



Native American Sunday

A Liturgy for Worship

Northern Great Lakes Synod

Marquette, Michigan



~A Welcome from Bishop Katherine Finegan

I commend to you this excellent resource to equip your congregation to observe a Native American Sunday. This order for worship includes texts for Christ the King Sunday, November 21, 2021. However, feel free to use this resource to shape any worship occasion and substitute scripture texts that are appropriate.

I hope that by worshipping in the cadence and spiritual perspective of our Indigenous neighbors, we will have greater awareness and understanding to build future relationships. May it also deepen spiritual understanding of our relationship with our Creator God, the earth that is God's creation, and God's Son, our Brother, Jesus. May this liturgy be a blessing to you as we engage in a different language of faith.

On **Native American Sunday** in the Northern Great Lakes Synod, we honor the unique and beautiful contributions of our Native American brothers and sisters by lifting up the American Indian/Alaska Native ministries of the ELCA.

Native American Sunday provides congregations in the NGLS the opportunity to give generously through a special offering. Offering proceeds will be split in half between the American Indian and Alaska Native Ministries of the ELCA, and the "Walking with our Indigenous Neighbors Task Force" of the Northern Great Lakes Synod.

This Designated Offering (Please note: "Native American Sunday" in the memo line of your check) can be sent to the Northern Great Lakes Synod at:

The Northern Great Lakes Synod, ELCA
1029 North Third St., Suite A
Marquette, MI 49855

Statement from the American Indian and Alaska Native Ministry of the ELCA:

The Lutheran witness of the gospel with American Indian and Alaska Native people has a history of more than 350 years. The Lutheran witness was seen among the Cherokee as they walked the infamous trail of tears and continues all the way to the Northern shores of Alaska's Inupiat Eskimo people. The ELCA's American Indian and Alaska Native membership is around 4,850. The American Indian and Alaska Native Ministries works closely with 30 native congregations around the country and is working to open new faith communities as well.

Relationships with American Indians and Alaska Natives in the ELCA are firmly grounded in reconciliation and the mutual building up of the saints — people of all backgrounds, tribes, regions, communities, congregations and unique needs. Together, we work with a common vision to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, share in the ministry of word and sacrament, participate in God's work of reconciliation in the world and creation, seek justice for all people and celebrate diversity within Christ's unifying love. In our shared work, we strive to nurture and uphold the dignity of American Indian and Alaska Native people, their congregations and communities, and the church.

American Indian and Alaska Native - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (elca.org)



Gathering

Nature's Song

(Please listen to the sounds of creation; birds chirping, papers rustling, children chattering.; the sounds around you.)

Land Acknowledgement

We offer the following acknowledgment of the communities of Indigenous People who first lived in the land we call home. These are the tribes with whom we are walking together within the borders of the NGLS: Keweenaw Bay Indian Community, Bay Mills Indian Community, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, Lac Vieux Desert (lock view DES-air) Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, Hannahville Indian Community, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, Lac Du Flambeau (lack-dew-flam'-bow) Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, and Sokaogon (Su-ka'-gun) Chippewa Community/Mole Lake Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians.

Call to Worship

Prayer of the Four Directions

And Mother Earth and Father Sky

Creator is the Center of Creation. The central reality of Creator's plan for the world is the central reality of our lives. As we face each of the four directions, as we kneel to Mother Earth, and as we reach to the Heavens, we will respond in prayer. Following each prayer, we will return to face the center, reminded each time that it is our Brother who is able to bring healing and salvation and who, by His Spirit, is able to renew the face of the earth.

First let us all face a center point. (all face center, pause)

The start of life's journey, the new day, is the East. It is the place of beginnings, first light, and the possibility of starting again.

You have sung us into existence. Let us face East (all face East, pause) and let us pray:

Enable us, Creator Spirit, to be wise in our use of the resources of the earth, sharing them in justice, partaking of them in thankfulness. (all face center, pause)

The South holds the warmth of summer. It is a time of innocence, of learning and growth.

