

## **Worship aids for Lutheran World Federation Sunday**

### **A prayer:**

Gracious God, wonderful Creator, Lord of the nations, in this world of amazing diversity of people and cultures, give us a unity of caring and purpose, so that together we may create communities of justice and peace. Call us and lead us, by your will, boldly to shape the future with hope, so that we may be witnesses to your saving love in all the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **A petition to include in the church's prayers:**

We pray for the churches of the Lutheran World Federation, and all the people of our worldwide Lutheran family. Strengthen us in the one bread we share, so that all may be fed and nourished. United us in your cup of blessing, so that we never suffer or rejoice alone. We pray especially for the churches and people of Africa, many of whom live and serve in the midst of poverty, warfare, hunger and oppression. Awaken us with your calling, so that we may be companions throughout the earth in common witness and service. [Lord in your mercy...]

### **Hymn suggestions:**

*With One Voice*

712 Listen, God Is Calling (Tanzania)

755 We All Are One in Mission (Finland)

761 Now We Offer (Nicaragua)

773 Thuma Mina (South Africa)

795 Cantad al Señor (Brazil)

### **For your worship bulletin:**

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) is a worldwide communion of 140 member churches in 78 countries on six continents. It represents nearly 66 million Lutherans and has its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. Field offices for humanitarian and emergency assistance are located in 23 countries where LWF works. The ELCA and the ELCIC, through predecessor churches, have been members of the Lutheran World Federation since its founding in 1947. The ELCA is the second largest Lutheran church in the world.

### **Worship and the Lutheran World Federation**

#### **Our Global Lutheran Family**

One of the most moving experiences in worship is to hear a congregation of people gathered from around the world praying the Lord's Prayer in a multitude of languages. It feels like Pentecost all over again. Ad you know that everyone is together in this prayer because the rhythm of the prayer petitions is familiar.

When member churches around the world come together, our prayers and hymns in many languages join together to become the worship of our global Lutheran family. In worship, we gather the joys and pains of people in many homelands, and we give voice to our hopes and fears in the words and music of worship.

An LWF study program on Worship and Culture in Dialogue (1993-1998) acknowledges that mission has always carried with it the forms of church life and worship of those involved in mission. Not surprisingly, familiar hymns and liturgy from North America and Europe are sung throughout the world. In recent decades, churches in North America and Europe have been discovering songs and liturgy that have grown out of the experience of the church in nations of the south. The study included some counsel for churches.

African church music can be used to satisfy the rhythmic hungers of North American Lutherans, while its significance probably lies more with the African linking of music and behavior – a lesson yet to be learned and digested by so many who eagerly appropriate this powerful repertoire of music.

Singing songs and liturgical music from other parts of the world must be more than importing words and music. When we sing these songs, we are actually becoming part of the movement of faith which is being given voice in the language and music of particular communities of people. This enables us to cross boundaries that so often separate us – different continents and cultures; different languages and customs; different experiences of life and struggling to live.

When we include elements of worship that come to us as gifts from churches in other lands, the gift is larger than what can be printed on paper to guide our singing. At some point, we need to hear the stories about people and communities – how their life and faith came together in their particular setting to express the worship of the church. The language and music may come from Malaysia or Zimbabwe or Chile, but it becomes worship for the whole church.

Through all of this, LWF Sunday is transformed to become Sunday around the LWF – our global Lutheran family gathering on Sunday in so many congregations throughout the world. We gather our joys and pains together, share them with one another and present them to our loving God.