



The 2026 semiquincentennial of the signing of the Declaration of Independence arrives at a fraught time in the nation's history. While Sundays and Seasons and other ELCA worship resources in general refrain from commemorating Independence Day as a liturgical occasion outside of intercessory prayer, this milestone anniversary and its broader national context present a unique situation. In witness to the church's ardent stand against Christian nationalism in its various and insidious forms, and in response to implementing resolution CA25.05.25 of the 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly,¹ the Worship Resource Development Working Group of the ELCA Churchwide Organization and Augsburg Fortress has developed resources for this specific occasion that both celebrate and lament our nation's history, affirm the reality of the current moment, and seek to unite the diverse body of Christ for the life of the world.

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¹ Implementing resolution CA25.05.25 from the 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopts the recommended implementing resolutions for the new social statement [“Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All.”](#)

DAY TEXTS

This set of liturgical texts was developed in the context of the readings appointed in the Revised Common Lectionary for Lectionary 14, year A (complementary series), and within the broader national context of the US Semiquincentennial. Assemblies using the semicontinuous series of first readings and psalms are encouraged on this occasion to use the complementary series so that the connections among the scriptural and liturgical texts are most evident.

Sunday, July 5, 2026

Time after Pentecost—Lectionary 14

Year A

National Holiday

Introduction

The mystery of God's ways is sometimes hidden from the wise and intelligent. The prophet describes an everlasting realm that contrasts with earthly nations, one marked by peace, humility, and freedom. Jesus associates with those excluded from the religious community. Like Paul, we struggle with selfish desires; we lament flawed systems; and we seek God's mercy and forgiveness. We gather around word, water, and meal by Christ's invitation: "Come to me, all you that are weary." Here we find rest for our souls and hope for life in beloved community.

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,
source of hope in every nation,
rest for the weary,
glory and peace to the ends of the earth.

Amen.

Let us bring every burden to God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of all mercy,
**we have sinned against you,
our neighbors, and your creation.
Within ourselves and our communities,
our desire to do what is good
is at war with the evil that dwells in us.
We lament the evil that holds us captive.
We repent of the evil we have done,
and the evil done on our behalf.
Rescue us, forgive us, and restore us
for lives of compassion and courage
through our Savior Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

All-merciful, Almighty God
forgive you all your sins

through the grace of + Jesus Christ,
and by the Spirit's power
strengthen you in doing what is good.

Amen.

Prayers of the Day

You are great, O God, and greatly to be praised. You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Grant that we may believe in you, call upon you, know you, and serve you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Lord of all the worlds, guide this nation by your Spirit to go forward in justice and freedom. Give to all living in these lands the blessings of well-being and harmony, but above all things give us faith in you, that our nation may bring glory to your name and blessings to all peoples, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. Blessed are you, Lord of^l heav'n and earth;* you have revealed these^l things to infants.
Alleluia. (Matt. 11:25)

Readings and Psalm

Zechariah 9:9-12

The king will come in humility and peace

Psalm 145:8-14

The LORD is gracious and full of compassion. (Ps. 145:8)

Romans 7:15-25a

The struggle within the self

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

The yoke of discipleship

Prayers of Intercession

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Trusting in God's steadfast love, let us pray for the church, the nations, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

Gathering God, send your Spirit on the church you have called out from every nation. Knit us together into one body and heal the divisions we have caused. Overcome our timidity to witness and act in the public square when your purpose is being thwarted. Bless rostered and lay leaders with clarity and courage as they center your people in the gospel. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

All your works praise you, O God. From the Arctic to the Caribbean, from the Atlantic to the western islands, these lands and waters have sustained its peoples over many centuries. As we take our part in creation's praise, revive our wonder at what you have fashioned, and enliven our will to ensure its health for future generations. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Holy Trinity, you show us the splendor of diversity and the beauty of unity in your own divine life. We come from many nations with many languages; make us a united people that delights in our many different gifts. As the United States of America marks its declaration of independence, give those whom we have entrusted with authority the spirit of wisdom, and curb every abuse of that trust, so that both here and abroad, justice, humility, and peace may flourish. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

You are the Mother of exiles, O God. Extend your arms to all who are tired, who live with poverty, the tempest-tossed, all who yearn to breathe free. Embrace people seeking refuge; those incarcerated, detained, or disappeared; and neighbors fearing those they once trusted. Give healing and hope to people in any oppression and need, especially these we name before you now (*a brief silence*). God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We remember before you those who have died in every generation: Jan Hus, executed for protesting the ecclesial system; Benedict, teacher of a prayerful life; and those who have died ensuring the freedoms of this country: people in the armed services, peace officers, advocates, and activists. (*Here specific names may be mentioned.*) Gather us, together with those who have gone before us (*especially*), and with saints of every tribe and nation, into the holy city you have prepared. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Into your mercy, O God, we entrust our restless hearts and all our cares, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.
Amen.

