and the goats

Matthew 22:34-40 The greatest Commandment

John 13:34-35 A new commandment

**PRAYER AFTER THE GOSPEL**

This is the gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

Thank you, Lord Jesus,   
for showing us God's great love for us.   
Help us to love our neighbours.   
**Amen.**

*OR*

This is the gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

Lord Jesus, thank you for your great love.   
Help us to love God completely,   
and to love others as we love ourselves.   
**Amen.**

**OFFERING PRAYER**

God of love,   
teach us to give of ourselves in love,   
and use us and our possessions   
to help other people.   
**Amen.**

*OR*

Eternal loving Shepherd,

Your Son lay down his life for us, his sheep.

Help us to follow him

By loving and serving the people around us.

**Amen.**

*OR*

Thank you, Lord,   
for making us yours and caring for us   
as a good shepherd cares for the sheep.   
Help us to recognise Jesus   
in those who are poor and needy,   
and serve him humbly with what you have given us   
by serving them.   
**Amen.**

*OR*

Thank you, Lord, for calling us   
and giving us so many gifts,   
both physical and spiritual.   
Help us to go out and serve you   
by showing your compassion and love to others.   
**Amen.**

**Intercessions/ PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

*Call to prayer*

We are worried and distracted by our own needs and the needs of the world. Let us stop and turn to God, and place all our cares into his hands.

*Call to prayer*

Jesus told the scribe that we are to love the Lord our God with all our being and love our neighbour as we love ourselves. So let us pray to the Lord for our neighbours in need.

*Suggested intercessions*

\* for the church, that it would seek out and save those who have been harmed or abused by the world

\* for those who are afraid to help people in need

\* for those who commit violence against other human beings, that they would repent and seek to repair the damage they have done

\* for community housing projects and all who work to provide housing for the poor

\* for those who are strangers and refugees in our country, especially new immigrants

\* for the nations of the world, for wisdom, peace, and justice

\* for the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the stranger, the sick, and the prisoners

\* for those who are dying in loneliness, that God would send someone to sit beside them in their last hours

\* for those who suffer from family and domestic violence, and all those who have lost loved ones through domestic violence. We remember especially women and children who are among the most vulnerable

\* for our Indigenous brothers and sisters here in Australia, and First Nations people globally, who experience displacement, loss of language and culture, systemic discrimination, racism, violence and abuse

\* for anyone who would identify as the other, and for our enemies – those who are hated by the world, ignored, excluded and abused. May we remember that Jesus stands with and for these people, and we can see the face of Christ in the least of these

\* for doctors and nurses and all others in healing professions. We give special thanks for the Lutheran Nurses Association of Australia and the support they provide to parish and community faith nurses

\* We give thanks for the work of Lutheran community services including Lutheran Care in SA/NT and Lutheran Services in QLD, and our Lutheran aged care facilities and all those who work in these arms of the church. Sustain them in their work as they meet with some of the most vulnerable people in our communities

\* for all Christians, that we may be willing to 'cross the road' and help our neighbour who is in need

*Concluding prayer*

Father, teach us to see your own dear Son in the face of all who suffer. May we be your instruments of love and healing in the world. We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*OR*

**A PRAYER LITANY FOR HEALING – including a blessing of oil for anointing in healing prayer, provided by Bishop Mark Whitfield.**

Our Lord Jesus healed many who were sick   
as a sign of the reign of God come near.

He sent his disciples to continue his work   
of healing,

and they witnessed to the presence   
and power of God   
through prayer in Jesus’ name,   
by the laying on of hands,   
and the anointing with oil.

We now entrust to God all   
who are in need of healing and hope,

as we pray in the name of the great healer and reconciler of the world.

Loving God,  
you are our source and our final home.

We give you thanks for the gifts of life on earth, and of new life in baptism.

Renew in us the grace of our baptism,   
that we may know the true wholeness of life  
which is life from you, lived for you.