You have sung us into existence. Let us face South (all face South, pause) and let us pray:

May we walk good paths, Creator Spirit, living on this earth as sisters and brothers should, rejoicing in one another's blessings, sympathizing in one another's sorrows, and together with You renewing the face of the earth. (all face center, pause)

***Prayer of the Four Directions
And Mother Earth and Father Sky*** (cont.)

The West reminds us of the wisdom of maturity with the approaching of the sunset. It is the time of parenthood, responsibility, and good sense – the time to teach, acknowledge, and give thanks. You have sung us into existence. Let us now face West (all face West, pause) and pray that the Spirit of Creator may again breathe over the waters making them pure, making them fruitful. Let us pray:

We pray that we too may be purified so that life may be sustained and nurtured over the entire face of the earth. (all face center, pause)

The North holds the hard, cleansing wisdom of the time of winter and white hair; the elders breathe through the sacred pipe, the grandparents who, on life's great circle, are closest to the little children. You have sung us into existence. Let us face North (all face North, pause) and let us pray:

May the air we breathe be purified so that life may be sustained and nurtured over the entire face of the earth. (all face center, pause)

From Mother Earth comes all that has life. (Bend and touch Mother Earth and say):

You have sung us into existence. Let us kneel or symbolically touch Mother Earth and let us pray:

May we walk gently upon the Earth and leave our footprints softly on what we touch.

We raise our hands toward Father Sky. In love, Father Sky embraces all the Earth with His love. (Raise your hands and extend your palms toward the sky.)

You have sung us into existence. Let us raise our hands to Father Sky and pray:

May we see the vastness of Your arms and feel Your embrace of love at all times. A-Ho or Amen (or both!). (See Worship Notes on page 11)

Gathering Song (see suggestions on page 11)

Confession and Forgiveness

Great Spirit, look at our brokenness.

**We know that in all creation
the human family has strayed from the Sacred way—
the way of love, respect, gratitude and reverence for all life.**

We know that we are the ones who are divided.

**And we are the ones
who must come back together to walk the Sacred Way—
the way of love, respect, gratitude and reverence for all life.**

**Sacred One, teach us love, compassion, and honor,
that we may heal the earth and heal each other.**

Words of Restoration

As surely as the rain comes forth to water the earth, God's mercy comes to us as a gift, abundant and freely given. The same God who created the cosmos and raised Jesus from death to life brings healing and forgiveness to the world today. You are loved; you are restored. In Christ, you are made new. **A-Ho or Amen (or both!).**

OR (see next page)

Confession

Creator of all mercy and consolation, come to the aid of Your people, turn us from the wrong paths to live for You alone. Give us Your Spirit that we may confess our wrongs, receive Your forgiveness, and grow in Your Son, our Brother Jesus. **A-Ho or Amen (or both!).**

Let us confess those things we have done wrong in the presence of Creator and one another.

Creator,

Have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from You and, too often, we have given ourselves into the power of wrong. We are truly sorry and humble ourselves before You. In Your compassion forgive us our wrongs, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to You, and uphold us by Your Spirit, so that we may live and serve You in newness of life through Jesus, our Brother and Savior. A-Ho or Amen (or both!).

Forgiveness

Creator, rich in mercy, loved us even when we walked the wrong path and made us alive with our Brother Jesus. By Creator's love, we have been saved. Our wrongs are forgiven+ and Creator strengthens us with power through His Spirit. **A-Ho or Amen (or both!).**

Hymn of Praise (see suggestions on page 11)

Prayer of the Day (prayed by all)

Almighty and ever-living God, you anointed your beloved Son to be priest and sovereign forever. Grant that all the people of the earth, now divided by the power of sin, may be united by the glorious and gentle rule of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

OR

Oh Great Creator, we come before you in a humble manner. We pray for all our relations in nature, all those who walk, crawl, fly, and swim, seen and unseen, and to the good spirits that exist in every part of creation. May there be beauty above us. May there be beauty below us. May there be beauty in us and beauty all around us. We ask that this world be filled with peace, love, and beauty. A-Ho or Amen (or both!). (prayer by Medicine Grizzly Bear)

Word

Prayer for Illumination

God of abundance, the land we walk on is holy ground.

