

**Strength, Soul, and Spark: Celebrating the Gifts of Women  
Women of the ELCA Thankoffering Service, Nov. 23, 2025**

**Prelude** Becky Retherford  
**Welcome - Explanation of Thankoffering Service** (Barb S.)

**Thanksgiving for Baptism** (Barb S.)

We gather in the name of our creator, redeemer +, and sustainer. **Amen.**

Joined to Christ and named as God's beloved, we give thanks for the gift of baptism that roots us in life, renews us in strength, and frees us to be bold.

We give you thanks, O God,  
For at the beginning of time, your creative spirit moved over the waters, your Word brought new life, and you called it good.

We give you thanks, O God, for waters that sustain and heal.

You revealed a spring of water to Hagar, saving her and her son Ishmael.

You brought your people out of the waters of the Exodus, leading Miriam to shout out in song.

You held Moses in the River Nile, where Pharaoh's daughter would find him and care for him as her own.

You kept the party going when, at Mary's request, Jesus turned water into wine at a wedding.

You led a Samaritan woman to a well, where she would be met by Jesus' grace and given living water that lasts.

Even today, you shower us with life, and we praise you. With your living water, sustain our souls, show us empathy and welcome, give us strength, and lead us by your divine spark to lives of compassion and mercy. **Amen.**

**Opening Song:** "All Creatures Worship God Most High"- vs. 1-4, 6 (ELW #835)

1 All creatures, worship God most high!  
Sound ev'ry voice in earth and sky: Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Sing, brother sun, in splendor bright;  
sing, sister moon and stars of night:  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

- 2 Sing, brother wind; with clouds and rain  
 you grow the gifts of fruit and grain: Alleluia! Alleluia!  
 Dear sister water, useful, clear,  
 make music for your Lord to hear:  
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
- 3 Sing, brother fire, so mirthful, strong,  
 drive far the shadows, join the throng: Alleluia! Alleluia!  
 Dear mother earth, so rich in care,  
 praise God in colors bright and rare:  
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
- 4 All who for love of God forgive,  
 all who in pain and sorrow grieve: Alleluia! Alleluia!  
 Christ bears your burdens and your fears;  
 still make your song amid the tears:  
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
- 6 O sisters, brothers, take your part,  
 and worship God with humble heart: Alleluia! Alleluia!  
 All creatures, bless the Father, Son,  
 and Holy Spirit, Three in One:  
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

**Greeting** (Kathy N.)

The grace of our Lord Jesus, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

**Prayer** (Kathy N.)

Let us pray. God of Glory, **we are gathered today in your presence to celebrate and give thanks for all of the gifts and talents given to women. While we recognize the abundance we have, we also recognize the struggles of women in our own country and around the world. Sometimes these struggles are voiced or are internal conflicts that only You know about. Lord, bring peace and joy to our hearts today. Allow us to fully absorb the presence of you and of the community of strong women surrounding us. Amen.**

**Bible Reading** Ruth 1:7-11a, 13c-16 (Joan R.)

*At end of reading:* Holy Wisdom, Living Word. **Thanks be to God.**

**Responsive Reading**      Psalm 139:1-14      (Joan R.)

**Gospel Acclamation**      “Halle, Halle, Hallelujah”      (ELW #172)

Halle, halle, hallelujah.    Halle, halle, hallelujah.  
Halle, halle, hallelujah.    Hallelujah. Hallelujah.    (*repeat*)

**Gospel**      Matthew 9:18-25      (Dar S.)

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the ninth chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*After the Gospel is shared:*

This is the Gospel, the Good News made real for you.

**Praise to you, O Christ!**

**Intro of the Speaker**      (Dar S.)

**Message from Local Organization:**      **Rita Hawley, Baldwin Food Pantry**

**Hymn:**      “Great is Thy Faithfulness”      (ELW #733)

- 1 Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father;  
there is no shadow of turning with thee;  
thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not;  
as thou hast been, thou forever wilt be.

