

**25** *James, the Apostle* James, a son of Zebedee, is remembered for his humanness and martyrdom as a follower of Jesus. We pray that we too, imperfect as we are, will trust in God's mercy and be fearless in sharing the gospel and serving our neighbor in the name of Jesus Christ.

**26** We remember in our prayers the youth of the United Church of Christ, an ELCA full communion partner, who are gathering in Florida for their National Youth Event. We pray for God's blessings on their experience that all may envision God's purpose and plan for their lives.

**27** We give thanks for the growing impact of Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA and the generosity of members eager to share the gospel and grow the church, as demonstrated by the 62 new-start ministries welcomed into the ELCA.

**28** For the faith and gifts of all musicians and composers who bless our lives and worship, helping us praise God, sing for joy and express our faith, we give thanks to God.

**29** As congregations, pastors, leaders and delegates prepare for our Churchwide Assembly, we pray God's Spirit will ready their hearts and minds for fruitful discussions and work to advance the ELCA's mission of sharing the gospel, serving our neighbor and doing God's work in the world.

**30** *World Day Against Trafficking in Persons* We ask God to embolden us in our actions and advocacy to end crimes of human trafficking that exploit women, children and men everywhere for purposes including forced labor and sexual exploitation. We pray for freedom, healing and hope for all victims.

**31** We pray that our identities are not wrapped up in the comforts of personal success, abundance of possessions or greed but rather in the love of God that grounds our lives in generosity, service, concern for others and humility.

*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](mailto:info@elca.org) for additional information. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631. Telephone: 800-638-3522, ext. 2458.*



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God's work. Our hands.

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## PRAYER VENTURES

JULY 2016

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*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** Many congregations are tending community gardens and are now harvesting vegetables and fruit to share. We pray for abundant harvests and blessings on their efforts to engage members and neighbors in gardening—and learning to garden—for the benefit of those who are hungry.

**2** We ask God to watch over youth and adults who venture into unfamiliar places on mission trips and service learning experiences, that they be safe yet open to unexpected opportunities for seeing the world through God's eyes, having assumptions and prejudices challenged, and experiencing mutual care.

**3** As we are sent into the world and everyday life to do God's work, we pray that we be willing servants and disciples, trusting in the presence and power of God with us and in us—for the sake of the world.

**4** *Independence Day* We give thanks to God for the freedom and abundance that we experience as a nation and pray that we will continue to challenge ourselves to embrace and demonstrate in our lives and laws values of freedom, justice, equality and care for all people.



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**5** ELCA Global Mission Gatherings take place across the country throughout the summer and help equip us for God's work—globally and locally. We pray the Spirit will fill participants and gathering leaders and musicians with energy, hope and wisdom for God's mission in the world.

**6** We pray for The Episcopal Church, an ELCA full communion partner, and for the continuing growth of our relationship as we work together and discover how our gifts, leaders and ministries complement each other in sharing the gospel and serving our neighbor.

**7** The Rev. Elisabeth Johnson, Anne and Willie Langdji and Susan Smith are ELCA missionaries serving in Cameroon and the Central African Republic. We give thanks for their ministries and faithful service and ask God to bless their work in education, health ministries, sustainable development and in helping our partner churches prepare leaders.

**8** We remember in our prayers families, communities and nations recovering from natural disasters, including the earthquakes in Japan, Nepal and Ecuador, wildfires in Canada and the U.S., severe weather and flooding in the U.S., and areas of drought around the world.

**9** In the midst of our presidential campaigns, we ask God to create in us mutual respect, wisdom and concern for each other, particularly for people—of all ages and situations—who are often excluded, unnoticed or reviled.

**10** The “neighbor” that Jesus directs our attention and concern to goes beyond the familiar person next door. We pray God will open our eyes and hearts to our neighbors who are strangers, who cause us discomfort, who disagree with us, who live in places we'll never see or who are scorned by society.

**11** We ask God to forgive us when we stray from God's truth and ways, that we will stay on paths of humility, love and justice.

**12** We remember in our prayers leaders of the church in the past and present who have committed themselves to furthering ecumenical unity and a united Christianity, in the name of Jesus Christ.

**13** For our parks, wilderness areas and public lands we give thanks to God; we praise God for the wonders of the earth and the heavens that inspire us and give us joy in every season.

**14** There are regions of the world and the United States continuing to suffer from drought conditions. We pray they receive the rain and water necessary for life and self-sufficiency and for the wisdom and creativity to manage limited water resources in new ways.

**15** We pray the Spirit will help us discern what is true and consistent with God's Word in the mix of all the messages and influences that come at us each day and that we will have clarity and courage in sharing the gospel.

**16** We remember in our prayers people who devote their lives to caring for, restoring and understanding nature and the environment, and we give thanks for the ways in which they draw our attention to the beauty and wonder of God's amazing handiwork.

**17** We give thanks to God, creator of all things in heaven and on earth, for reconciling all humanity and creation through the sending and sacrifice of Jesus Christ—an undeserved gift of love and forgiveness.

**18** We pray for the end of oppression, enslavement, inhumane treatment and practices that victimize people for economic gain, power or personal

advantage and that we will instead behold and treat each other as beloved and valued brothers and sisters in Christ.

**19** We remember in our prayers and give thanks for the more than 900 women and men who have studied at colleges, universities and seminaries in the United States and around the world with the assistance of global companion churches and the ELCA International Leadership Development Program.

**20** In the face of persistent gun violence in the United States, we remember the victims and their families in our prayers and pray that God will strengthen our will to tackle the complex causes of violence for the sake of human lives and safe communities.

**21** When we feel weak, experience trouble or fear our enemies, we pray to God for strength, giving thanks and praise for the promise of God's enduring love and refuge.

**22** We remember in our prayers the six young adults serving in Cambodia through the Young Adults in Global Mission Program. We pray that God will guide and bless their work with local congregations and organizations in areas of rights-based development and teaching English.

**23** Throughout history women have served in orders, organizations and ministries serving the poor, hungry, sick and oppressed. We give thanks and affirmation for their faithful service and devotion to doing God's work in the world in some of the most difficult situations.

**24** We come to God in prayer, trusting in God's patience and responsiveness to our concerns, appeals and expressions—spoken and unspoken—and ask that God will deepen our faith and teach us to pray without hesitation or self-consciousness.