**Loving God,**  
**grant us healing and wholeness.**

Merciful God,

your Son came to bring reconciliation   
into a broken world.

Wherever there is conflict, hurt and hatred between people, communities,   
and nations,   
bring peace and understanding.

**Merciful God,**  
**grant healing and wholeness.**

Gentle God,  
your Son Jesus has shared the pain   
and suffering of human life.

Give comfort and courage to all who suffer;  
for young and old,  
for those with long standing illness   
and those afflicted with injury and crisis;  
for those bearing physical pain   
for those bearing mental pain,  
for those bearing spiritual distress -

**Gentle God,**  
**grant healing and wholeness.**

Compassionate God,  
you are the source of human knowledge.

Give wisdom and skill to all   
who provide medical care,

and lead our community to respond   
with compassion to all in need.

Give also that healing and release   
that is beyond all human ability.

**Compassionate God,**  
**grant healing and wholeness.**

Lord of life: we commit to you our needs   
and the needs of those who are dear to us:

For those who are suffering from injury   
and illness;  
those who are troubled by confusion or pain;  
those who are unsure of the future;  
those who cannot sleep;  
those who are weary and frail;  
those who carry grief and loss;  
those who are dying.

**Lord of life,**  
**grant healing and wholeness in Jesus’ name.  
Amen.**

Lord Jesus Christ, you sent your disciples   
to heal those who were sick.

Bless this oil, that all who are anointed with it  
may be healed, strengthened,   
and renewed   
by the power of your Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

Blessed be God who heals us.  
**Blessed be God who heals us in Christ.**

In a spirit of reconciliation and harmony   
let us greet one another:

The peace of the Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

*OR*

Open our ears

to hear you in the cries of those who are exploited,

those considered to be nothing,

those abandoned and dismissed.

Open our mouths to defend you in all places:

in public places, at our work,

in our schools and universities,

in our workplaces and our streets,

as well as in our private deeds.

Remind us that what we do to the least ones,

we do to you.

Amen.

(Claude Mostowik msc, Australia*)*

*OR*

God of Justice,

awaken in me the determination to work for a more just world.

God of Love,

prompt me to always seek the truth.

God of Compassion,

strengthen me to raise my voice

in solidarity with those experiencing poverty and marginalisation.

God of Strength,

enliven in me the courage to stand beside those fighting injustice.

God of Grace,

inspire me to be more rather than to want more.

May I learn to walk your way of mercy and compassion with all.

May I be generous with what you have freely given

so that my brothers and sisters can live life to the full.

Amen.

([*From Caritas Australia*](https://www.caritas.org.au/resources/library/be-more-prayer-poster/))

**Communion Invitation**

For a choice of communion invitations, see the document 'General notes and resources', under 'Communion invitation', in the 'General and seasonal' folder.

**responses before the blessing and dismissal**

*Prayer after communion:*

Almighty and everliving God,   
it is your will to restore all things   
in your dear Son.   
As you have gathered us as one   
around the table of the Lord,   
bring together under his just and gentle rule   
all the peoples of the world,   
now divided and torn apart by sin.   
For he lives and reigns   
with you and the Holy Spirit,   
one God, now and forever.   
**Amen.**

*The following responses may be used after the prayer after communion.*

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace to love and serve your neighbour.

**Thanks be to God.** *OR* **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Go in peace, to see the face of Christ in all you meet.

**Thanks be to God.** *OR* **In the name Christ. Amen.**

**blessing**

*Either of the following blessings may be used:*

A Franciscan Blessing

May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers, half truths, and superficial relationships, so that you may live deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression and exploitation of people, so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation, and war, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and turn their pain to joy.

And may God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you can make a difference in this world, so that you can do what others claim cannot be done.

Amen.