Offering Prayer

Blessed are you, O God,
for waves of grain and harvesters,
fruitful vines and winepresses,
for our labor and our rest,
for the gifts of your hand in this land.
Transform us and what we offer
into the banquet of your compassion,
serving your love without limits
through Jesus Christ, our Savior.
Amen.

Thanksgiving at the Table

Holy God,
you alone are Majesty,
you alone are Excellency,
you alone are Sovereign.

Within the vast reaches you splashed into being,
you formed our star and this planet:
purple mountains, fruited plains,
crystal waters, towering forests, gleaming mines.
Here you fashioned human beings
in our infinite variety and hue,
yet each one created equal,
to care for one another
and our earthly home.

In a time of peace
enforced by the cruelty of empire,
you came in Jesus to share our life.
Born under the rule of a merciless king,
Jesus revealed the merciful realm of God.
Moving across borders
to people broken and oppressed,
Jesus brought healing, restoration, and freedom.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore,
Christ's execution at the hands of a ruthless regime,
Christ's resurrection that buries death,
Christ's ascension to rule with love forever,
we declare the revolutionary mystery of faith:
Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

God, shed your grace on us.
Shower your Holy Spirit
on these gifts of bread and wine
and on your people gathered this day.
Ignite in us the flame of freedom—

freedom from prejudice, from supremacy, from fear;
freedom for acceptance, for welcome,
for the *shalom* that you have first shown to us.

Faithful God, loving God:
Your Majesty shines forth in weakness.
Your Excellency is revealed to infants.
Your Sovereignty reigns from a cross.
Yours, O God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
is the everlasting kingdom,
the peaceable power,
and the humble glory,
now and forever.
Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Citizens of the commonwealth of heaven:
Taste and know that God is good to all.

Prayer after Communion

We thank you, God of heaven and earth,
that you fill our deepest need
with the very gift of Jesus Christ,
broken and poured out for us.
Pour us out into a broken world.
Channel our common life
toward the common good,
following the way our Savior leads us
now and forever.
Amen.

Affirmation of Christian Vocation in Civic Life

Within the sending rite of the service, this affirmation may be made by the whole assembly. Or, the affirmation may be made by individuals or groups, and it may be introduced by a description of the area of service to be affirmed (for example, service by those elected or appointed to public office; service in federal, state, and local agencies; service in nongovernmental organizations focused on public affairs).

In these or similar words, the presiding minister addresses those affirming Christian vocation in civic life.

[People of God] / [name/s], you are chosen and named as God's beloved.

You have received the gift of Christian vocation,
a holy calling lived out in various dimensions of your life,
your relationships and communities,
your work and your rest.

Daily and richly we live in the promises of holy baptism,
sustained by grace to trust God,
proclaim Christ through word and deed,
care for others and the world God made,
and work for justice and peace.

I ask you, therefore:

Will you endeavor to pattern your life on Jesus Christ,
in gratitude to God and in service to others?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you strive to pursue the common good in public life,
nurturing mutual care among neighbors near and far?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you pledge to bear witness in word and action,
commending what is true and right,
renouncing what is unjust and harmful,
and working to mend what is flawed?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

The presiding minister continues.

Sovereign God, your Son Jesus lived within the structures of society even as he spoke truth to those in power and challenged systems of oppression. Give to *your servant/s* ([name/s]) courage, patience, and vision in *their* commitment to serve in Christ's name. Empower us all in our Christian vocation to be courageous disciples and responsible citizens. Grant that our life in the public realm be grounded in love for our neighbors, care for the most vulnerable, and respect for the common life we share, through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

The service concludes with the blessing and dismissal.

