

**28** On this day we remember the Holy Innocents, martyrs, and the slaughter of innocent children in Bethlehem by order of King Herod. Guide all those who lead to do so in justice and love.

**29** We give thanks for ELCA World Hunger, its work and mission of reaching communities in need with innovative solutions that get at the root causes of hunger.

**30** We lift up the ELCA's observation of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation in 2017.

**31** We give thanks for a new year. Grant that in 2015 we may know God's presence, see God's love at work and live in the light of the event that gives us joy forever – the coming of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

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## PRAYER VENTURES

DECEMBER 2014

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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** In this Advent season, we anticipate and acknowledge the presence of the light that no darkness can overcome, Jesus Christ.

**2** Grounded in prayer, we hope that the current truce following the recent war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza will hold so that God's peace and justice will prevail.

**3** We give thanks for the ELCA Church Council, which has approved the implementation of this church's Disability Ministries and Youth and Young Adult programs into *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*.

**4** More than 2 billion people – a third of the world's population – do not have access to improved sanitation and remain at risk for cholera. We give thanks for ELCA members and partners working to improve sanitation facilities around the world.

**5** We give thanks for ELCA members and others who have contributed \$13 million to the ELCA Malaria Campaign in their effort to raise \$15 million by 2015. Through the campaign, ELCA members have joined with companion Lutheran churches and partners in 13 African countries to prevent and treat malaria, educate communities about the disease and more.

**6** Grant ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and other ELCA leaders joy and a spirit of bold trust, that their work may stir us to a life of fruitful service.

**7** In daily life, cultural, ethnic and racial differences matter, but they can be seen and celebrated as what God intends them to be – blessings rather than means of oppression and discrimination.

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*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.*

**8** Ever living God, strengthen and sustain the membership of this church, that with patience and understanding we may continue to love and care for your people.

**9** We give thanks for the “appreciative inquiry” process led by our presiding bishop, a process that recognizes the ministries that this church does well and areas in which there’s room to grow. By thinking together, we can imagine what God is calling this church to be.

**10** We give thanks for the generosity of the more than 3.8 million ELCA members, as we strive to be faithful in our efforts to strengthen the life-impacting ministries of this church.

**11** We give thanks for Lutheran Disaster Response, which enables ELCA members to partner alongside people and communities impacted by a disaster, as together we navigate our way through recovery.

**12** Lord God, you have called this church to respond to the needs of the unaccompanied children arriving in the United States. Guide us as we continue to look for ways to respond, including advocacy and strengthening relationships with Lutheran churches overseas.

**13** Keep us in communion with all the saints, especially Lucy, martyr, whom we commemorate today and until that day when all tears will be wiped away and sorrow will be no more.

**14** We praise you for your servant John of the Cross, renewer of the church, whom we commemorate on this day. Like John and the saints who walked with him, raise up in our own day teachers and prophets inspired by you, with voices that give strength to this church.

**15** We give thanks for the men and women who help advance this church’s global mission by moving us toward a church that is joining together across its expressions to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ here and around the world.

**16** Almighty God, we lift before you those impacted by Ebola. Bless our accompaniment with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sierra Leone and the Lutheran Church in Liberia.

**17** We give thanks for ELCA members and others who have contributed more than \$2.5 million to support humanitarian assistance for survivors of Typhoon Haiyan, which struck the Philippines one year ago.

**18** We give thanks for the congregations of this church and lift up their commitments restoring and reconciling communities in a fragmented world.

**19** Through the ELCA Book of Faith Initiative encourage all members, from children to adults, to dig deeper into our book of faith, the Bible.

**20** We praise you for your servant Katharina von Bora Luther, renewer of the church, whom we commemorate on this day. Like Katharina, raise up in our own day teachers and prophets with voices that give strength to this church.

**21** As we light the four candles for Advent, open our eyes to see Christ’s presence among us.

**22** As congregations are invited to study “The Use of the Means of Grace,” guide our worshiping community’s conversation.

**23** We give thanks for Lutheran World Relief, an ELCA partner, dedicated to ending poverty, injustice and human suffering around the world.

**24** Gloria in excelsis Deo! Glory to God in the highest! We join the angels tonight, singing God’s highest praise for what God has done. Glory to God in the highest and peace to you on this Christmas Eve!

**25** Whatever we feel today, isolated or at one with those around us, we give thanks that God is with us! Christ has come to dwell with us!

**26** Almighty God, give us such an awareness of your mercies that with thankful hearts we praise you.

**27** We give thanks for John, apostle and evangelist, whom we celebrate on this day, and pray that the brightness of God’s light shine on this church, and that all may walk in the light of truth.