*OR*

Go in peace   
 and love with the love of Christ.  
 **Amen.   
 We go in the name of Christ, carrying love to the world.**

**HYMNS AND SONGS**

The following songs and hymns are especially appropriate for Christian Care Sunday:

**FROM LHS, AT, TIS**

**Lutheran Hymnal and Supplement**

\* *Modernised version available*

**LHS**

344 Our God is love, and all His saints\* G6

356 Lord of glory, who hast bought us\* G3

366 Jesus calls us; o'er the tumult G7

373 Lord, speak to me that I may speak\* G5

380 O God of mercy, God of might G9

381 O God our Father, throned on high (*alt tune* 391, G9)

385 With all my heart, I love Thee, Lord\* G7

426 What a friend we have in Jesus

480 A pilgrim and a stranger

780 We go to God when we are sorely placed GS

816 O Fount of good, for all your love G7

820 We thank you, God, for eyes to see GS (One Licence)

821 Where cross the crowded ways of life G7

853 A new commandment

855 Brother, let me be your servant GS (CCLI)

858 Make me a channel of your peace (One Licence)

860 When this earth was created GS (CCLI, One Licence)

**'All Together' books**

**AT**

95 Make me a channel of your peace (One Licence)

99 Pentecost prayer (CCLI, One Licence)

144 No longer strangers (One Licence)

175 The greatest commandment (CCLI)

177 Love one another (CCLI, One Licence)

191 Brother, let me be your servant (CCLI)

197 When I needed a neighbour (CCLI, One Licence)

261 The Servant King (CCLI)

278 Lord, hear our prayer (CCLI)

286 Sorrowing song (CCLI, One Licence)

300 Practise love (CCLI)

301 Prayer of peace (May the Father of love) (CCLI)

310 Yesu, Yesu, fill us with your love (CCLI, One Licence)

313 Christ, be our light (One Licence)

373 Bound by love (One Licence)

397 Before I take the body of my Lord (CCLI, One Licence)

413 The Summons (CCLI, One Licence)

487 Make your home in me (One Licence)

**Together in Song: Australian Hymn Book II**

10 The Lord’s my Shepherd

106 Now thank we all our God

136 There’s a wideness in God’s mercy

217 Love Divine

240 We go to God when we are sorely placed

256 From heaven you came

280 When he comes back

281 When God almighty came to be one of us

414 There’s a spirit in the air

531 Sent forth by God’s blessing

607 Make me a channel of your peace

608 Where cross the crowded ways of life

618 What does the Lord require

629 When I needed a neighbour

640 Yesu, Yesu, fill us with your love

647 Comfort, comfort all my people

650 Brother, sister, let me serve you

681 Lord let me see

689 Lord, hear my praying

699 A new commandment

**Modern Worship/Intergenerational song choices (available from Song Select and covered by CCLI):**

Broken Things – Andrew Jacob Pruis, Jason Houser, Matthew West

Lord, I need you – Christy Nockels, Daniel Carson, Jesse Reeves, Kristian Stanfill, Matt Maher

Way Maker – Osinachi Kalu Okoro Egbu

What the Lord Has Done in Me - Reuben Morgan

God of the Poor (Beauty for Brokenness) – Graham Kendrick

Recommended complementary bible reference: Psalm 107:1-43

Hosanna – Brooke Ligertwood

Called Me Higher – Leslie Jordan (All Sons and Daughters)

For the One – Jenn Johnson, Paul McClure (Bethel)

If We Are the Body – Mark Hall (Casting Crowns)

Greatest of These – Joel Houston (Hillsong United)

Lifesong - Mark Hall (Casting Crowns)

Compassion Hymn- Keith Getty, Kristyn Getty, Stuart Townend

They will know us by our love – Peter Scholtes (made more recently famous by King and Country)

He is Among Us – Paul Zach (The Porters Gate)

The Greatest Commandment – Andy Piercy, Isaac Wardell, John Swinton, Orlando Palmer, Paul Zach (The Porters Gate)

We Will Make No Peace With Oppression - Latifah Alattas, Liz Vice, Paul Zach (The Porters Gate)

Instrument of Peace - Isaac Wardell, Jessica Fox, Liz Vice, Orlando Palmer, Paul Zach (The Porters Gate)

Have Mercy on Me - David Gungor, Latifah Alattas (The Porters Gate)

***Songs kids love:***

Please note, it is not permissible use youtube clips in congregational worship without the express permission of the creator. Please check your permission and use rights before streaming or projecting these links.