***Refrain***

**Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!**

**Morning by morning new mercies I see;  
all I have needed thy hand hath provided;  
great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!**

- 2 Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,  
sun, moon, and stars in their courses above  
join with all nature in manifold witness  
to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.      ***To Refrain***
- 3 Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,  
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;  
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,  
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!      ***To Refrain***

**Apostles' Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our**

**Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,**

**the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**Prayers of the People** (Marti P.)

In solidarity with your people from every nation and knit together with all of creation, we boldly pray for the church, our world, and all those in need.

Inspire your church, like Ruth and Naomi, to extend arms of compassion and empathy in times of challenge. Equip communities to be welcoming, to show mercy, and to lean into relationships so that all people may know your care. God our soul,

**Hear our prayer.**

Guide leaders to reflect the spark of your divine wisdom. Open eyes to see the goodness of your created world and encourage the tender care of those cast aside. Reveal yourself in unexpected places and in the leadership of those called to help. God our Spark,

**Hear our prayer.**

Bring healing, like the woman who bled for twelve years, to all who are suffering. Give strength to the weary, uplift the lowly, and amplify the voices of those quieted. Breathe new life into forgotten places, end wars, rejuvenate lands, and uplift spirits. God our Strength,

**Hear our prayer.**

Trusting in your love for us, we offer these prayers and whatever else weighs heavy upon us to you, in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

**Thankoffering** (Barb. S.)

**Hymn** "Come, You Thankful People, Come" (ELW #693)

- 1 Come, ye thankful people, come;  
raise the song of harvest home.  
All be safely gathered in  
ere the winter storms begin.  
God, our maker, doth provide  
for our wants to be supplied.  
Come to God's own temple, come,  
raise the song of harvest home.
- 2 All the world is God's own field,  
fruit unto his praise to yield;  
wheat and tares together sown,  
unto joy or sorrow grown.  
First the blade, and then the ear,  
then the full corn shall appear.  
Lord of harvest, grant that we  
wholesome grain and pure may be.
- 3 For the Lord our God shall come  
and shall take his harvest home;  
from his field shall in that day  
all offenses purge away;  
give his angels charge at last  
in the fire the tares to cast,  
but the fruitful ears to store  
in his garner evermore.
- 4 Even so, Lord, quickly come  
to thy final harvest home.  
Gather then thy people in,  
free from sorrow, free from sin,  
there, forever purified,  
in thy garner to abide.  
Come, with all thine angels, come,  
raise the glorious harvest home!

**Offering Prayer** (Jessica B.)

Let us pray. God of Abundance,

**You create goodness in everything we offer. Use these gifts to bless the world.**

**Strengthen ministries, empower leaders, and inspire generosity so that all may know your love. Reveal this love to us once again as we gather at your table that we might embody your compassionate care in all we do. Amen.**

**Lord's Prayer**

Gathered by your Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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  
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.**

**Blessing** (Jessica B.)

Receive the blessing of God who breathes creativity into every soul and lights up every vision with purpose.

Bless the women of the world with the strength that they need,  
with empathy that brings us together,  
and with gratitude that moves us all forward.

May your love be our guide, and your justice our song that we sing and live out each day. **Amen.**

**Sending Song:** “Now Thank We All Our God” (ELW #840)

1 Now thank we all our God  
with hearts and hands and voices,  
who wondrous things has done,  
in whom this world rejoices;  
who, from our mothers' arms,  
has blest us on our way  
with countless gifts of love,  
and still is ours today.

2 Oh, may this bounteous God  
through all our life be near us,  
with ever joyful hearts  
and blessed peace to cheer us,  
and keep us all in grace,

and guide us when perplexed,  
and free us from all harm  
in this world and the next.

- 3 All praise and thanks to God  
the Father now be given,  
the Son, and Spirit blest,  
who reign in highest heaven,  
the one eternal God,  
whom earth and heav'n adore;  
for thus it was, is now,  
and shall be evermore.

**Sending** (Dar. S.)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

**All: Thanks be to God**

**This worship service was created by students and staff of the office of Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa for the Women of the ELCA.**

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