

23 Pray to God with a joy-filled and grateful heart, knowing that God's promises and mercy are immeasurable and trustworthy with life-giving blessings to savor and share.

24 We give thanks to God for the challenging work of teachers, principals, custodians, cooks, student teachers, administrative staff, counselors, librarians, nurses, bus drivers and all who play influential and supportive roles in the education, well-being and development of our children and youth.

25 We remember in our prayers the Rev. Phillip Baker and the Rev. Rosanne Swanson, ELCA missionaries serving in Indonesia. Pray that their ministries will be blessed as they work alongside companion churches and institutions sharing the gospel, training leaders, strengthening and growing the church, and serving the needs of communities.

26 We pray that God's saving power through Jesus Christ will be known throughout the world, that all may praise God and sing for joy.

27 Pray that when asked about our faith or who Jesus is, with the help of the Spirit, we reply enthusiastically in our own words – imperfect or insufficient as they may be – that Jesus is our Savior and the Son of the living God through whom we are loved, forgiven, opened to God's word and ways, set free on a new path in life and promised eternal life.

28 The world is vast and its people often unknown to us, despite technology and worldwide media. Trusting that we all have one Creator and Savior, we pray that the Spirit of God will move in us and among us, bringing us closer together that we will no longer be strangers but familiar and welcoming brothers and sisters in Christ.

29 Sing and shout prayers of thanks and praise to God for all God has done, taught us, blessed us with, revealed to us for the strengthening of our faith, and the countless ways in which God is present with us and equipping our congregations for every challenge and opportunity we encounter.

30 We remember in our prayers the ELCA missionaries serving in Hong Kong: the Rev. Jenna Bergeson, the Rev. Wayne Niemen, the Rev. Christa Vonzychlin and the Rev. Carolyn Schneider. Pray that God will bless and further their ministries working alongside companion churches and institutions training and encouraging leaders for ministry, sharing the gospel, and strengthening and growing the church.

31 Pray to God with humility as a servant and living sacrifice, asking for insight into the gifts and skills we each bring to the church and how – together – we can put them to use for the growth of the church and for the sake of our neighbors who cry out for good news, hope, comfort, connection and healing.

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.



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PRAYER VENTURES

AUGUST 2017

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 Ask God to bless communities, neighborhoods and military bases observing National Night Out this evening to help them be safe, caring places in which neighbors and law enforcement work together for the well-being of all.

2 We remember in our prayers ELCA missionaries Robin Strickler, the Rev. Kate Warn and the young adults serving in the Young Adults in Global Mission program in Rwanda. Pray that their ministries will be blessed as they work alongside companion churches and institutions sharing the gospel, strengthening and growing the church, serving communities, and striving for reconciliation, healing and justice.

3 Give thanks for the generosity of ELCA congregations supporting domestic and global ministries through Mission Support.

4 Remember and give thanks for the rich partnership and relationship we have with The Episcopal Church, a full communion partner with the ELCA since 1999, and ask God to further our work together sharing the gospel and serving our neighbor.

5 Pray for leaders, teachers and volunteers preparing for fall programs in congregations that the Spirit will stir their enthusiasm, creativity, confidence and a desire to share the gospel and nurture the faith of children, youth and adults.

6 When the disciples wanted to send hungry crowds away, Jesus said no, we can feed them. Ask God to stir our empathy, compassion and faith that, drawing on our collective resources and abundance, we have enough to share and will not turn away, ignore or disparage our neighbors who are hungry and in need.

7 Pray for leaders of our congregations and church gathered for the first ELCA Rostered Ministers Gathering in Atlanta, an opportunity for rostered ministers to meet colleagues for fellowship, share ideas and be refreshed and renewed for serving the church.

8 We pray – we plead – with God to help us end terror and violence in the world and to lift from us any fear, suspicion, anxiety, anger and even apathy that dwells in us.

9 Give thanks and praise to God for being attentive to our prayers, for being slow to anger, compassionate, loving and merciful with us.

10 Pray that every congregation will discover, use and carefully manage their diverse assets, resources of their community and abundance for growing the church, serving their neighbors, equipping and nurturing their members, and doing God's work in the world.

11 On this observance of International Youth Day, pray for children and youth that they experience the benefits of education, health care, clean water and stable food sources, and safe and caring environments to grow up in. Pray that they may know the joys of living, playing and dreaming as young

people unencumbered and undiminished by persistent worry, violence or hopelessness.

12 We remember in prayer children and youth beginning a new school year and pray that with the help and inspiration of parents, teachers and caring adults in their lives, they will grow in faith, intellect, wisdom, confidence, curiosity and hope as maturing children of God.

13 Pray that when we are overcome by fear and terror, feel vulnerable and alone, helpless and ill-equipped, we remember and trust that God is ever-present, powerful and active in our lives and world.

14 Give thanks for nurses who attend with skill and compassion to our physical, emotional and spiritual needs in diverse communities, contexts and situations.

15 *Mary, Mother of our Lord* We are in awe of how God uses people like Mary who are humble and poor to reveal God's presence in the world and accomplish great things. Give thanks, praise and glory to God for the many ways in which we are called and sent into the world to share the good news of Jesus Christ and serve as humble witnesses of our faith.

16 Writers, poets, editors and bloggers inspire and inform us and stir our faith; praise God for the diversity of the body of Christ and for the gifts, insights and imagination they exercise and share with the church and world.

17 Ask God to help us understand and value the spirit of the teachings, movements, insights and leaders throughout history that have contributed to the shaping and growth of the Lutheran church. Pray that we continue to be dynamic, growing and unafraid of change as we listen to God's word, discern God's will and strive to be nimble and faithful in our plans, preparation and work as disciples – today and for the future.

18 Elijah listened for God in a wind storm, earthquake and fire but instead heard God in the silence and calm that followed. Pray for patience and discipline that amid our busy, loud, attention-grabbing world we also create places and times for stillness and calm in which we do nothing but listen and talk with God.

19 There is hope in the progress being made to halt the spread of HIV through prevention, treatment and care and in eliminating the stigma and discrimination experienced by those who are HIV-positive. Give thanks for the progress and pray for generous support and continuing commitment for the work of supporting children who've lost parents or guardians to the disease, training pastors in HIV and AIDS counseling, getting medicines to remote rural health clinics, making free HIV testing available, preventing new infections and transforming this church into a safe space for people living with HIV and AIDS.

20 Ask God to help us be persistent and faithful in prayer for our own lives and for the needs of the world.

21 We unite in prayer, fasting and advocacy with our brothers and sisters in Christ of The Episcopal Church that our nation, elected leaders, public-service agencies and communities will address with compassion, wisdom and concern for justice the cuts to public programs that are vital to hungry people who are living in poverty.

22 The Lutheran church has a rich history of education for children, youth and adults. Give thanks to God for our early childhood education centers, elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, seminaries, lay schools of theology and lifelong education programs related to the ELCA. Pray they flourish and continue to influence and enrich the lives of the people they touch.