Send forth Your grace to help us heal the wounds of this world.

Open up the soil of our hearts to Your word of life.

May we be strengthened by this time together and grow into who You are creating us to be.

Readings from Sacred Scripture (the following are for Christ the King Sunday. Please feel free to use other appropriate readings.)

Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14	<i>The one coming with the clouds rules over all</i>
Psalms 93	<i>Ever since the world began, your throne has been established. (ps. 93:2)</i>
Revelation 1:4b-8	<i>Glory to the one who made us a kingdom</i>
John 18:33-37	<i>The kingdom of Christ</i>

Sermon

Hymn of the Day (see suggestions on page 11)

An Affirmation of Faith

We believe in Creator, Father-Mother Spirit,
who called the world and all that is in it into being;
who spoke the creative-forming word, and all came forth;
who created women and men and set them free to live in love and humility
to the will of supreme love, and in community with all.

We believe in Creator, Son and Brother,
who because of love for all creation beyond our understanding,
entered the world to share our humanity;
to set before us the paths of life and death,
and walk them with us;
to be rejected and die,
but finally to conquer death and in new life,
draw the world to himself for all time.

We believe in Creator,
in-dwelling Spirit, who calls us into community,
that we may, through faith and that community of oneness,
experience uplifting and sustaining grace;
that we may fulfill our human responsibility to reach out
to our neighbor, whomever that may be;
that we may rejoice in the constant nature of creation
and the wondrous joy of life itself.

We believe in Creator,
whose word teaches us that all things grow together, the Circle of Life;
that the paths of life and death, good and evil, too often come together;
that choices are not clearly defined,
but that we confidently and responsibly tread the path we choose
and only the true One can be our judge.

We believe in Creator,
who is present and working in this world through all Creation. *A-Ho or Amen (or both!).*

Prayers of the People *(based on Chief Seattle's words)*

All is Sacred!

All is Sacred!

Every part of this earth is Sacred.

Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore,

Every mist in the dark woods,

every clearing and insect is holy.

The rocky crest, the juices of the meadow, the beasts and all people;

all belong to the same family.

Teach your children that the Earth is our Mother.

Whatever befalls the earth befalls the children of the earth.

The water's murmur is the voice of our father's father.

We are a part of the earth and the earth is a part of us.

The rivers are our brothers; they quench our thirst.

The perfumed flowers are our sisters.

The air is precious,

For all of us share the same breath.

The wind that gave our grandparents breath also received their last sigh.

The wind gave our children the spirit of life, and will continue.

This we know: the earth does not belong to us;

we belong to the earth.

This we know: all things are connected;

like the blood which unites our family.

All things are connected.

Our God is the same God, whose compassion is equal for all.

We did not weave the web of life;

we are merely a strand in it.

Whatever we do to the web,

we do to ourselves.

Let us give thanks for the web in the circle that connects us.

Thanks be to Creator, the God of All! A-Ho or Amen (or both!).

