

**28** We give thanks for Thomas Aquinas, teacher, whom we commemorate on this day, and all teachers who lead us to a fuller knowledge of the truth.

**29** Guide those who lead and participate in the Book of Faith Initiative, which strives to increase biblical literacy and fluency for the sake of the world.

**30** Our faith liberates us to embrace each person in their wholeness. We give thanks for the ELCA's Ethnic Specific and Multicultural Ministries team and its mission of assisting our church in becoming more culturally diverse and anti-racist.

**31** We give thanks for the ELCA Malaria Campaign and our members and companions overseas who help reduce the number of deaths from this preventable, treatable disease.



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

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## PRAYER VENTURES

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### JANUARY 2015

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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** On this day when we celebrate the holy name of Jesus, we pray that the mind of Christ, whose name we bear, would be our own. It is a good way to begin again another year.

**2** We give thanks for teachers and prophets with voices that give strength to this church.

**3** We give thanks for the ELCA International Leaders – Women program and its commitment to the role and contribution of women in church and society.

**4** As a church of moral discernment, we lift up the ELCA social statement “The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries.” We are called to support civil rights organizations that fight to end racism and ensure justice for all.

**5** We remember those whose lives have changed because of HIV and AIDS. We give thanks for our church's commitment to addressing the root causes that contribute to the spread of HIV.

**6** We pray for West African nations struggling with Ebola. Through ELCA World Hunger, Lutheran Disaster response and the ELCA Malaria Campaign, we walk together with Lutheran companions as they respond to hunger, disaster and disease with compassion and action.

**7** We pray for the people of Iraq, who are displaced from their homes following the violent persecution of Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities by Islamic State extremists.

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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** We pray for all who live in poverty in our nation and world. Help us as a society to not think of the poor as a problem to be solved, but as people to be loved.

**9** Help us reach out to people who have thoughts toward suicide. As a community of faith, guide us as we bring awareness to this very real epidemic so that those who suffer may find hope and meaning.

**10** We celebrate and give thanks for our church's five-year, comprehensive campaign, "*Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*," which seeks to raise funds to sustain and grow the ministries of the ELCA.

**11** We give thanks for all those who lead in worship, for worship lies at the heart of how we understand ourselves together as mission people. We are a church whose members, through worship, are fed and sent out in the name of Christ for the sake of the world.

**12** We lift up the ELCA's observation of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation in 2017. ELCA members and congregations are encouraged to participate in the observation with the theme, "Freed and Renewed in Christ: 500 Years of God's Grace in Action."

**13** Gracious God, cycles of violence seem never-ending. Lead us from prejudice to truth; deliver us from hatred to love.

**14** We give thanks for ELCA Vision for Mission and its call to do God's work with our hands. Gifts to Vision for Mission help open doors to new ministries, revitalize existing congregations, share the gospel with others and grow the church for the sake of the world.

**15** As people of faith and leaders of this church, we support public policy that protects children, reunites families and cares for the most vulnerable regardless of their place of birth.

**16** We give thanks for the ELCA Fund for Leaders, a scholarship program that attracts men and women of promise to study at one of eight ELCA seminaries with full-tuition or mission developer scholarships.

**17** We give thanks for John I. Williams Jr., who will become the 12th president of Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pa., effective July 1, 2015. Muhlenberg is a college of the ELCA.

**18** Today begins the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, when we are reminded of Jesus' prayer for his disciples, "so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (John 17:21).

**19** We give thanks for all who work for justice among people and nations, especially Martin Luther King Jr., renewer of society, whom we commemorate today.

**20** We remember all the lives lost to gun violence. Bless us with the wisdom and strength to put down our guns and be peacemakers.

**21** In a living example of caring for our neighbor, we give thanks for those who, through the ELCA and Lutheran Disaster Response, are responding to the arrival of unaccompanied and migrant children to the United States with grace and compassion.

**22** We give thanks for ELCA colleges and universities, where students are educated for a sense of calling or vocation, opening the path toward a meaningful life of contribution to the common good.

**23** We give thanks for people who work or who have worked to protect our nation and world. We pray for our veterans, chaplains and volunteers who bring them spiritual comfort.

**24** Welcoming God, with gracious and open hearts and minds, we give thanks to ELCA members and congregations invited and encouraged to engage in an important study and conversation centered around the invitation to Holy Communion.

**25** On this last day of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, we pray for the day when all Christians know that unity among us is above all a gift of God.

**26** Raise up, in every country, all who herald the gospel and who make the good news known, especially Timothy, Titus and Silas, missionaries whom we commemorate today.

**27** On this day, we remember Lydia, Dorcas and Phoebe – three women who were companions in Paul's ministry. Women are important Christian leaders, and we give thanks for all the faithful leaders of this church.