

# **Evangelical Lutheran Worship Talking Points**

## **I. God comes to us.**

Through the Word and sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Spirit is given, who works faith where and when it pleases God in those who hear the Gospel.  
ACV, ELH p. 9

John 1:1-5 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Leviticus 26:11 I will set My tabernacle among you, and My soul shall not abhor you. 12 I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.

Ephesians 2:19-22 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Rev. 21:3-4 “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

Romans 10:8 The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart”[e](#)(that is, the word of faith which we preach)

Matthew 18: 20 For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”

## **II. God reveals his identity and nature.**

Our churches with common consent teach that the decree of the Council of Nicea concerning the Unity of the Divine Essence and concerning the three Persons, is true and to be believed without any doubting.  
AC1, ELH p. 8

[Scripture] sets before us Christ as the only Mediator, Propitiation, High Priest, and Intercessor. He is to be prayed to and has promised that He will hear our prayer. This worship He approves above all: that in afflictions He be called upon: “If any man sins, we have an advocate with the Father...” (1 John 2) AC21, ELH p. 14

Ex. 3:15 God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, [[a](#)] the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation.

Exodus 6:6 Therefore say to the children of Israel: ‘I am the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.

John 8:58 Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."

Psalms 104:30 You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; And You renew the face of the earth.

Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

I Timothy 2:1-6 Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all

### **III. God reveals his attitude towards us and His relationship with us.**

Our Father, Who art in heaven. God would hereby tenderly invite us to believe that He is our true Father, and that we are His true children. SC:LP ELH p. 33

He that knows he has a Father reconciled to him through Christ, since he truly knows God, also knows that God cares for him and calls upon God. AC20, ELH p. 13

...the sacraments were ordained... to be signs and testimonies of the will of God toward us, instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them. AC 13, ELH p.11

...God-fearing and distressed consciences have through experience found that it (the teaching of justification by faith) brings the greatest consolation. Consciences can never be pacified through any works, but only by faith, being assured that for Christ's sake they have a gracious God. AC 20, ELH p.13

This is the chief part of the Gospel and ought to stand out as the most prominent teaching in the Church, so that the merits of Christ may be well known and that faith, which believes that sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, may be exalted far above works. AC 26, ELH p. 19

I John 1:5-9 This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

I John 3:1 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!

### **IV. God serves us.**

Where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation. SC:LS, ELH p. 36

[The Holy Ghost] calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian Church He daily and richly forgives me and all believers all our sins... SC:Creed, ELH p. 32

Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

Titus 3: 4-7 But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

This is my body which is given for you.

This cup is the new testament in My blood which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins.

ELH p. 54

John 20:19-29 Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

Jesus said to him, "Thomas,<sup>[d]</sup> because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

John 4:23-24 But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Romans 10: 17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

John 17:17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

#### **V. We remember what God has done for us.**

#### **By faith and in faith we offer sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving.**

Luke 10:27 So he answered and said, " 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,<sup>[a]</sup> and 'your neighbor as yourself.'<sup>[b]</sup>

We should fear, love and trust in God above all things.

We should... call upon Him in every trouble, pray, praise and give thanks.

We should fear and love God, so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it. SC:TC, ELH p. 31

I am in duty bound to thank and praise, to serve and obey Him. SC:Creed, ELH p. 32

God's name is hallowed when His Word is taught in its truth and purity, and we as the children of God live holy lives according to it.

"Amen" means that we should be sure that these petitions are acceptable to our Father in heaven and are heard by Him; for He Himself has commanded us so to pray and has promised to hear us. SC:LP. ELH p. 34

That we may learn to believe that no creature could make satisfaction for our sins but Christ, true God and man; and that we may learn to look with terror at our sins, and to regard them as great indeed, and to find joy and comfort in Him alone, and thus be saved through such faith. Christian Questions, 16, ELH p. 39

2 Chronicles 2:4 Behold, I am building a temple for the name of the LORD my God, to dedicate it to Him, to burn before Him sweet incense, for the continual showbread, for the burnt offerings morning and evening, on the Sabbaths, on the New Moons, and on the set feasts of the LORD our God. This is an ordinance forever to Israel. 5 And the temple which I build will be great, for our God is greater than all gods.

Isaiah 1:11 “ To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?”

Says the LORD.

Bring no more futile sacrifices; Incense is an abomination to Me.

