

PRAYERS
FROM THE
EVANGELICAL-LUTHERAN
HERITAGE

Christmas
Sampler



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Show your power and mercy
on all people who are bound
in the fetters of superstition
or the dreariness of unbelief, idolatry, false doctrine,
or utter careless ungodliness.
May Christ come also to them,
and establish among them
his kingdom of light, truth, and righteousness.
O eternal Father,
with your eternal Son and your Holy Spirit,
may you be praised and worshiped
at all times and in all places,
now and forever. Amen. [77]

*Riga Prayer Book, 1707, from Prayers from the Collection of Baron Bunsen.
based on the translation of Catherine Winkworth*

2. *Christmas*

Almighty and eternal God,
we thank you for seeing us in our sorrow
and sending your only Son to become fully human.
Graciously enlighten our hearts
that we may hold fast to his blessed comfort,
rejoice greatly in the birth of your beloved Son,
praise and rejoice in you with all the holy angels,
patiently endure all trouble
and overcome all by your grace;
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. [78]

Die pommersche Kirchen-Ordnung und Agenda, p. 282.3

Lord God, dearest Father,
help us to take part
in the new birth of your beloved Son Jesus Christ in the flesh,
and to set aside our old sinful birth;
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. [79]

Die pommersche Kirchen-Ordnung und Agenda, p. 282.2

We thank you,
Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
that you are the Word and living image of the eternal Father,
our Immanuel.
You took on yourself our human nature,
and you support and protect your Christendom
against your enemy, the devil.
Give us the light of your holy Word.
Forgive us our sins and give us eternal life.
Be our mediator and intercessor, and plead for us.
Hear and help us as you have promised,

“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden,
and I will give you rest.”

Have mercy on us.

Pray for us before your everlasting Father,
sanctify and rule in us with your Holy Spirit.

Protect us against all treachery and terror,
and the lies and murder of the devil
so that with pure and joyful hearts we may serve you;
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
you live and reign,
now and forever. Amen. [80]

Die pommersche Kirchen-Ordnung und Agenda, p. 284.1

Lord God, heavenly Father,
we give thanks that in your great mercy and compassion
you allowed your dear Son to become incarnate
and through him redeemed us from sin and eternal death.
Enlighten our hearts by your Holy Spirit
that we may always be thankful for such grace,
be comforted in all trouble and temptation,
and at last obtain eternal salvation;
through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one true God,
now and forever. Amen. [81]

Veit Dietrich, Summaria christlicher lehr, Christmas Day, 1548.

Merciful God, loving Father,
we give you thanks and praise
that you have mercifully fulfilled
the word of your promise to the patriarchs
and sent your only Son to become fully human
for our salvation and blessedness.

O Lord Jesus Christ,
eternal praise be to you,
that you, being rich, for our sakes became poor,
that we through your poverty might become rich;
that you have become our brother,
that we with you might become the children of God.
Grant that you may be born in our hearts,
just as you, though you are Lord of lords,
have for our sakes become a child,
so give us the right childlike mind.
You are the brightness of the Father’s glory
and image of his person,
renew us in your holy likeness.

Heavenly Light,
lighten us through the darkness of this world.
Eternal Life, give us life in you.
Great Prince of Peace, grant us your peace,
and keep us ever in your kingdom,
that we may praise and magnify you in your glory:
you, with the Father and the Holy Spirit live and reign forever. Amen. [82]

The Swedish Rite, Litany Prayer for Christmas Day, p. 52-53

Beloved Immanuel, Lord Jesus Christ,
Son of the Most High, and Son of the virgin,
we give you thanks
for your heart-felt compassion for our sinful birth,
that you came to us from the Father's throne
to this misery below,
to take on yourself our flesh and blood,
so that we might share your own divine nature.
Now has the heavenly Father shared his loving heart with us.
Now has come great joy without ceasing,
and in you is his anger stilled.
By your holy birth,
we are born again for heaven,
and you have become the true gateway of heaven for us.
By you we have access to the Father,
and open entrance into your kingdom.
O then help, dear Lord, gracious Immanuel,
that we may rightly know the mystery of your revelation in our flesh;
always remembering your tender mercy to us,
your poverty and distress,
and rejoice heartily in your gracious birth,
and know of all its mighty power.
Lift up our hearts.
Open our lips.
Unloose our tongues,
that with all the angels,
to whose friendship we are now restored,
we may worship, praise, and magnify you,
and in you, the beloved Son,
be acceptable to the Father;
and finally, be and abide with you in
the everlasting joys of heaven. Amen.
Blessed be the Lord God of Israel.
Blessed be his holy name.
All the earth is full of his glory.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Hallelujah! [83]

Johann Gottfried Olearius, 1635–1711, in Seed Grains of Prayer, #267

O Lord Jesus Christ,
precious Savior,
in your indescribable love
you came from heaven
and became fully human.
You were not ashamed
to be called our Brother
so that we might have peace with God,
righteousness and eternal life.
Your love is infinite
and your mercy is boundless.
While we were still sinners
you loved us and reconciled us to the Father.
By your blessed birth
we have come to the inheritance of the eternal kingdom.
By our first parents we lost Paradise,
but by you heaven has been opened to us again.
For your grace we give you our sincere thanks.
We rejoice and are glad in you
for your compassion on us,
and for delivering our souls.
Enlighten our hearts,
so that your birth may preserve us in grace,
against sin, death, hell and the power of the devil.
By your Holy Spirit
comfort and sustain us
in the perils and pains of our last hours.
All of this we ask, O precious Jesus,
you are blessed and exalted forever,
for the sake of your miraculous incarnation. Amen. [84]

Wilhelm Löhe, *Liturgy for Christian Congregations of the Lutheran Faith*, Christmas Prayer 5, p. 123

3. *New Year*

Almighty and eternal God,
every good and perfect gift comes from you.
We thank you for all your benefits,
spiritual and physical,
which you have given us in the past year.
In your goodness, grant us a favorable and joyful new year,
defend us from all dangers and adversities,
and send on us the fullness of your blessing;
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. Amen. [85]

Ober-Lausitz Agende, 1695, Historic Collect for New Year