

**24** We ask God to help us be faithful followers, students and servants of Jesus Christ, bold in our faith and willing to go wherever God sends or leads us in the world, even into our own neighborhoods.

**25** We pray for the Reformed Church in America, a full communion partner with the ELCA, and for the continuing growth of our relationship as together we share the gospel and do God's work in the world.

**26** In the midst of our country's discussions and impassioned debates about reducing gun violence, we ask God's forgiveness for our failures to keep human lives – God's handiwork and gift – in the foreground. We plea for God's help and wisdom in reaching self-sacrificing, life-valuing, effective answers – together.

**27** Katherine Graf, Rachel Eskesen and Aliyah Richling serve as ELCA missionaries in Hungary. We pray for their partnership and service with small and re-emerging Lutheran churches, especially in the areas of teaching, Roma ministry and parish ministry.

**28** As followers of Jesus Christ, we pray that our spirit and actions express humility, concern for our neighbor and a desire to first honor and serve others rather than ourselves.

**29** As congregations prepare programs for fall, we ask God to bless their planning and leadership. We pray their efforts and creativity will encourage people of all ages in their faith and touch the hearts of those who yet seek or hunger for the good news found in Jesus Christ.

**30** Following God's ways and trusting in God's love, our hearts are firm and steady, and we are not afraid; for these blessings we give praise and thanksgiving to God.

**31** We remember in our prayers seasonal workers seeking new employment, moving or facing the emotions that come with change. We pray that our congregations be inviting and welcoming for people in transition, that we are communities of faith offering acceptance, stability, friendship and support.

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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.*



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

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## PRAYER VENTURES

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### AUGUST 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** We remember in our prayers students who have returned or are preparing to return to school that they will grow strong in wisdom, faith, knowledge and friendship with their peers.

**2** We give thanks to God for the special work of teachers, principals, custodians, cooks, student teachers, administrative staff, counselors, librarians, nurses, bus drivers and all who play a role in the education, well-being and development of our children and youth.

**3** In the face of threats of terror and uncertainty in the world, we pray that we embrace God as our refuge and strength and resist the human urge to respond with violence, debilitating fear or hatred.

**4** We remember in our prayers regions and communities across the United States that have suffered loss and hardship from flooding, wildfires and severe weather. We ask that those who suffer and are trying to recover experience God's presence and hope, as well as the caring assistance of emergency responders, relief workers and neighbors.

**5** We come to God in our human weakness and distress and pray God will grant us the bold faith and courage needed to speak peace and reconciliation into the commotion of hatred and division that exists today and live the truth that all people are created in God's image.

**6** For all ELCA pastors, rostered leaders and missionaries we give thanks to God. We pray they find daily encouragement, spiritual renewal and supportive partners for the work God has called them to in the world.

**7** We give thanks to God for the certain gift of eternal life we have in Jesus Christ and pray that this confidence will set us free to love our neighbor and be generous with everything we have, especially for the well-being of people who live in poverty and hunger.

**8** *ELCA Churchwide Assembly* We remember in our prayers the pastors, leaders and voting members gathered in New Orleans for the 2016 Churchwide Assembly. We pray the Spirit will guide and energize their discernment, discussions and decisions that shape the mission of the ELCA and how we go about God's work in the world.

**9** *International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples* There are an estimated 370 million indigenous peoples living around the world. We ask God to stretch our awareness and empathy and move us to join the work to protect and promote the rights, culture and land of indigenous people – children of God, brothers and sisters in Christ.

**10** *Grace Gathering* We pray the Spirit will bless the experience of all those gathered at the Grace Gathering in New Orleans and that God's people will be recharged for faith-driven, heartfelt witness and service in the world as Lutheran Christians.

**11** We remember in our prayers the bishops and staff of our 65 synods that God will sustain and encourage them in their faith and ministries as they serve and support congregations, leaders and communities across the country.

**12** *International Youth Day* We pray young people everywhere will thrive, be healthy and live with hope alongside caring, attentive adults, parents and mentors.

**13** Nurses serve in many contexts and attend to the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of people of all ages – from birth to death. We give thanks for their gifts and service and pray God will strengthen and sustain them for the ever-changing challenges they face.

**14** We ask God to grant us courage, hope and a confidence grounded in Jesus Christ, especially when our service and witness in the world proves difficult or discouraging.

**15** *Mary, Mother of Our Lord* We are all bearers of good news – the gospel – no matter our social standing, abilities, education, age or

position. We ask the Spirit to permeate everything we say and do with expressions of joy and hope.

**16** We give thanks to God for the leadership, service and vision of Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton and pray that God will continue to strengthen her faith, deepen her wisdom and bless her witness and ministry on behalf of the ELCA.

**17** Refugees and immigrants in the world continue to seek safe, welcoming communities in which to live, work, form new relationships and become self-sufficient. We pray God will safeguard their journeys and provoke us to be active in welcoming, supporting and advocating for all who are displaced by war, national instability, poverty or persecution.

**18** We pray that we will tell without reluctance or shyness the story of God's presence, love and justice in the world throughout history and not forget to weave in our own stories as loved and forgiven children of God.

**19** We remember in our prayers the young adults serving in Rwanda with the Young Adults in Global Mission program. We ask God to bless their work with the congregational, social and reconciliation ministries of the Lutheran Church of Rwanda.

**20** We give thanks to God for the young adults who have served in ELCA outdoor ministries this summer and ask God to bless their lives and drive their desire to serve others – in the name of Jesus Christ – as they return to school, work, new ministries or volunteer opportunities.

**21** When traditions, routines or rituals – even those of the church – inhibit us from caring for our neighbor, we ask God for the wisdom to discern what is most important and to not fear change for the sake of doing God's work in our communities and the world.

**22** We remember in our prayers Jenna Bergeson, the Rev. Carolyn Schneider, the Rev. Wayne Nieminen and the Rev. Christa VonZychlin, ELCA missionaries serving in Hong Kong. We ask God to bless their work in theological education and teaching English with our partner churches and institutions.

**23** We give thanks to God for being our hope and trust, our refuge and rock, from the day we are born until we enter the kingdom of heaven.