

[Prayer Ventures for February 2025]

- 1** *World Interfaith Harmony Week (U.N.)* Ask the Spirit to help congregations create opportunities for dialogue and learning with people whose religious beliefs and traditions are different from our own, for the sake of peace, harmony, cooperation and mutual understanding.
- 2** The word of God brings joy and comfort to us yet is sometimes difficult to hear. Pray that we will reflect on how God's word strikes us, especially when it challenges what is safe, familiar and comfortable in our lives.
- 3** Ask God to help us move beyond our apprehensions, anger and entrenched beliefs so that we might confess and address deeply rooted aspects of racism that poison relationships, workplaces, society and the church. Pray for the Spirit to remind us that we are children of God who live in grace and are called to love, respect and serve one another — complexities, differences and all.
- 4** Among all our gifts and abilities, the most important is love for God and our neighbors — family, strangers and siblings in Christ alike. Praise God for teaching us what love entails through the selfless, unreserved and undeserved love of Jesus Christ for humankind.
- 5** Pray for Federal Chaplaincy Ministries of the ELCA, which seeks, supports, nurtures and sends pastors and seminary students to serve as federal chaplains and chaplain candidates for the U.S. military, Veterans Affairs hospitals and federal correctional institutions. Give thanks for chaplains and the gifts that the Spirit nurtures within them as they serve in unique contexts.
- 6** Lift up prayers and songs of praise to God for being the bright light in the world that illuminates the one true and enduring source of hope, guidance and eternal life — Jesus Christ.
- 7** Use the words of Psalm 71:3 in your prayer to God today: “Be to me a rock of refuge, a strong fortress to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress.”
- 8** Pray for our neighbors and siblings in Christ who labor in one or more jobs to meet basic daily needs for themselves and their families. Ask God to strengthen and sustain their spiritual and physical strength and to help us be supportive, caring and generous neighbors.
- 9** Ask God to help us be attentive and responsive to how God speaks to us through Scripture, the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, the work of the Spirit and the encouragement and admonition offered by our siblings in Christ.
- 10** Give thanks for the ELCA's commitment to accompany and work with interreligious partners, including the Shoulder to Shoulder Campaign, an initiative that connects, equips and mobilizes leaders and members of faith communities to address anti-Muslim discrimination and violence, foster greater understanding and shift attitudes about Islam and Muslims in our country.
- 11** What tasks feel overwhelming to you right now? Ask God to renew your spirit for undertaking those things that are difficult to work through and accomplish.

**12** Remember in prayer our ministries in nine African countries. Pray for ELCA Global Mission personnel, International Women Leaders and Young Adults in Global Mission who work alongside companion churches to help spread the gospel, equip leaders, grow the church and respond to community needs.

**13** We are recipients and beneficiaries of the good news of Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and imperfections and defied the finality of death so that we could live with newfound freedom in this world, and forever in the kingdom of God.

**14** Give thanks to God for the leaders of our church who respond to God's call by serving as ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service. Ask the Spirit to sustain their faith, inspire their joy in ministry and equip them with gifts and skills for serving in diverse and challenging contexts.

**15** Pray for peace, healing and justice, especially in the critical contexts of Ukraine, Russia, Haiti, the Middle East, troubled regions of Africa and wherever conflict and war exist in the world.

**16** Remember in prayer those impacted by the wildfires in Southern California and by severe winter weather, and those involved in long-term recovery from disasters. Give thanks for Lutheran Disaster Response and for synods and congregations that provide financial support, resources, volunteers and encouragement.

**17** Pray for the 300 health and human service organizations that form the alliance of Lutheran Services in America and serve more than 6 million people every year in the United States and the Caribbean. Pray that our work together through these organizations will provide us with abundant resources and skills to respond to the unique needs of people of all ages.

**18** "I have called you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you" (Isaiah 43:1-2). Give thanks and praise to God for being our ever present help in every circumstance of life.

**19** Praise God for the work of the Spirit, which creates and nurtures our faith and hope in Jesus Christ, our risen Savior, whose love has no limits and endures through our ups and downs.

**20** *World Day of Social Justice (U.N.)* Ask for God's help to advance social justice everywhere, to foster healthy societies and economies, to end inequality and discrimination, and to increase inclusion — issues critical for the well-being of our neighbors and communities.

**21** Thank God for the ELCA's special relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), a full communion partner since 1997. 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.

**22** Remember in prayer our ministries in nine countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Pray for ELCA Global Mission personnel and Young Adults in Global Mission volunteers, who

help deepen relationships of accompaniment with companion churches and who work to develop leaders, strengthen education and health ministries, and confront issues of migration and gender justice.

**23** “Love your enemies; do good to those who hate you; bless those who curse you” (Luke 6:27-28). Pray for humility and courage to love our neighbors as God has loved us.

**24** In the dreariness of winter, when nature seems lifeless, give thanks to God for the people and little things reminding us that life endures, though we might think it depleted. God’s ability to create, revive and sustain life — even in us — is cause for joy and thanksgiving!

**25** Pray for synod bishops gathering for the spring Conference of Bishops in Itasca, Ill., that the Spirit will guide and enrich their time together for worship, study, mutual sharing, and conducting business. Give thanks for their guidance of our church and ask God to equip them for leadership, service and responding to the growing challenges of ministry in our 65 synods.

**26** Give thanks for the work we do together through programs, ministries and initiatives of the ELCA and our synods. Pray that our church will thrive and that we will inspire faith and hope wherever we share the good news of Jesus Christ.

**27** “Esteem [the Bible] as the precious fountain that can never be exhausted” (Martin Luther, *Table Talk*). What stories and texts in the Bible are most familiar to you? Pray for the Spirit to help you discover something new and revealing each time you read or hear those familiar texts.

**28** Pray for the ministries unique to your community, that we will consider the people and needs they serve, value their staff and volunteers, and generously support their work.