

PRAYER VENTURES FOR FEBRUARY 2022

1 *Black History Month* Give thanks for the gifts, accomplishments, influence and witness of our African-descent neighbors — we stand together as siblings in Christ and partners in the gospel, doing God's work in the world together. Pray that God will guide our church as it strives for racial justice, socioeconomic equity, racial reconciliation and an end to racism in our church, society and institutions.

2 Give thanks for the small and subtle ways in which the Spirit encourages and deepens our faith each and every day.

3 Pray for parish nurses who serve in ministries of health and healing and for the ELCA-affiliated Evangelical Lutheran Parish Nurse Association, which supports parish nurses and promotes a culture of health, healing and wholeness in Lutheran congregations, agencies and communities.

4 Pray for those who lost homes and were displaced during the December wildfires in Boulder County, Colo. Give thanks for the partnership of Lutheran Disaster Response, the Rocky Mountain Synod and Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains as they work together to provide food, temporary shelter, emotional and spiritual care, and assistance with recovery work.

5 Pray that our anxieties about the future will be quieted by the assurance that the Spirit's gifts of hope and peace are more powerful and enduring than the threats and uncertainties we face in life.

6 Pray that, just as the fishermen Simon Peter, James and John dropped everything they were doing to follow Jesus, we, too, with all our gifts and flaws, might respond to God's call to spread the good news of Jesus Christ, serve our neighbors in need and do God's work in the world.

7 Remember in prayer those impacted by severe weather, especially Typhoon Rai in the Philippines and the recent tornadoes, flooding and winter storms across our country. Pray that God's presence will bring healing and hope during recovery, comfort those grieving the loss of loved ones, and strengthen the people and organizations that respond to crises and help with recovery, including Lutheran Disaster Response.

8 Remember and give thanks for siblings in Christ of every generation who have shared the gospel, inspired others to believe, and borne God's grace, peace and hope into the world through their words, example, service and sacrifice.

9 We live in a time of war, conflict and unrest in many regions of the world. Pray for the safety of people living amid turmoil, the well-being of refugees and immigrants fleeing threats, and the protection of children and youth living in circumstances unimaginable to us. Ask the Spirit to guide us as courageous and compassionate advocates, peacemakers, companions and bearers of hope in the world.

10 Pray for the leaders of youth and family ministries and for outdoor ministry professionals as they participate in the ELCA Youth Ministry Network Extravaganza in Minneapolis, an event that provides them with encouragement, support, education and networking opportunities.

11 "I give you thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart" (Psalm 138:1). Pray that every aspect of our life, service and generosity will reflect our gratitude for God's awesome, undeserved love and blessings.

12 Give thanks and praise to God for the companion-synod relationships that connect our synods and congregations with Lutheran churches around the world, blessing, nurturing and strengthening them for their ministry together.

13 Give thanks that God teaches us something new every day and equips us so well to share the good news of Jesus Christ, care for neighbors in need and reflect God's gracious love through our words, actions and interactions with people.

14 Pray for immigrants and refugees, in our country and around the world, who seek safety, relief and a place to rebuild their lives. Ask that God's compassion, wisdom and desire for justice guide us in resolving the problems and crises that displace people from their homes and nations.

15 "Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green" (Jeremiah 17:7-8). Praise God for the work of the Spirit, which renews and nourishes us when we feel uncertain, weary or anxious.

16 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, that together we will find strength and resources for the work of sharing the gospel and serving our neighbor, especially in these challenging times.

17 Pray that the Spirit will help us understand and follow the ways, desires and commandments of God that protect our well-being in daily life.

18 Give thanks that our faith and hope are grounded in Christ's resurrection and the promise of one day being raised to eternal life as God's children. Pray that the Spirit will help us articulate — in our own imperfect words — our joy, our faith and the good news of Jesus Christ for all people.

19 Pray that our seminaries and Lay Schools for Ministry program will grow, thrive and prepare our church leaders for ministry in diverse and changing contexts, in the present and with insightful anticipation of the future.

20 "Love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as [God] is merciful" (Luke 6:35-36). Ask the Spirit to help us do what seems difficult or impossible and live as willing disciples of Christ.

21 Reflect on what God is stirring in us right now, and pray that we might discern what God calls us to be: bearers of love, hope, healing, reconciliation and the good news of Jesus Christ.

22 Pray that the story of Joseph forgiving his brothers, which mirrors God's love and forgiveness of us, will inspire us to forgive those who have caused us offense, anger or distress, and that we might seek forgiveness and grace from people we have hurt.

23 The theme of the ELCA Youth Gathering and our camps' summer curriculum is "boundless: God beyond measure." Pray that we will live into this theme, growing in faith and gratitude for God's infinite power, presence, love and wisdom.

24 Thank God for hearing and responding to our prayers — spoken and silent — and for tending to our needs, easing our worries, calming our anger and providing refuge in time of trouble. Ask the Spirit to guide and inspire us as we do God's work in the world, caring for our neighbors in distress.

25 Pray for the Deaconess Community of the ELCA, a diverse body unified in its commitment to proclaim the gospel, show mercy, demonstrate servant leadership and bring healing and reconciliation to the world.

26 Look into the vast night sky at the stars, planets, meteors and comets, and praise God for stirring our awe, wonder, curiosity, humility and imagination.

27 "And all were astounded at the greatness of God" (Luke 9:43). Give thanks that in Jesus Christ we glimpse and experience the glory and power of God poured out upon humanity for our healing and salvation.

28 Give thanks for the evolving technology that helps us with everyday tasks, connects us with people around the world, provides new tools for treating the sick and injured, and helps us reach more people with the gospel. Pray that we will consider the impact of technology and use it equitably and justly for the well-being and benefit of all people.