Love the Lord Your God (tick, tick tick, boom!) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUiBLT7a4s4> or <https://celebratingjesus.bandcamp.com/track/love-the-lord-your-god>

The Blind Man (AT 23) (Public Domain)

Love Your Neighbour <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aLv3V6dzGaU> (Song covered by CCLI)

Love One Another <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDWRGsVu8x0> (Song covered by CCLI)

The Rizers – 1 John 4:7 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ealledf2dI>

Every Move I Make <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dgf1YzscBlE> (Song covered by CCLI)

This Little Light of Mine <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKkbIZtqhyQ>

(Public Domain lyrics, various arrangements on CCLI)

Love the Lord (Hey Hey) – Colin Buchanan <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KFQKI4sV_wg> (Song covered by CCLI)

Be strong and Courageous – Colin Buchanan <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=afuGgqU-qoc> (Song covered by CCLI)

**VISUAL**

**DISPLAY**

A display can be created of caring roles undertaken in your congregation and community context – Doctors, nurses, teachers, social workers and welfare workers, prison guards and police officers, emergency services workers, aged and disability carers. Banners or visual images depicting the good Samaritan, serving hands, hearts of love and the sharing of wealth, food and clothing may be appropriate (particularly if you are focusing on the text from Matthew 25).

Any display that incorporates the LCA tagline “Where love comes to life” is also appropriate.

ALWS provides many images for use in worship settings depicting poverty, refugees and the poor of our world, as well as images and stories of the provision of basic needs such as water, food, medical help, education and shelter. You can look at their resources at <https://www.alws.org.au/discover-more/schools-and-churches/> .

**VISUAL LITURGY**

There are many visual prayers, poems and benedictions, as well as looped visual imagery available for use at <https://www.theworkofthepeople.com/>

While this is not a free resource, it is of a high quality and subscriptions are reasonably priced for either one off use or an ongoing basis. The visual liturgy is searchable by lectionary week and year, or theme or key word.

**DRAMA**

**'MEGA DRAMA'**

*Mega Drama* resources (Openbook Publishers) has many scripts focused on love, sharing love and Christian care. These are no longer in print, although many churches own copies of this resource. Limited copies may still be available through Australian Christian Resources (shopacr.com.au).

Dramas appropriate for Christian Care Sunday include the following:

Volume 1:

This is the word of the Lord

Gift of Love

If the glove fits…

Love one another

The rest of the sermon

Prepared to go

The Lord is my Shepherd

Volume 2:

How much do you love yourself?

The final judgement

Volume 3:

Will they know?

The lost parcel

All or nothing

Don’t look up

Volume 4:

When it comes to the crunch

A woman’s prerogative

Words don’t mean a thing

Volume 5:

Real Love

Volume 6:

Put on love

The case of the missing God

I’m so busy

*Selected dramas have been scanned and are downloadable from the CCS additional resources section.*

**2 additional drama scripts are available in the intergenerational worship resources pack for Christian Care Sunday provided by Grow Ministries.**

**OTHER OPTIONAL SPECIAL BLESSINGS OR PRAYERS:**

blessing of PEOPLE INVOLVED IN WELFARE WORK

Where the gospel shared is the parable of the good Samaritan, any people in the congregation involved officially in welfare or caring work could be blessed. Note the suggestions in the document 'General notes and resources', under 'Blessings of people', in the 'General and seasonal' folder.