Blessing

The Author of life,
the Word of salvation,
the Breath of new birth,
+ one God, bless you
and equip you for living and serving,
today and every day.

Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Seek liberty and justice for all.

Thanks be to God.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress, 2006): prayers 125, 237, 289 (pp. 41, 63, 77); Affirmation of Christian Vocation (p. 84); Holy Baptism (p. 228).

All Creation Sings (Augsburg Fortress, 2020), prayer 1041 (p. 50).

Enriching Our Worship 1 (Church Publishing, 1998), p. 56.

PREACHING THE LECTIONARY ON THE OCCASION OF THE US SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL

A typical attitude of North American Christianity is to imagine that our current moment, our current experience, is unprecedented and unparalleled—and thus preachers sometimes face a sense of overwhelm when approaching major dates on an historical and political calendar. We have a kindred spirit here with the apostle Paul in today’s New Testament reading. Paul wrestles with God’s will for his own life in difficult political times, himself under persecution from an authoritarian Roman government that is persecuting followers of Jesus. Paul knows God has given him the will to “do what is good,” and yet he still finds it difficult, maybe impossible, to follow God’s law.

Perhaps we imagine a less complicated earlier age in our churches, when large congregations sang breezy renditions of “God Bless America” in 1976 or other patriotic hymns on earlier anniversaries. We would, of course, be wrong. Looking merely to 50 years ago, prior to the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, churches worshiping during the United States Bicentennial did so only one year removed from the tragic end of the Vietnam War, with the fall of Saigon and US draftees returning home with physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wounds that would remain with them for the rest of their lives.

The 1976 anniversary was just eight years removed from the assassinations of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, the Democratic presidential candidate whose brother, President John F. Kennedy, had been assassinated in Dallas less than five years earlier. It was just two years removed, too, from the resignation of President Richard Nixon.

Always as preachers, we must first consider and attend to the needs of our own particular context, tailoring our message so that it responds to our particular location, as we see Jesus doing in his parables focused on life in a Middle Eastern Jewish context. And at the same time, as Jesus did with his parables, we are also tasked with doing more than simply responding to the needs and desires of our particular worshiping assembly. On this day, Lutheran preachers in particular are called to reject outright the temptations and claims of Christian nationalism. At this moment in the United States, we are faced with a political movement that has married Christianity with an embrace of hardline authoritarianism and glorification of violent masculinity, casting Jesus in the role of a warrior. We have seen a political Christian movement that has attempted to demonize empathy and love of neighbor, recasting “neighbors” as only those who share the same ethnicity and cultural background.

Today’s gospel offers a much different vision: a Jesus who comes to all offering rest for our souls, who promises rest for all “who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens.” This Jesus—perhaps like some of you preparing to preach today—has been criticized for his teachings and his associations with those on society’s margins. But Jesus in this gospel reminds us that those whom the world considers wise and intelligent often miss God’s message of grace, and instead we must look to find truth in those who, like infants, are deemed powerless or foolish.

As Lutherans, many of our ancestors came to this continent as distinct religious, linguistic, and ethnic minorities; as Scandinavians and Germans who worshiped in their native languages rather than English well into the twentieth century. As such, we have a responsibility to turn away from any distortion of Jesus’ teachings. We also must bear witness to the ways in which nationalism

took hold of the German churches during Nazism, and we must resist and refuse the desire to be silent or complicit.

What then, you wonder, do we say? I would urge each of us to begin with fervent prayer, with the confidence that in this prayer to preach a gospel independent of national allegiance, the Spirit would intercede for us with sighs too deep for words. We have excellent tools in the texts appointed for this day. In Zechariah we are reminded that we worship a liberating God, one who has come to set the prisoners free, and thus we resist a Christianity that prescribes only obedience to the governing authorities, relying on a surface-level reading of Romans 13. In Romans 7 today we also hear the wrestling of Paul himself, an admission of the temptations offered by a nationalistic, power-hungry gospel that comes for all of us, lest we resist it and seek instead to serve our neighbor.

And finally, in today's gospel, we hear Jesus' lament for this generation. For our own time, we hear in these words the call to repentance for a church that has celebrated America without acknowledging the role its dominant (white Christian) culture has played in enslavement, abuse, and terrorization of non-white, non-Christian Americans, and all are who are most vulnerable, including women, children, and the poor. Jesus, in contrast, offers to all who are hurting a comfortable place of shared burdens and rest.