Loving and forgiving God, we acknowledge that our past is filled with scars inflicted upon Indigenous People who were forced to attend boarding school in which they were robbed of their identity, and that the legacy continues through the generations. You invite us to heal this broken history by living as different people today and into our future as we seek to learn what it means to walk together. Give us courage to confess and own what is ours so that our journey is healing. God in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Lord of justice and consolation, as Rachel wept for her children, we grieve the deaths of all Indigenous Peoples who have been murdered over the years. We pray for families who miss their loved ones. Console all who mourn. We pray also for those who are missing and may still be found. For those who hang on to hope in the midst of profound despair, console all who mourn. For all those who have been wounded by senseless acts of violence, bring justice to those who cry out. Remember your beloved children as we remember you. God in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Recognizing the harm done to generations of Indigenous People by church and state, we your people seek forgiveness, O God, and the spirit of your Son to walk alongside native people as neighbors on the earth you've given us to share. Help them to see in us an expression of your love and justice. God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray that the Indigenous People of northern Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, whether living on or off reservation, may be healed of their deep wounds, reclaim the gifts of their cultural heritage, and have access to a good education and productive employment. Particularly we pray for our neighbors in the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community, Bay Mills Indian Community, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, Lac Vieux Desert (lock view DES-air) Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, Hannahville Indian Community, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, Lac Du Flambeau (lack-dew-flam'-bow) Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, and Sokaogon (Su-ka'-gun) Chippewa Community/Mole Lake Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians. God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Jesus Christ, Holy Child of God, you have prayed for us. With your Spirit that intercedes for us, hear our prayers. Help us to commend our worries and fears to you. In you, our hope rises, and we look for the new life you alone can bring. In the name of Jesus the Christ, the risen one, we lift our prayers. **A-Ho or Amen** (or both!).

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

From sundaysandseasons.com.

Copyright © 2021 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.

OR (see next page)

A Native American Lord's Prayer

Great Spirit, whose wigwam is in the sky and hunting ground is the earth, all are afraid of You and mighty are You called; ruler over storms, over people and birds and beasts and mountains - have Your way over all; over earth-ways and skyways; find us this day our meat and corn that we may be strong and brave, and put aside from us wicked ways as we put aside the bad of all who do us wrong; and let us not have troubles that lead into crooked paths; but keep everyone in our circle from all danger; for Yours is all that is: the earth and sky, the streams, the hills and the valleys, the stars, the moon and the sun; all that lives and has breath, all that has Your life and spirit with in. Wonderful, Shining Mighty Spirit! A-Ho or Amen (*or both!*).

OR

Lord's Prayer

Eternal spirit, earth-maker, pain-bearer, life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of justice be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. AMEN!

From the New Zealand Prayer Book
[September 2018]

Reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-724885

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of our Brother Jesus be with you always.

And also with you.

Please take a moment to share that peace with one another.

The Offering of Gifts

Indigenous Peoples offer tobacco as a gift to Creator. One of the four sacred herbs, tobacco (along with cedar, sweetgrass, and sage) is a powerful gift that is pleasing to our Creator and a symbol of respect. Therefore, in our traditional way, let us offer our gifts, our resources, our love to Creator.

All Things Hold Beauty

a Mohawk prayer (prayed by all)

Thank you, Creator, for all that You have given us. Thank you for the beauty of the universe that You created: the trees, the sky, the mountains, the rain. All things hold beauty in themselves and all are related and touch each creature of the earth. You created the rhythm and pattern of the universe in a harmony of movement, sight and sound. Help us to appreciate Your creation and to live with our eyes, ears, and hearts open to Your message. *A-Ho or Amen (or both!)*.

Benediction

Walk tall as the trees,

Live strong as the mountains,

Be gentle as the spring winds,

Keep the warmth of the summer sun in your heart

And the Great Spirit will always be with you. A-Ho or Amen (or both!). (Native American proverb)

AND / OR

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord's face shine on you and be gracious to you. May the Lord look upon you with favor and grant you peace; in the name of God the Father, God the Son+, and God the Spirit that makes us one. **Amen.**

Hymn

(see suggestions on page 11)

Dismissal

When we see the changes of day and night,

The stars in the sky,

We realize

It is the work of someone more powerful than humans. (Chased by Bears-Santee Sioux)

AND / OR

Go in peace and make peace,

remembering the cross of Christ the King.

Postlude

This service is provided by the *Walking with Our Indigenous Neighbors Task Force* of the Northern Great Lakes Synod.