Before or after the prayer of the church, those involved could be invited up, and after a suitable word of God and a brief prayer, a blessing such as the following could be said as hands are briefly laid on each person: 'I bless you, N, for\_\_\_/in\_\_\_, in the name of the Father and of the Son+ and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.'

Alternately, all who are involved in care ministries and work could be invited to stand and the following group blessing could be prayed. Between each petition, the usual response of ‘Lord, in your mercy; Hear our Prayer’ can be used if desired.

For all who serve and work as caring educators:

parents, grandparents, nannies and babysitters,

child care staff and ‘Out of School Hours’ carers,

kindergarten and preschool staff,

teachers and school support staff including leaders and administrators –

We pray your blessing on them as they care for our young.

For all who serve to restore health and care for us in our living and our dying:

Doctors, nurses and carers,

Midwives and palliative carers,

Specialists of all kinds, surgeons and physical and occupational therapists,

Psychologists and psychiatrists,

Allied health professionals,

And all who support medical and care professionals –

Cleaners, cooks, gardeners and grounds people

Administrators and orderlies.

Bless these people as they create environments where we can become well.

For those who care for our spirits and souls:

Our Pastors and Chaplains and Counsellors,

Community Visitors and Pastoral Carers,

Lay workers in our church communities and organisations.

Bless these people who listen for your voice, and hear our deepest hearts desires – our brokenness and our joy.

May you care for their souls, as they care for us.

For those who meet you, Jesus, in the face of the most needy:

For social workers and youth workers,

Child protection and foster care support staff,

Emergency relief staff and financial counsellors,

For those who distribute food, from our foodbanks and zero waste organisations, and for those who meet children in our school breakfast clubs,

For the emergency accommodation staff at homeless shelters and referral services, who meet people with no place to stay, no warm, safe or comforting home,

For police officers, prison guards, emergency services staff and volunteers, paramedics and fire fighters, army, navy and air force personnel – for all those who fight to keep us safe and deliver justice and rehabilitation,

We pray your blessing on these our sisters and brothers who care for the most vulnerable people in our communities.

And for those who care for the world:

Our conservationists, environmentalists, scientists and veterinarians – may we learn to love and care for the earth and the created world, just as you asked us to at the very beginning, because you have created this good world and in caring for it, we show our love for you and each other, and the generations to come.

Finally Lord, we remember everyone without a pay check,

But who engages in this caring work regardless:

The carers in our families, tending to the needs of unwell people, those with different abilities requiring assistance, or the elderly.

For all those who visit and check on their neighbours, friends and family;

For those who are cooking and taking meals to people in crisis, and sharing resources with someone in need,

For those who advocate for people in need: such as refugees or anyone experiencing discrimination;

For those who accompany people to medical appointments and court hearings;

And those who act as a translator, where English isn’t the first language of their friend or family member.

Bless these your children, God, who cross the road to help a neighbour in need and who welcome the stranger, regardless of the nationality and age, gender or culture.

For all who care in our communities, may you be their Good Shepherd, Jesus. May you lead them to the good growing grass, and by the still waters; May your rod and staff comfort and protect them. May you restore their souls and make their cup overflow, as they care for us.

Amen.

**COMMISSIONING/BLESSING FOR HEALING**

It may be appropriate today to commission or bless those in the congregation who are 'sent out' for any kind of healing ministry, especially where you are celebrating Saint Luke, or where there exist members in your community who work as doctors, nurses and carers.

See the Seasonal Resource for the Celebration of Saint Luke – October 18 for more ideas. *Church Rites* and *Rites and Resources for Pastoral Care* may also be consulted for various installation and blessing rites. Note also the suggestions in these *LCA Worship Resources* in the document 'General notes and resources', under 'Blessings of people', in the 'General and seasonal' folder.

Before or after the prayer of the church, those involved could be invited up, and after a suitable word of God and a brief prayer, a blessing such as the following could be said as hands are briefly laid on each person: 'I bless you, N, for\_\_\_/in\_\_\_, in the name of the Father and of the Son+ and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.'