In all this, must we only preach sermons of doom and gloom? No. The celebratory moment comes instead in the endurance of a hopeful democracy, a country striving toward greater equality—in moments like the civil rights movement, the women's movement, and the embrace of immigrants and refugees—even as we take steps back into nativism, fear, and violence. The celebration is that we too are invited to be Americans, and we can resist a politics and religion of cruelty, shame, and fear, instead rooting ourselves in Jesus' gospel of sacrifice, humility, service, love, justice, and truth.

Preach boldly. Know that Jesus has called you for this very moment.

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RESOURCES FOR MUSICIANS

Overview

There may be parishes where pastors, music leaders, and all members of the congregation are in complete agreement as to if and how to acknowledge the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence this July 4, 2026. But there most assuredly will be places where struggles are encountered. We may be faced with differences of opinion between other staff members and congregational members and even internal struggles within ourselves. And that is not necessarily a bad thing as long as conversations remain respectful and minds are open to listening and learning. Having honest and meaty discussions can help us understand others' points of view and help clarify our own. "Here I stand" makes a great bumper sticker for the Lutheran Reformation, but a single weekend in July of 2026 does not carry as much historical weight as the Diet of Worms or other Lutheran foundational moments.

If we keep in mind the immense task the formers of the Declaration of Independence had in front of them, we can gain some insight and be better able to put our own task into perspective. Maybe viewing the musicals *1776* or *Hamilton* would be good places to start, as they are based on accounts of the difficulties of birthing this great nation! Balancing the sacred with the secular—aka God and Country—in worship is nothing new. The reign of God and earthly governments can work together toward shared goals if we do not conflate them. Conflating church and country is idolatry and keeping them isolated from each other is impossible. Is there an answer? Being able to achieve and maintain a healthy tension is our best goal. Let us focus on what beneficial things we can do to promote the good of all.

How might church musicians approach the US Semiquincentennial?

- Have discussions early on with pastors and other staff members about worship that weekend. You may decide to hold no observance at all, citing a clean separation of church and state affairs. Or you may decide to acknowledge the anniversary in the sermon and/or prayers, and perhaps by choosing hymns, songs, and other music that address the anniversary with thoughtfulness and care.
- Anticipate and prepare for various and opposing viewpoints among parishioners, worship leaders, and other staff members. Be able to articulate your stance but be open to others' suggestions. We may need to compromise a bit for the sake of relationships.
- Consider offering a special separate program to honor the 250th anniversary. Pressure to go "full patriotic" at Sunday's worship might be alleviated by keeping the worship worshipful, focusing on word and sacrament and the day's lectionary texts, and then offering a program of patriotic music and readings at a different time, perhaps as a post-service event with a meal.
- Advertise and promote any Independence Day celebrations in the community that might interest parishioners.
- Choose music for worship carefully. Music will often be the key component as to whether people feel the anniversary has been observed appropriately—no matter how they might identify politically. Most church musicians deem the words we sing as very important, as will some of our parishioners. But for some folks, it is the feeling of the music, their memories, their connection to the larger culture that determines whether the anniversary is being celebrated appropriately and to their satisfaction. This is not unlike discussions/arguments we may encounter about singing Christmas texts during Advent.

Choosing music for worship or for programs outside of worship

One of the greatest challenges for church musicians is choosing words for others to sing. We want them to sing truth, not manufactured expressions or propaganda. Honor the integrity and humanity of the people in the choir and the assembly. This level of sensitivity is a responsibility for us at all times of the year, for all ages and for every occasion, including national days.

Let's look at a sampling of songs considered "patriotic," dig deeper into what messages they might be conveying, and ask some questions of the words we might put into people's mouths and minds. Careful discernment is our sacred calling as worship leaders.

