

27 Remember in prayer leaders and delegates gathered for the Eastern Washington-Idaho and Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana synod assemblies, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them for God's work in the world and growing the church.

28 The ELCA Fund for Leaders supports students of promise attending one of our seven seminaries. Pray for generous support of the fund and for its work to enable more future ministers to go to seminary in response to God's call to ministry by making seminary more affordable and easing student debt.

29 Pray we live in Christ as Christ lives in us, that our words, actions and endeavors bear abundant fruit wherever people are most in need of good news, hope and healing in our relationships, congregations, communities and world.

30 For the lengthening days of spring and the welcome, uplifting gift of light in our lives, we give thanks and praise to God.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

PRAYER VENTURES

APRIL 2018

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

1 *Easter Day* Christ is risen! We rejoice and ask God's Spirit to live in us and dispel our doubts, hesitations and fears and fill us with faith and amazement over God's miraculous, unconstrained love for us.

2 The body of Christ spans every nation and all people, without partiality. Ask God to make us bold witnesses of our faith and the good news of Jesus Christ – close to home and throughout the world.

3 Continue to pray for victims of gun violence and their families; for communities, students and those terrorized by all too familiar acts of violence across our nation, and pray for those who commit acts of violence and those who are unmoved by these tragedies. Ask God's forgiveness for our failings and the ways in which we have – knowingly or unintentionally – cultivated or supported a culture of violence, hatred, anger and fear. Pray God will guide and embolden us to do what is necessary to turn the tide of violence and build a counter-culture where people can experience God's intended peace and life abundant.

4 Remember in prayer, especially during Arab American Heritage Month, the diverse gifts and challenges of our Arab and Middle Eastern brothers, sisters and congregations, and their unique stories and heritages that are part of a larger story that makes up the ELCA and reminds us of the rich history and tradition of Christ's church in the world.

5 Pray for the churchwide officers, synod bishops and other elected members of the ELCA Church Council gathered for their work of providing guidance, support and leadership for the churchwide organization and the ELCA.

6 "This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." Look around and give thanks for all God has made, accomplished, blessed us with and is working through us – children of God, followers of Christ.

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.

7 We produce more than enough food in the world to feed everyone, yet 815 million people still go hungry. Thank God for the work of providing relief and ending hunger that ELCA World Hunger is doing through ELCA congregations, global companion churches, The Lutheran World Federation and other partners like Bread for the World, Church World Service, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and Lutheran World Relief.

8 Pray God breaks thorough our walls of skepticism and confusion and touches our lives that our faith may be renewed and strengthened.

9 *Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945)* Give thanks for bold servants of Christ, like Dietrich Bonhoeffer, whose lives are guided by their faith, exercise deliberation in their decisions and actions, and take risks for the sake of the gospel, justice, peace and humanity.

10 Pray God will sustain, strengthen and energize ELCA synod bishops, staff and volunteers serving congregations, church leaders, special ministries and diverse communities across the United States and in the Caribbean region.

11 Thank God for the blessings and joys of living in community, and pray for grace, patience and mutual understanding when we encounter conflicts that challenge our unity.

12 Remember in prayer our ELCA missionaries serving in the schools of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovakia; ask God to bless and guide their work with the church in Slovakia of educating young people for service and leadership roles in the church and nation.

13 Pray we are influenced by the Spirit to share with joy and a sense of mutual concern and responsibility our assets, possessions and financial resources with those of our faith community and our neighbors in need, that all may have what they need and thrive.

14 Remember in prayer rostered ministers awaiting calls, that the Spirit will stir in them patience, wisdom and discernment, faith and continued enthusiasm for serving the church in new ways and places.

15 We ask God to open our minds to Scripture and God's promises and ways, that our light will shine brightly in the world – in what we say, do and wrestle with together – as wise yet humble witnesses to the life-giving good news of Jesus Christ.

16 Pray the workshops for church musicians, sponsored by the ELCA in partnership with the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians and Lutheran Summer Music, grow the skills, theological knowledge, creativity and leadership abilities of musicians across the United States.

17 It's God's love for us that identifies us unambiguously as children of God – forgiven, cherished, gathered in time and time again, and given the gift of life eternal with God.

18 Give thanks for the seminary professors and theologians of our church, and pray their faith, curiosity, hunger for learning and commitment to teaching and faith formation is sustained and inspired by the Spirit.

19 Give thanks for the ELCA's dedication to supporting work with HIV and AIDS advocacy and education in our church and communities, as well as partnering with companions around the world accompanying and advocating for people affected by HIV and AIDS; pray for effective and accessible prevention initiatives, education, treatment, care and the training of health care providers and educators, especially in underserved regions of the world.

20 Praise God, for the Lord is attentive, gracious, comforting and puts gladness in the hearts of the faithful.

21 The ELCA and The Episcopal Church are committed to prayer, fasting and advocacy addressing cuts to public programs that are vital to hungry people who are living in poverty. Remember to pray for these concerns, our leaders and people in need on the 21st of each month through December 2018.

22 *Earth Day Sunday* Praise God for the gift of creation in all it's beauty and wonder; thank God for sustaining life through Earth's abundant resources given to us and entrusted to our care, stewardship and sharing justly.

23 ELCA outdoor ministry leaders are meeting at the LOM Executive Directors' Gathering in Tallapoosa, Ga., to explore the most relevant and important questions facing their work today. Ask God to deepen their collective wisdom and inspire them to arrive at real-world solutions and approaches to ministry with people of all ages and backgrounds.

24 Praise God for leading us to be faithful, fearless followers and bearers of the good news in the world and for comforting and restoring us when we stumble, grow weary or feel fragile.

25 Ask God to bless ELCA Global Mission Gatherings held in conjunction and partnership with synod assemblies and other ELCA events and programs in upcoming months, that participants and congregations will be further equipped for God's work in global and local realities and wherever these realities intersect in life.

26 Remember in prayer leaders and delegates gathered for the Alaska Synod Assembly, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them for God's work in the world and growing the church.