

# PRAYER VENTURES FOR JULY 2021

**1** Give thanks that God is attentive to our prayers, hearing our cries for help, comfort and renewal and our expressions of joy, mourning, praise and thanksgiving.

**2** Pray for the adults and young adults applying to volunteer for the 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering; give thanks for their eagerness to serve in this ministry, sharing their faith, gifts and time with youth and the adults who work with youth.

**3** Ask God to bless and equip newly elected synod bishops as they live into their leadership and ministry responsibilities; give thanks for the help and encouragement they receive from leaders and members of their synods, who have also responded to God's call.

**4** Give thanks to God for the gift of freedom we enjoy in our nation. Pray that we will use that freedom thoughtfully and responsibly, working for justice and equity to liberate our neighbors—here and around the world—who are oppressed or excluded.

**5** Praise God for calling, equipping and entrusting us to do God's work in the world. Pray for strength, boldness and wisdom to proclaim the gospel, overcome obstacles and hesitance, engage others in conversations and questions about faith, and serve our neighbors in need.

**6** Pray for individuals and families who are traveling this summer, that God will protect them; that they will be immersed in the wonders of creation and be renewed; that they will meet people who enrich their faith and worldview; and that they will bear the good news of Jesus Christ wherever they go.

**7** Ask God for mercy and forgiveness when weakness and imperfection tangle our daily life; give thanks that God's enduring mercy and grace renew our faith, no matter what is happening in our lives.

**8** Ask the Spirit to grant us wisdom and insight as we help children and youth recover and learn from the pandemic and its social isolation. Pray that they will experience healing and wholeness through interacting with peers and adults; enjoying play, school and community activities; and returning to their faith communities to rejoin their siblings in Christ.

**9** Pray that we will be humble, but also bold and confident, knowing that the power and grace of Christ energize and sustain us throughout our baptismal journey.

**10** Remember in prayer the summer staff serving in ELCA outdoor ministries across the country; ask God to renew their spirit, faith and energy at this point in the summer and for the duration of their service.

**11** Give thanks to God for our siblings in Christ throughout history who have sacrificed their lives to proclaim the word of God and the gospel, so that all might believe, experience the saving grace of Jesus Christ, know true freedom and have eternal life.

**12** Pray for those affected by the Middle East crisis, especially for refugees, people returning to their countries and those internally displaced. Pray that God's healing presence will give them peace, hope and strength in their time of need.

**13** Thank God for our special relationship with the Moravian Church in America, a full communion partner with the ELCA since 1999. Pray for the church, its members and its leaders, and pray that together we will find strength and new resources for the work of sharing the gospel and serving our neighbor, especially in these uncertain and challenging times.

**14** Give thanks that, through Jesus Christ, we have been chosen, adopted as children of God and immersed in grace, blessings and the truth of God's intent for humanity and creation.

**15** Ask God to nourish and strengthen the church's relationships with global companions during this time of transition, as we assess how best to work together while continuing to respond to the impact of COVID-19.

**16** Pray that our senses will be tuned to God so that we "hear what God the Lord will speak," and will be obedient and faithful in following God's word, commandments and ways for the sake of the world.

**17** Ask the Spirit to help us greet our neighbors with hospitality, empathy, concern and hope as we maneuver the uncertainty of reopening public places

and holding events where people once again gather in person.

**18** Pray that we will respond to God's call to serve our neighbors in need and share the gospel wherever we go with those unique gifts, skills and passions the Spirit has cultivated in us through our education, life experiences and communities of faith.

**19** Remember in prayer those congregational leaders and volunteers planning and creating fall programs and ministries for all ages that will offer education, service and spiritual growth.

**20** Pray for the Building Resilient Communities team, a collaboration of ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response, and for our work together across all expressions of our church as we accompany communities from disaster through recovery, ensuring that we and our neighbors can thrive today and tomorrow.

**21** Ask God to remind us daily that we live in hope and unity, drawn together as "citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God," with Christ at the center.

**22** Give thanks for synod and churchwide organization staff, neighboring congregations and ecumenical partners who, during the pandemic, have supported and assisted congregations and leaders through the challenges of adapting to changing circumstances and opportunities, and of continuing to learn and work together to help the church grow and thrive.

**23** The work of a shepherd is unfamiliar to most of us, but we all know how it feels to be guided and assisted through dark and difficult times, to have our spirit restored when we are weary and to be reassured that we are not alone in life. Give thanks and praise to God for being our ever-present, loving and good shepherd and for equipping our communities of faith and siblings in Christ to shepherd one another and our neighbors.

**24** Pray for a just, respectful and lasting solution to the long-standing conflict between Palestine and Israel; pray for those most vulnerable to the violence, unjust laws, displacement and schisms that stir fear, suspicion, abuse and despair; and ask God to bless and

sustain those working for peace, justice and healing in the Holy Land.

**25** Pray that when we hear stories of Jesus performing miracles, the Spirit will deepen our understanding of God's ways, power, compassion, justice and activity in the world, and that these will guide and influence how we live and serve as followers of Jesus, children of God.

**26** Give thanks that our contributions to Mission Support help fund global mission work in leadership development, evangelism, ministry support, education, sustainable development, in-country scholarships and interfaith relations.

**27** Ask God to strengthen our commitment and guide our efforts to end hunger in our nation and throughout the world. We ask for the faith to believe that there will be enough food and resources for all if we let God's justice and generosity influence our own, listen closely to our neighbors in need, deal with the root causes of hunger and poverty, and work together to create sustainable solutions.

**28** Who in your community, congregation or family concerns you right now? Pray for their needs and well-being, and ask the Spirit to guide you in responding to, caring for and accompanying them.

**29** Pray that with Christ in our hearts and the Spirit in our midst, we will grow in our understanding of God's boundless love and broaden our vision of what we can accomplish as we do God's work in the world.

**30** Give thanks for volunteers, congregational leaders and professionals who serve older adults in a variety of circumstances and settings; care for their spiritual, physical, emotional and social needs; encourage their gifts and involvement in congregations; and help them stay connected with life-giving relationships and communities.

**31** Give thanks and praise to God for being kind, just, understanding of our complexities, responsive to our prayers and needs, and trustworthy in word and deed.