

23 Pray that, as followers of Christ who treasure life as a gift from God, we will exercise patience, caution and concern for our neighbor as the COVID-19 pandemic continues long past our expectations and assumptions.

24 Give thanks for followers of Christ and children of God who gather in faith communities everywhere to praise God, grow in faith and celebrate the unity we have in Christ. Pray that we might never show bias toward or rebuff people who are curious and seek the good news we have received.

25 Praise God for our creative siblings in Christ whose hymns stir our faith, inspire us, speak of God's work and express our joy and gratitude to God.

26 *Thanksgiving Day* As we celebrate Thanksgiving, lift up prayers of gratitude for the blessings and abundant resources we enjoy, and remember the people in our communities and world who suffer food insecurity, hunger and poverty. Ask the Spirit to increase our generosity and engagement with our neighbors in need and to help our communities become more just, generous, compassionate and committed to addressing difficult social issues.

27 Pray that we will be humble but not shy about praying in private or with others, trusting that God understands us even when our words – spoken or silent – feel awkward or inadequate.

28 “O come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!” Like the immense, complex and awesome universe, we are God's handiwork. Raise up prayers of glory and thanksgiving to God!

29 *First Sunday of Advent* This is a year of hope, yearning and anticipation, when we cry out for relief, healing, positive signs of change in the world and reassurance that we'll all be OK. Pray that we will trust in God's promises and presence through faith in Jesus Christ – son of man and son of God, our hope, security and salvation in all times and circumstances.

30 In the course of your day, envision the people who, working behind the scenes in service industries, attend to our needs, ease our stresses, make our lives more enjoyable, help us manage each day and attend to the little things we take for granted. Pray that we will open our eyes and see them, valuing their work, advocating for their fair wages and benefits, and expressing our gratitude for their hard work serving others.

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 60631-4101. Telephone: 800-638-3522, ext. 2458.



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PRAYER VENTURES

NOVEMBER 2020

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 *All Saints Day* Give thanks for everyone God has gathered in the body of Christ – those who are living and those who have passed. Praise God for the diverse talents given to us that the Spirit uses to encourage faith in others, strengthen the community of believers and do God's work in the world.

2 *Native American Heritage Month* Lutheran witness of the gospel with American Indian and Alaska Native people stretches back more than 350 years. The ELCA's American Indian and Alaska Native membership is around 4,850, and American Indian and Alaska Native Ministries works with 30 native congregations around the country. Pray for the ministry and witness of native congregations and the work of the American Indian and Alaska Native Lutheran Association, that they might flourish and grow.

3 Pray for the Spirit to grant us wisdom and courage in our discernment and decisions as we elect leaders for our nation, states and communities. Pray that those chosen to serve will do so with compassion, justice, concern for people with critical needs and a commitment to the well-being of all people and communities.

4 We are called to be disciples and students of Jesus, to study Scripture and to learn from the bearers of faith who live by what they teach. Pray that the Spirit will open our hearts and sharpen our minds to distinguish between those who are trustworthy and those who use their position and powers of persuasion to tempt us from the truth and ways of God.

5 Pray for people and communities in the western states that are fighting wildfires, recovering from the devastation left by recent fires and worrying about the increased threat of wildfires and longer fire seasons. Ask God to protect the firefighters, emergency responders and volunteers who work tirelessly and at great personal risk to protect lives and property.

6 Praise God for leading us and renewing us with light and truth throughout our baptismal journey.

7 Continue to pray for our global companions as some countries experience a new wave of COVID-19 infections. Pray for those countries most affected, that we might share physical and spiritual support and resources, mutually encourage leaders and congregations, and wait patiently for the day when we can celebrate our unity and work together in person.

8 Pray for insight and wisdom from the Spirit that will help us lead lives pleasing to God and glimpse the kingdom of heaven.

9 Give thanks to God for Augsburg Fortress, the publishing ministry of the ELCA. Ask God to bless and further its work creating resources and partnerships “to support the ministries of faith communities in communicating the good news of God’s liberating grace.”

10 Pause, reflect and pray for God’s help with whatever is most troubling or perplexing in your life right now – that thing that keeps you awake at night.

11 *Veterans Day* Remember and give thanks for the service and personal sacrifice of women and men who have served our nation in times of peace and war. Pray for those currently serving in the military and for their families, especially during times of separation, that they will know they are remembered, valued and cared for by their faith community and siblings in Christ.

12 Pray for people who are recovering from hurricanes, storms and flooding here and in other countries. Ask God to displace their grief and despair with hope, their feelings of loss with comfort and wholeness, and their isolation and loneliness with the reassurance that people, congregations and ministries such as Lutheran Disaster Response will stand with them now and for the long haul of recovery and healing.

13 Give praise and glory to God! We are alive and free because Jesus died and rose again for the sake of all humankind, that when we pass from this life, we will enjoy life together with God forever.

14 Pray for pastors and Christian education leaders who are working through the challenges of confirmation instruction in a time when most congregations are still unable to meet in person. Ask God to lead them toward creative, effective solutions that will nurture and strengthen faith in young people, share the teachings of the church and affirm their roles and gifts as members of the body of Christ.

15 Pray that we might trust in God’s promises and in the certainty of our salvation through Jesus Christ, and not fret or speculate about when Christ will come again. Ask God to help us live in the present as children of God who share the good news of Jesus Christ, grow the church, strengthen one another and serve their neighbor.

16 Give thanks for the people in our daily lives who lift our spirits, inspire our faith, renew our hope and equip us for serving our neighbor.

17 Ask God to guide us through the span of our lives and focus us on learning God’s ways, commandments, teachings and priorities along the way.

18 Pray for federal chaplains serving in the U.S. military and Veterans Affairs hospitals as they minister to military members and their families here and around the world. Give thanks for how they touch the lives of young adults, encourage their faith, connect them with faith communities, and provide care and counseling in unique contexts.

19 Some students find studying from home more difficult than others, especially those who live with learning disabilities, have special needs or experience the learning environment best when interacting with peers, teachers and counselors in person. Pray that these students will find the care and attention they need – in person and online – to learn, mature and grow strong in their self-esteem.

20 We direct our attention to God and pray for mercy; we humble ourselves and trust in God’s promise of love, forgiveness and new life in Jesus Christ.

21 Pray for those working through the sometimes long and emotional process of becoming foster or adoptive parents. Pray that we might find ways to support and care for them and to celebrate with them the joys of family and parenthood.

22 Ask for God’s mercy and forgiveness when we fail to respect our neighbor, care for their needs and love them as Jesus loves us. Pray that our faith will shine in the world through bold yet humble acts of justice, mercy, empathy, advocacy, care and love.