- To whom are the words addressed? For example, "My country 'tis of thee" (LBW 566) is addressed to the country, not to God or to each other. "God bless our native land" (ELW 891, LBW 569) is indeed a prayer addressed to God, but might "native land" mean something different to naturalized citizens than to those born here? "God bless America" (the refrain, at least, as the less-sung stanza does call us to "swear allegiance") is a rather decent prayer in itself, asking for God's blessing and guidance, and it sings of the vastness and diversity of the United States of America—the land, at least, if not the people.
- Does a text say or imply that our country is more blessed by God than any other country? "This is my song" (ELW 887) proves that we can celebrate our own nation while also acknowledging and affirming other lands and people.
- Does a text glorify war, as does "Onward Christian soldiers" (LBW 509) or our own national anthem "The Star-Spangled Banner"? Do we still need to reference war to express love of country? Or can we acknowledge that battles have taken place in many ways, such as the battles for civil rights? Can we expand our understanding of "heroes"? Can we honor those individuals who put themselves in harm's way for a righteous cause, as in "O beautiful for spacious skies" (ELW 888, TFF 298) that calls beautiful the heroes who in "liberating strife . . . more than self their country loved, and mercy more than life"?
- Speaking of that same text, its author Katherine L. Bates has us sing in its first stanza of the country's natural beauty and fertility and then turns to prayer, praising God for grace and asking that our "good" be crowned with "brotherhood." Stanza two honors the heroes who gave their lives for others. The third stanza looks to the future and asks God to mend our every flaw. The depth and richness of this text have helped it endure these many years; it has much to say still today.

An opportunity to broaden the concept of patriotism

Discover which themes are present in both the Declaration of Independence and the teachings of the Old Testament prophets and Jesus, especially as presented in the Sermon on the Mount. With that broader mindset, any hymn that speaks of justice, equality, mercy, peace, humility, and gratitude is appropriate for the observance.

Don't keep the rationale for your choices a secret

Communicate the rationale for your careful and deliberate choices. Identify the source for each musical choice in advance publicity, newsletters, and worship folders. Frame the broad palette you are presenting as a celebration of American heritage that embodies the American tapestry and the American dream and the Christian principles of freedom, equality, and justice.

Assembly Song

Hymnal Resources

ACS—*All Creation Sings*

ELW—*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

LBW—*Lutheran Book of Worship*

TFF—*This Far by Faith*

WOV—*With One Voice*

National Songs

Before You, Lord, We Bow

ELW 893, LBW 40

God Bless Our Native Land

ELW 891, LBW 569

God of Our Fathers

LBW 567

Holy God, You Raise up Prophets

TFF 299

Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory

ELW 890, TFF 297, LBW 332

My Country, 'Tis of Thee

LBW 566

O Beautiful for Spacious Skies

ELW 888, TFF 298

The Right Hand of God

ELW 889, TFF 300

This Is My Song

ELW 887

Additional Assembly Songs

All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name

ELW 634, TFF 267, LBW 328/329

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound

ELW 779, LBW 448

Build a Longer Table

ACS 1062

God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens

ELW 771, LBW 463

How Firm a Foundation

ELW 796, LBW 507

In Christ There Is No East or West

ELW 650, TFF 214, LBW 359

[Let Freedom Ring](#)

GIA Publications, Inc.

Lift Every Voice and Sing

ELW 841, TFF 296, LBW 562

Many and Great, O God

ELW 837, WOV 794

[May We Be Free](#)

GIA Publications, Inc.

This Little Light of Mine

ELW 677, TFF 65

“Melting pot” or “tapestry”?

The concept of the United States as a “melting pot” still carries meaning, but for many people this older metaphor has given way to the more inclusive concept of a “tapestry” or “mosaic” where individuals are not lost in the mix but retain their uniqueness as they are connected to others like or unlike themselves. With that in mind, it is good to remember that no single song contains the full story. The breadth of the story is told by a mix of different voices of the American tapestry. While Americans imported many of their musical styles from Europe, there are noteworthy sounds that have roots in American soil.

- Native American texts and tunes such as “Many and Great, O God” (ELW 837, WOV 794)
- Early American hymns such as “How Firm a Foundation” (ELW 796, LBW 507) and “All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!” (ELW 634, TFF 267, LBW 328/329)
- Shape-note hymns such as “Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound” (ELW 779, LBW 448) and “God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens” (ELW 771, LBW 463)
- African American traditions of spirituals, gospel, and jazz such as “This Little Light of Mine” (ELW 677, TFF 65) and “In Christ There Is No East or West” (ELW 650, TFF 214, LBW 359)

Other Music for the Day

AFP—Augsburg Fortress Publishers
CG—Choristers Guild
CPH—Concordia Publishing House
GIA—GIA Publications, Inc.
HAL—Hal Leonard

HOP—Hope Publishing
LF—The Leupold Foundation
LOR—Lorenz
MSM—MorningStar Music
OCP—Oregon Catholic Press

Choral

If your choir is off for the summer, consider gathering at least a few voices for this special weekend. Many of these choral anthems can be adapted as vocal solos.