If you would like additional resources, please visit the Northern Great Lakes Synod's website at www.nglsynod.org

For more information on the ELCA's work with Indigenous Peoples, please see the following document: *A Declaration of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America TO AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE PEOPLE* at [Declaration_to_American_Indian_Alaska_Native.pdf](#) (elca.org)

Worship Notes

Portions of this service are used on Native American Sunday at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Baraga, MI (Keweenaw Bay Indian Reservation), Good Shepherd Lutheran Church / Lutheran Campus Ministry in Houghton, MI, and the Annual Mohican Veteran's Pow-Wow Services in Bowler, WI (Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohican Reservation).

A-Ho, at the end of the prayers, is an affirmation or acknowledgement, much like our traditional use of *Amen*. Please feel free to use either (or both!). Some tribal members pronounce A-Ho as Ah-Hoe' while others pronounce it Ah-Hau' (both of which are correct).

Within the 574 federally recognized Tribes in the United States, traditional worship elements vary much like within our own congregations. For instance, some tribal members hold tobacco, a sacred herb, in their left hand (closest to their heart) when praying. Some bow their heads in reverence while others raise their head and hands towards Father Sky.

Many Indigenous People use the term *Creator* when talking about *God*. It does not disrespect or minimize the power of the *Holy One*. One doesn't have to go far in the Bible to make the connection that God *is* Creator (Genesis). Likewise, many Indigenous People use the term *Brother Jesus*, acknowledging a close, personal relationship with our Lord.

If you are unsure of a particular tradition, please feel free to reach out to a member of the Task Force.

Thank you for sharing Native American Sunday with your congregation!

Hymn Suggestions

ELW - Evangelical Lutheran Worship	LBW - Lutheran Book of Worship	WOV - With One Voice
All Are Welcome	ELW #641	
Canticle of the Turning	ELW #723	
Christ, Be Our Light	ELW #715	
Creating God, Your Fingers Trace	ELW #684	WOV #757
Gather Us In	ELW #532	WOV #718
Hallelujah (Heleluyan)	ELW #171	WOV #609
In Christ There Is No East or West	ELW #650	LBW #359
Let All Things Now Living	ELW #881	LBW #557
Let Justice Flow Like Streams	ELW #717	WOV #763
Let Streams of Living Justice	ELW #710	
Light Dawns on a Weary World	ELW #726	
Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil		WOV #713
Many and Great, O God, Are Your Works	ELW #837	WOV #794
Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth	ELW #735	WOV #769
O God of Every Nation	ELW #713	LBW #416
Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness	ELW #843	
Praise to You, O God of Mercy	ELW #208	WOV #790
'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime	ELW #284	LBW #72

We Are One in the Spirit

All My Relatives by Dakota Road <https://dakotaroadmusic.com/>

Praise to You by Dakota Road <https://dakotaroadmusic.com/>

A Native American Prayer

O Great Spirit whose voice I hear in the winds
and whose breath gives life to the entire world,
hear me!

I am small and weak, and I need your strength and
wisdom.

Let me walk in beauty and make my eyes ever behold
the red and purple sunset.

Make my hands respect the things you have made
and my ears sharp to hear your voice.

Make me wise so that I may understand the things you
have taught my people.

Let me learn the lessons you have hidden in every leaf
and rock.

I seek strength, not to be greater than my brother,
but to fight my greatest enemy—myself.

Make me always ready to come to you with clean hands
and straight eyes,

so when life fades, as the fading sunset,
my spirit may come to you without shame.

A-ho!