The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies—

I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting. Your New Moons and your appointed feasts

My soul hates;

They are a trouble to Me, I am weary of bearing them.

When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you;

Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear.

Your hands are full of blood.

“ Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean;

Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes.

Cease to do evil, Learn to do good;

Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor;<sup>[a]</sup>

Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow.

“ Come now, and let us reason together,”

Says the LORD,

“ Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow;

Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool

Psalms 51: 10-13, 15-17 Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me by Your generous Spirit.

Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You.

O Lord, open my lips, And my mouth shall show forth Your praise.

For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart—

These, O God, You will not despise.

Acts 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

2 Timothy 3: 14-17 But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work

I Corinthians 11: 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.

Colossians 3: 12 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. 14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Philippians 2:1-8 If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others  
Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature<sup>[a]</sup> God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature<sup>[b]</sup> of a servant, being made in human likeness.  
And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Phil. 4:4-7 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

## **VI. The words we speak and sing, the rich diversity of the signs and symbols of the liturgy, and the thought progression of the Divine Service proclaim Christ and him crucified.**

Ceremonies are needed for this reason alone: that the unlearned be taught. AC24, p. 16

The Church is the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments rightly administered. And concerning the true unity of the Church, it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, rites, or ceremonies, instituted by men, should be the same everywhere. AC VII, p. 10

Nevertheless, very many traditions are kept on our part, for they lead to good order in the Church, such as the Order of Lessons in the Mass and the chief festivals. But at the same time people are warned that such observances do not justify before God, and that in such things it should not be called a sin if they are omitted without scandal. AC XXVI, p. 21

Therefore since ordinances instituted as being necessary or with the idea that they merit grace are contrary to the Gospel, it follows that it is not lawful for any bishop to institute or require such services. For it is necessary that the doctrine of Christian liberty be preserved in the churches; namely that bondage to law is not necessary to justification, as it is written in the Epistle to the Galatians: Do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. It is necessary that the chief article of the Gospel be preserved: that we obtain grace freely by faith in Christ, and not because of certain observances or acts of worship devised by men.

What then, are we to think of Sunday and similar rites in the house of God? To this we answer that it is lawful for bishops and pastors to make ordinances so that things are done orderly in the Church, not so that we should merit grace or make satisfaction for sins by them, or that consciences be bound to think them necessary services and that it is a sin to break them without offense to others...

It is proper that the Church keep such ordinances for the sake of charity and tranquility, so far that one does not offend another, and that all things be done in the churches in an orderly way, without confusion. Yet consciences are not to be burdened, thinking they are necessary to salvation, or that they sin when they break them without offense to others...

Likewise the observance of Sunday, Easter, Pentecost, and like festivals and rites. For they greatly err who judge that by the authority of the Church the observance of Sunday instead of the Sabbath Day was ordained as being necessary. Scripture has abrogated the Sabbath Day; for it teaches that since the Gospel has been revealed, all the ceremonies of Moses can be omitted. And yet because it was necessary to appoint a certain day so that the people would know when they might come together, it appears that the Church designated Sunday for this purpose. This day seems to have been chosen all the more for this additional reason; that people might have an example of Christian liberty and might know that neither the keeping of the Sabbath or any other day is necessary. AC XXVIII, p. 26

Falsely are our churches accused of abolishing the Mass, for the Mass is retained by us and celebrated with the highest reverence. All the usual ceremonies are also preserved, except that the parts sung in Latin are interspersed here and there with German hymns which have been added to teach the people...

The people are accustomed to receive the sacrament together, if any are fit to do so, and this increases the reverence and devotion of public worship. For none are admitted unless they are first examined. The people are also advised concerning the dignity and use of the sacrament, what great consolation it brings troubled consciences, that they might learn to believe God and to expect and ask of Him all that is good. This worship pleases God; for such use of the sacrament nourishes true devotion toward God...

Therefore the Mass was instituted that the faith of those who use the Sacrament should remember what benefits are received through Christ and should cheer and comfort the troubled conscience. For to remember Christ is to remember His benefits and to realize that they are truly offered to us. Nor is it enough only to remember the history, for this the Jews and the ungodly also can remember. Therefore the Mass is to be used for this purpose, that there the sacrament may be administered to them that have need of consolation, as Ambrose says, "Because I always sin, I am always bound to take the medicine."

AC XXIV, p.17

Matthew 11: 28-30 "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."