- Cherwien, David. [“Prayer for Peace.”](#) MSM 50-9209.
Ferguson, John A. [“Come, Sing of Years Gone By.”](#) AFP 9781506465296.
Ferguson, John A. [“This Is My Song.”](#) AFP 9781506456928.
Grundahl, Nancy. [“Children of God.”](#) AFP 9798341901674.
Helsa, Bret. *A Dazzling Bouquet: Songs on the Path of Justice and Community.*
AFP 9798889838142. [Forthcoming, June 2026]
Helsa, Bret. [Justice Like a Base of Stone: Hymns of Hope and Transformation.](#)
AFP 9780800623562.
Hopson, Hal H. [“I Am the Light of Nations/Yo soy la luz del mundo.”](#) AFP 9780800675868.
Huff, Mac. [“Sweet Freedom.”](#) HAL 01972914.
Keesecker, Thomas. [“God, We Gather As Your People.”](#) AFP 9798341904644.
Keesecker, Thomas. [“Let Us Pray for Peace.”](#) CG CGA1561.
Lindholm, Jeanette and Hernández, Ana. [“We the People.”](#) AFP ITEM014329.
Mendelssohn, Felix. “Verleih Uns Frieden” (Grant Us Thy Peace) in [Chantry Choirbook.](#)
AFP 9780800657772.
Miller, Mark A. [“Roll Down, Justice!”](#) CG CGA1472.
Miller, Mark A. [Roll Down, Justice! Sacred Songs and Social Justice.](#) CG CGBK72.
Moore, Undine Smith. [“I Would Be True.”](#) AFP 9781506484945.
Organ, Anne Krentz. [“The Healing of the Nations.”](#) AFP 9781506465531.
Parks, Marty. [“Freedom!”](#) martytparks.com.
Raabe, Nancy M. [“I Dream a World.”](#) AFP 9798889832492.
Schutte, Dan. [“Homeland.”](#) OCP 30153643.
Willmington, Edwin M. [“God of Justice, Love, and Mercy.”](#) HAL JH-2160.

Keyboard / Instrumental

Organists and pianists undoubtedly have arrangements of numerous American tunes and patriotic melodies in their libraries. Keep in mind that “My country, ’tis of thee” and “God save the Queen” use the same tune as “God bless our native land” and may be titled in different ways. Also note that many full collections and individual titles are available as digital downloads.

Organ Collections

- Barr, John. [Patriotic Hymns and Songs for Organ Manuals Only.](#) LF LE600255.
Callahan, Charles. [Spirit of America.](#) CPH 97-7019.
Callahan, Charles. [Two Patriotic Pieces for Organ.](#) CPH 97-7560.
Childs, Edwin T. [For Love of Country: Eight Hymn Settings for Keyboard.](#) GIA G-7284.

Diemer, Emma Lou. [*God and Country: Organ Settings of Hymn Tunes for National Occasions.*](#) Sacred Music Press 70/1141S.

Gibson, Tedde. [*Lift Every Voice and Sing: Alternative Hymn Settings.*](#) AFP 9798889830986.

Ives, Charles. [*Variations on "America."*](#) Theodore Presser 153-00259.

Janzer, Dennis. [*American and Patriotic Solos for Organ.*](#) LF LE600414.
<https://theleupoldfoundation.org/product/dennis-janzer-american-and-patriotic-solos-for-organ/>

Janzer, Dennis. [*Intrada and Trumpet Tune on "National Hymn."*](#) LF WL700021.

Paine, John Knowles. [*Double Fugue on "God Save the Queen."*](#) Thorpe Music Publishing Co. 493-00056.

Powell, Robert J. [*An American Tribute: A Suite of Patriotic Songs.*](#) MSM 10-589.

Thayer, Eugene. [*God Save the King \(Variations\).*](#) LF WL700024.

