

24 We pray we are not hesitant to live as active, concerned members of society, that our actions, words and influence reflect God's word and will for the world.

25 In the conversion of Paul we see God at work in the least likely of people. We pray that we recognize how the Spirit stirs us and are attentive to the surprising ways in which God is at work in the world.

26 We remember in our prayers the leaders of our 130 outdoor ministry sites and 85 outdoor ministry organizations making plans for summer programs and seeking staff who will serve—in the name of Jesus Christ—people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

27 We thank God for women who respond to God's call and pursue lives of service and witness as missionaries, rostered ministers, lay leaders, theologians and teachers.

28 We give thanks to God for educators, scholars and theologians throughout history who have helped us mature in faith through prayerful study, exploration and discussion of Scripture and theology, and discover the intertwining of faith and everyday life.

29 Power and wisdom are sometimes confusing for us, especially in our current culture. We ask God to help us better understand humility, the nature of wisdom and true strength as exemplified by the teachings, example and sacrifice of Jesus.

30 We pray for God's blessings on food and clothing pantries, community meals and emergency assistance programs provided by congregations and communities for people living with poverty and hunger or seeking temporary assistance in difficult times.

31 We remember the words spoken during the service of Holy Baptism and ask God to renew and sustain our promise to "proclaim Christ through word and deed, care for others and the world God made, and work for justice and peace."

This resource may be copied and shared among members and friends of the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Contact info@elca.org for additional information. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631. Telephone: 800-638-3522, ext. 2458.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

PRAYER VENTURES

JANUARY 2017

These petitions are offered as guides to prayer for the global, social and outreach ministries of the ELCA. Thank you for your continued prayers for the life and mission of this church.

1 Our prayers are filled with awe and thanksgiving for the power and majesty of God reflected in all of creation, the universe and each other—wonderfully created, diverse human beings.

2 In this new year, we ask God to open our hearts and minds to newness and change, knowing that whether we succeed, struggle or fail in our endeavors, the love and forgiveness we have in Jesus Christ never waivers.

3 Mentors encourage, teach by example and walk alongside us. We give thanks to God for mentors who inspire our faith and help us develop skills, wisdom and confidence for navigating the complexities of daily life.

4 We remember in our prayers synod bishops gathered for the Bishops' Academy that they grow in faith and wisdom as leaders of our church and are strengthened in their support of one another for the work and ministry to which they have been called.

5 The wonder and joy of the birth of Jesus continues long after Christmas. We give thanks and praise daily for God's everlasting, undeserved gift of love.

6 *Epiphany of Our Lord* We give thanks and praise to God for revealing to the world Jesus Christ, Son of God—our true salvation, hope and light.

7 As the newness of Christmas gifts wears off, we ask God to center us in the lasting gifts of faith in Christ, caring relationships, supportive communities, and love and forgiveness—given and received.

8 *Baptism of our Lord* Through the waters of baptism and word of God we are welcomed lovingly into the body of Christ and set forward on a new path as children of God. We pray the Holy Spirit will remind us daily of our baptismal mission, stir our faith and be an ever-present guide for us as we share the gospel and serve our neighbor.

9 We remember in our prayers college and university students who are on winter break, involved in J-term studies or service learning that they be renewed for continuing their studies, know the mutual blessings of community service and further discern how God is calling into use their deepening knowledge, experiences, skills and passions.

10 For people—of all ages—who suffer with depression, especially during this time of the year, we pray for relief, hope, appropriate skilled care, supportive relationships and communities, and healing.

11 We give thanks to God for traditions of the past that still carry meaning and value for us and for traditions that are shifting or being newly formed as the world changes and we are moved by God's creative power and presence.

12 The ELCA strategy for Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities (AMMPARO) is rooted in concern for the plight of children forced to flee their communities, particularly in Central America and Mexico. We ask God to help us be bold and wise in our compassion and actions, responsible partners in finding solutions and work together as welcoming congregations for the sake of those who are most vulnerable—children and families.

13 We remember in our prayers our elders, those who are ill, and people who struggle with mobility who are homebound or living in places of care and pray that we are mindful of including them in the life of our congregations and affirming their value as brothers and sisters in Christ.

14 Uncertain of what awaits us each day and what the year ahead holds for us, we ask God to grant us courage, hope and wisdom for facing the challenges and tasks that take us by surprise.

15 Just as Jesus' disciples shared their experiences and introduced others to him as the promised Messiah, we pray that we are enthused

to go out of our way to share with people our faith and the good news of Jesus Christ.

16 *Martin Luther King Jr. Day* We remember in our prayers people, past and present, who stand and advocate with humility and courage for the rights, well-being and value of all people—God's people—who suffer injustice, mistreatment, neglect or oppression.

17 We are grateful to God for our global partners, companion churches and international leaders throughout the world and pray they continue to grow and flourish in their outreach and ministries for the sake of the world and the spreading of the good news of Jesus Christ.

18 Today begins the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and we pray for reconciliation and unity among all Christians, embracing our common identity as members of the body of Christ, children of God, called to share the gospel and serve our neighbor—together.

19 We remember in our prayers youth ministry leaders gathered for the ELCA Youth Ministry Network's Extravaganza in Louisville, Ky. We give thanks to God for their gifts and commitment to faith formation and the well-being of children, youth and families.

20 *Inauguration Day* On this day we remember in our prayers President Donald J. Trump and the people elected or chosen to serve and guide our nation. We pray they will be enabled to serve with wisdom, compassion, justice, skillfulness and humility for the prospering and health of our nation, diverse communities and global relations.

21 Elders sometimes feel more isolated during the winter months. We pray for insight for creating meaningful ways to help our elders stay connected with family, friends and community, as well experience the joy of new relationships.

22 Just as the fishermen Peter, Andrew, James and John dropped what they were doing in response to Jesus' invitation to follow and serve, we pray that we too are quick to follow, ready to learn and eager to serve as disciples of Christ.

23 We offer thanks and praise to God for being our salvation, light, strength and shelter throughout life and in every circumstance.