24 Express awe, reverence and thanks for the new covenant God has made with humanity and sealed in Jesus Christ, an enduring covenant of unconditional love, forgiveness and restoration of our relationship with God.

25 Pray for students beginning the new school year, especially those feeling uncertain, hesitant, insecure or fearful. Ask the Spirit for opportunities to care for students with tutoring, mentoring, counseling, family support and safe programs before and after school.

26 "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love" (Psalm 103:8). Bless the Lord and give thanks!

27 The end of summer is a time of transition for many people in seasonal jobs. Pray that they will be appreciated for their skills and service, find employment and housing, have consistent and affordable access to insurance and health care, and be welcomed and supported by communities and congregations wherever they go.

28 Pray that we might not rate ourselves above others because of their life circumstances, race, ability, appearance, education, income, religion, social status or political affiliation. Ask the Spirit to fill us with respect, thoughtfulness and compassion for our neighbor, no matter who they are.

29 Remember in prayer teachers, classroom assistants, student teachers, counselors, coaches, school staff and school administrators. Ask the Spirit to sustain their enthusiasm and inspire their wisdom, creativity, patience and concern for students and their parents.

30 Paul's instructions to the Hebrews couldn't be more timely: "Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it" (Hebrews 13:1-2). Pray that we will turn to Scripture and the wisdom shared by our communities of faith for guidance on how to live and serve our neighbors in these times of deep division and conflict.

31 Pray that the fall programs and community ministries of our congregations will flourish, welcome guests, inspire faith, spread the gospel, respond to our neighbors' needs and equip people for doing God's work in the world.

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
AUGUST 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 Pray for musicians and worship leaders as they develop and broaden their skills and explore existing and new worship resources at the Augsburg Fortress Summer Music Clinics.

2 Pray that we will look to God's wisdom as we ponder the world, our purpose in life and how we might live with one another in global community.

3 Give thanks to God for the ELCA International Leadership Development Program, which provides financial support for the short- and long-term academic training of established and emerging leaders in global companion churches and institutions.

4 "Now you must get rid of all such things — anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language from your mouth. Do not lie to one another" (Colossians 3:8-9a). Give thanks that, through our baptism and the ceaseless work of the Spirit, we are being transformed in every way to reflect the image of God in which we were created.

5 Pray for the leadership, wisdom and well-being of our presiding bishop, Elizabeth A. Eaton, as we and our siblings in Christ try to unify this church in a world of ever-evolving complexity, conflict and division.

6 Give thanks for the chance to combat hunger around the world through ELCA World Hunger's Global Farm Challenge, and for the generous donors matching our gifts to reach the fundraising goal of $525,000.

7 Praise God that we find our true treasure in God's love and mercy given through Jesus Christ, a relationship that endures for all eternity.

8 Pray for voting members, leaders, guests and staff of the churchwide organization participating in the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Columbus, Ohio. Ask the Spirit to guide and inspire their decision-making and spiritual discernment together on behalf of the entire church and to strengthen and unify them for doing God's work in the world.

9 *International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples* There are over 476 million Indigenous people living in 90 countries around the world. They have unique languages, traditions, cultures, knowledge systems, worldviews and systems for governing themselves. Pray that we will value them as children of God; respect their rights, freedoms, dignity and lands; and ensure their right to participate fully in political and economic activities. With repentant hearts, ask God's forgiveness for our harmful and unjust actions and policies throughout history, for taking what was not ours, and for forcing our own language, culture, religious beliefs, worldview and authority upon Indigenous peoples. Pray that we will work to rectify injustices and inequities, develop new relationships of trust and respect, and do the work necessary for reconciliation and healing.

10 Ask the Spirit to bolster us in praying for worldwide peace and reconciliation and in supporting people, ministries and organizations committed to making peace, providing relief, bearing hope and defending the vulnerable.

11 Pray that God will equip, inspire and sustain new synod bishops for serving in diverse contexts across the ELCA, and pray that they will find support, care and encouragement for their ministry and personal lives.

12 *International Youth Day* Give thanks for the gifts, wisdom and perspectives of youth around the world, and remember in prayer young people who live in areas of war and conflict, suffer poverty and hunger, long for educational opportunities, provide care for their siblings and parents, and live in hope for a better future.

13 Remember in prayer and give thanks for nurses, who use their gifts and skills in global mission, responding to disasters and serving their communities. Pray for the Evangelical Lutheran Parish Nurse Association and its work supporting and equipping parish nurses, helping congregations develop new health ministries and encouraging people to pursue nursing as a vocation.

14 Followers of Christ can suffer criticism and opposition. Ask God for courage, boldness and patience to share the gospel and serve our neighbors in need; pray that, when people oppose or criticize us, the Spirit will give us the confidence to respond with respect, love and humility.

15 Give thanks to God that, following a two-year pause due to COVID-19, Young Adults in Global Mission will send 25 new volunteers into the world to serve alongside our global companions and churches.

16 Ask God to help us discern between those who speak and teach God's word faithfully and those who deceive others by preaching and prophesying for personal gain, recognition or power.

17 Give thanks for the chance to enjoy the awe and beauty of God's creation in wilderness areas and city, state and national parks. Pray that, working together, we will make these treasures more accessible to people of all ages, abilities and economic circumstances.

18 Remember and give thanks for people now and throughout history who have inspired and strengthened our faith, helped us to understand God's word and ways, encouraged our service and witness in the world, and influenced our lives and actions through their fearless pursuit of justice and healing for all people.

19 Give thanks for the gifts, leadership, service and generosity of the laity of our church, who respond to God's call to serve our communities of faith, our society and our world.

20 Pray for companions and care providers who help people deal with illness, disability or the demands of aging. Ask that they will find the spiritual, physical and emotional strength necessary for their work, and that they will be renewed by rest, sabbath, self-care and the support they receive from others.

21 Ask God for forgiveness when, intentionally or not, we have discouraged total inclusion and involvement of all people in the church or society. Pray for an open mind and a willingness to listen to the stories and needs of those who are excluded or feel unwelcome; ask the Spirit to unite us in changing our practices, traditions, facilities and institutions to remove all barriers and deterrents to full inclusion and participation.

22 Pray for the young people gathering from a variety of backgrounds, churches and geographic regions for the World Council of Churches Stewards Program assembly in Germany. Ask God to bless their time together, nurture ecumenical unity and understanding, and inspire them to bring their experiences and ecumenical enthusiasm back home to their local contexts.

23 Give thanks for the ministry of the Christian Education Network of the ELCA, which supports and encourages professional and volunteer leaders who advance lifelong faith-formation ministries through congregations and partner organizations.