Tucker, Dale, compiler. [*America the Beautiful: Five Patriotic Pieces for Organ.*](#) MSM 10-983.

Wesley, Charles. [*God Save the King.*](#) LF WL700018.

Wold, Wayne L. [*Harmonies of Liberty: A Collection for Organ.*](#) AFP ITEM013038.

Wold, Wayne L. [*Suite for Organ on Eternal Father, Strong to Save.*](#) AFP ITEM015798.
Also in [*Augsburg Organ Library: Summer.*](#) AFP 9780800676872.

Piano Collections

Carter, John. [*Patriotic Songs for Piano.*](#) HOP 8225.

Childs, Edwin T. [*For Love of Country: Eight Hymn Settings for Keyboard.*](#) GIA G-7284.

Keesecker, Thomas. [*From Sea to Shining Sea: 8 National Songs for Piano Solo.*](#) MSM 15-408.

Larson, Lloyd. [*In God We Trust: A Piano Celebration of Faith and Freedom.*](#)
LOR 9780787718374.

Nix, Brad. [*Land That I Love: Patriotic Favorites for Solo Piano.*](#) LOR 70/2566L.

Parks, Marty. [*God and Country: Celebrating our Faith and Freedom.*](#) LOR 9781429133210.

Wayne L. Wold is director of music at First Lutheran Church, Ellicott City, Maryland. From 1996 to 2013 he served as director of chapel music at Camp David where he was a worship leader for four US presidents and first ladies, their families and guests, and military personnel and families. He is author of [*Preaching to the Choir*](#) (2023) published by Augsburg Fortress.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Upcoming Commemorations

Jan Hus, martyr, died 1415

Monday, July 6, 2026

Hus was a Bohemian (present-day Czechia) priest who spoke against abuses in the church, and was seen by Martin Luther as his predecessor in the reforming movement. He was found guilty of heresy by a council of the church, and burned at the stake.

Benedict of Nursia, Abbot of Monte Cassino, died around 540

Saturday, July 11, 2026

Benedict is known as the father of the Western monastic movement. Educated in Rome, he went to live as a hermit, and eventually gathered a community of monks around him. He wrote a rule for living in monasteries that is used by Benedictines and adapted by others.

Evangelical Lutheran Worship

[Pew Edition](#), pp. 76–80

All Creation Sings

[Leaders Edition](#), pp. 87–91

Litany for the Nation in Time of War

[Prayer Book for the Armed Services](#), pp. 75–76; also available at SundaysandSeasons.com

O God, the Father in heaven,
have mercy on us.

O God, the Son, Redeemer of the world,
have mercy on us.

O God, the Holy Spirit,
have mercy upon us.

O Christ, merciful Savior, hear us in this hour:
O Christ, visit us with your compassion.

For our sins by which we have grieved you;
for the ways in which we forget your steadfast love;
for our indifference to the gospel and the witness of your church;
for our apathy toward your call to faith;
for our failure to see the spiritual needs of those around us:
we beg your forgiveness, O Lord.

O Christ, forgive us.
O Christ, deliver us.

That our nation may remember you as the God of mercy and truth;
that the fulfillment of your will may be our desire;
that we may be healed from the motives of greed and revenge;

that we may discover through you a deeper experience of prayer;
that we may offer unselfish devotion to the well-being of our nation;
that you would uphold and guide our president and all in authority;
that you would defend and preserve our soldiers, sailors, and air force;
and that all our people may seek courage and a spirit of endurance:
we ask this, O Lord.

To comfort those under the constant strain of apprehension;
to remember those in captivity;
to bind up the wounded, sheltering them under your care;
to stretch out your arm to all who are lonely, tempted, or discouraged;
to have mercy upon all who trust in you:
we ask this, O Lord.

To hasten the day of peace;
to cast away the threads of hate;
to forgive our enemies;
to scatter any who delight in war;
and to renew steadfast faith within us:
hear us, good Lord, and receive our prayer.

O Christ, spare us.
O Christ, heal us.

Blessing and Sending for Public Witness

Available at elca.org in [PDF](#) and [Word](#) formats.

Also available at SundaysandSeasons.com > Library > Sundays and Seasons Resources >
General Rites and Essays > Blessing and Sending for Public Witness.