25 Pray for pastors, church musicians, artists and lay leaders participating in the Conference on Worship, Theology, and the Arts, sponsored by St. Olaf College in Minnesota, as they explore how the power of imagination can change, challenge and inspire churches responding to COVID-19 and structural racism.

26 Give thanks for Scripture, the creeds, Lutheran confessional writings and the ELCA Confession of Faith, which provide a foundation for our Christian faith, practice and witness and give expression to our relationship with Jesus Christ, the risen son of God and savior of humanity.

27 Remember in prayer those confined in our jails, prisons and correctional facilities. Pray that they will be treated justly and humanely, be renewed by the good news of Jesus Christ, and find hope and strength in God's love and mercy. Pray for the Spirit to help us extend our hospitality, acceptance and support to people previously incarcerated as they do the challenging work of building new lives in our communities.

28 Give thanks for musicians and artists who, through their creative gifts and work, proclaim the gospel, inspire our faith and convey the experiences, emotions and needs of humankind.

29 Remember in prayer our neighbors who struggle financially and live with the uncertainty of how they will support and care for themselves and their families. Pray that the Spirit will inspire us to respond with respect for their dignity and to affirm our interdependence as children of God.

30 With humility and joyful hearts, give thanks for God's steadfast love, which sustains and strengthens us through the twists and turns of our baptismal journey.

31 Pray that we might find identity, value, purpose and hope in God and not in accumulating short-lived wealth, possessions and power.
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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 *for additional information. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631-4101. Telephone: 800-638-3522, ext. 2458.*

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

PRAYER VENTURES
JULY 2022

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 Gun violence is the leading cause of death among children and youth in our nation today. Pray that we might overcome the feelings of indifference and impotence bred by the tragedy, trauma, complexity and frequency of gun violence. Pray that the Spirit will turn us toward Scripture, the teachings of Jesus and one another for the strength, wisdom and courage needed to change our laws and culture for the sake of safeguarding our communities and society.

2 Pray that we might notice and take to heart small acts of hope and kindness, and that these might renew our faith amid world events that inspire anger and despair.

3 "The Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go" (Luke 10:1). Respond to God's call that we pool our gifts and resources to share the good news of Jesus Christ, serve our neighbors in need and bear hope, peace and equity into the world.

4 *Independence Day* Give thanks for the freedoms we enjoy in the United States and for all those who work to sustain them in our behalf. Pray that we might value our freedom and use it to benefit and uplift all people, especially those excluded, forgotten and oppressed.

5 "Say to God, 'How awesome are your deeds!'" (Psalm 66:3). We can never proclaim too often God's acts of mercy, redemption and creativity throughout world history.

6 Give thanks to God for deacons, our siblings in Christ who serve as ministers of Word and Service. Pray for their ministries in congregations, synods, social ministry organizations, chaplaincy ministries, seminaries,

colleges, universities and ELCA Global Mission — wherever their diverse gifts are needed in our church and society.

7 Pray for the people and communities, especially in southern Mexico, that suffered devastation and loss of life from Hurricane Agatha.

8 "So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith" (Galatians 6:10). Pray that our faith and gratitude for God's love might move us to care for people — in our communities of faith and everywhere else — who face difficult situations.

9 Remember our neighbors in Ethiopia and Ukraine who are displaced in their own countries and hope to resettle in their home communities or elsewhere. Pray that their faith, their hope and the support of those accompanying them will sustain them through difficult, wearisome and dangerous times.

10 "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27). Pray that our love for God will be mirrored daily by our acts of love and concern for our neighbor, especially those who are needy, suffering and passed over.

11 Give thanks that through the work and witness of our global companions and ELCA Global Mission, we might proclaim God's love and presence in the world, build relationships, renew and transform lives, stir hope and respond to the needs of our most vulnerable neighbors.

12 Pray that the Spirit will instill in us appreciation and concern for ELCA congregations and ministries across the country as well as the other faith communities of our siblings in Christ. Ask God to help us affirm one another, encourage one another and share generously our assets and wisdom for doing God's work in the world.

13 Thank God for our special relationship with The United Methodist Church, a full communion partner with the ELCA since 2009. Pray for the church's members and leaders, that together they will find strength and resources for the work of sharing the gospel and serving our neighbor, especially in these challenging times.

14 Pray for musicians and worship leaders participating in Augsburg Fortress Summer Music Clinics. Give thanks for their unique gifts that enrich our worship life, inspire faith, facilitate opportunities for using our own gifts and help us express ourselves to God.

15 Pray that the Spirit will soften our hardness and self-reliance and create in us a receptive and eager spirit as we study God's ways, seek wisdom and truth, and learn from one another how to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

16 Pray for the ELCA Interim Ministry Association and Lutheran Transitional Ministry Association, which train and support pastors and interim leaders for serving congregations in times of transition, vacancy and discernment.

17 What distractions in your life draw you away from being mindful of God's presence and activity in the world? Pray that the Spirit will help us refocus our attention on God's ever-present grace, the work to which God is calling us and the needs and laments of people around us.

18 Pray for the worship leaders and church musicians gathered for Lutheran Summer Music, the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians' annual conference at Valparaiso University in Indiana. Ask that their gifts will be strengthened, that their imaginations will be stirred and that they will develop new skills for working with all generations.

19 Pray that, throughout life, we might understand and remain faithful to the ways of God — humility, persistent love, and forgiveness of others. Pray that God will be patient with our weaknesses and guide us back when we stumble or stray from these paths.

20 Give thanks for the work we do together across all expressions of our church — congregations, synods and the churchwide organization. Pray that we might value and draw upon the unity and strength we have in Christ and that, when we experience conflict or disappointment, we show grace and humility toward one another, grounding ourselves once more in our bond as children of God, siblings in Christ.

21 Ask God to help us comprehend that we have the ability, wisdom and resources to address the root causes of poverty and hunger in the world — especially when we work together and exercise generosity.

22 Praise God for the beauty and complexity of the universe that stirs our awe, imagination and appreciation, and for a creative power that stretches beyond our understanding.

23 God's persistent, undeserved grace and mercy restore us every day. Praise and thank God!

24 Ask the Spirit to reassure us of God's loving concern and attentiveness, especially when we feel the burden of thinking our prayers need to be worded perfectly and meet the expectations of others.