Thoughts from Ohiyesa

(Dr. Charles Alexander Eastman,
born to the Santee people of the
Dakota Nation in 1858)

*We first Americans have always been clear thinkers
within the scope of our understanding, but cause and
effect have not formed the basis for our thinking. We
do not chart and measure the vast field of nature or
express her wonders in the terms of science; on the
contrary, we see miracles on every hand—the miracle of
life in seed and egg, the miracle of death in a lightning flash
and in the swelling deep!*

*Nothing of the marvelous can astonish us—a beast
could speak or the sun stand still. The virgin birth seems
scarcely more miraculous than is the birth of every child
that comes into the world, and the miracle of loaves
and fishes excites no greater wonder than the harvest
that springs from a single ear of corn.*

*Let us not forget that even for the most contemporary
thinker, who sees a majesty and grandeur in natural*

Healer's Prayer

Out of our own sorrows and joys
Out of our own losses and gains
Out of our own knowledge of ease and disease
Out of our own store of wealth and poverty
Out of our own efforts to walk
through the darkness of disappointment and grief
We here in this place join hands and heart.

Knowing that life isn't always easy
Knowing the rewards aren't always tangible
Knowing that this Earth walk takes courage and support,
Dignity and faith,
In unity, leaning on each other,
We reach out to those in need
And wrap them, with gentle gossamer strands of love
light,
In a healing embrace, in a sacred healing embrace,
And whisper words of encouragement.

Because we are all one on this planet,
We and the Earth...all one.
Every human, every animal...one.
Every winged, finned, creepy-crawly creature.
Every plant. Every stone.
All who have come before us and will come after us
One sacred circle of life.

And we commit ourselves to the stewardship
of this sacred circle
And to this sacred planet, Earth.
And ask that our efforts be blessed
with grace and approval.

We must succeed in this endeavor!
There is no other way, but love.
There is nobody else, but us.

As we heal ourselves, we heal each other.
As we heal each other, we heal the world.
So be it.

Thoughts (cont.)

*law, science cannot explain everything. We all still
have to face the ultimate miracle—the origin and
principle of life. This is the supreme mystery that is the
essence of worship and without which there can be no
religion. In the presence of this mystery all peoples
must take an attitude much like that of the Indigenous
People, who behold with awe the Divine in all creation.*

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof... (Psalm 24.1, KJV)

We believe that being earth-keepers is foundational to our Christian vocation and should be integral to the full life and mission of the ELCA.

(from the 1993 ELCA social statement *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, & Justice.*)

Christian concern for the environment is shaped by the Word of God spoken in creation, the Love of God hanging on a cross, the Breath of God daily renewing the face of the earth. As members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, this congregation, the Northern Great Lakes Synod, and of society, we are deeply concerned about the environment, locally and globally. Even as we join the political, economic, and scientific discussion, we know care for the earth is a profoundly spiritual matter.

We believe we are grounded in a biblical vision of God's intention for the healing and wholeness of creation. **We believe** our hope is rooted in God's faithfulness to the creation from which humans emerge and depend on for sustaining life.

We believe we have a role to serve in creation—to pursue justice for creation through active participation, solidarity, sufficiency and sustainability, pursuing wholeness for creation. These commitments are expressed through individual and community action, worship, learning, moral deliberation and advocacy.

In 2017, the Lutheran Church commemorated 500 years. We find ourselves at another Reformation moment in which the bold, creative freedom of the reformers is called for as expressed in the theme that looks back in time, at the present day, and toward our future:

Not for Sale: Salvation
Not for Sale: Human Beings
Not for Sale: Creation

We state with bold conviction that creation is seamless. Humans are not, and cannot be, autonomous and independent. Earth-keeping is our calling.

Lutheran theologian and ethicist Larry Rasmussen writes: "Lutherans are uniquely positioned to offer leadership in the movement to restore creation, based on a strong theology of creation, a sacramental theology that discerns the active presence of God in all of life, a theology of the cross that leads us to identify with the most vulnerable, a situational ethic that enables us to respond creatively to new challenges, an ecclesiology which says that the church exists for the sake of the world, a tradition of commitment to social ministry and public advocacy for justice, an understanding of justification that empowers us to act out of gratitude and grace, and our affirmation of a future that is in God's hands."

