[Prayer Ventures for July 2026]

1 Remember in prayer adult vocalists and musicians attending the Lutheran Summer Music Choral Gathering at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn. Pray for the Spirit to stir their joy in singing, making music, expressing their faith through song and inspiring the faith of others.

2 Pray for congregations and hunger ministries as they apply for ELCA World Hunger's Domestic Hunger Grants. Ask God to strengthen their work of addressing food insecurity, housing, employment and human rights in their communities, and of advocating for policies that attend to neighbors in need.

3 Pray for vacation Bible school and day camp ministries, that they will inspire faith, nurture caring relationships, provide safe spaces for learning and play with others, and touch the lives of children with the good news of God's love through Jesus Christ.

4 *Independence Day and Semiquincentennial Celebration* Today we celebrate the history and independence of the United States as well as the long history of Native Americans in North America before the birth of our nation. Pray for the wisdom and resolve we need to ensure freedom, justice and equity for all people — in our nation and around the world.

5 "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest," Jesus said. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matthew 11:28-29). Pray for the gentle, humble and caring spirit of Jesus to be our example and inspiration for how we attend to the needs of our neighbors and siblings in Christ.

6 Remember in prayer ELCA deacons, pastors, bishops and candidates approved for call who are attending the Rostered Ministers Gathering in Indianapolis, Ind. Pray for the Holy Spirit to renew and inspire them for their ministries through fellowship, continuing education, worship, Bible study and mutual care and encouragement.

7 "By the loaves you break and give us, send us in your name to share bread for which the millions hunger, words that tell your love and care" (*ACS* 966). Praise God for giving us the sacrament of Holy Communion, which gathers us around the sacred meal where we are reminded of and experience God's gifts of grace, love, forgiveness, mercy and renewal through Christ's presence in the bread and wine.

8 Give thanks for Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) and its partners as they provide aid and relief to those affected by the ongoing crisis in the Middle East. LDR assistance includes food, shelter, trauma-informed care and support for long-term recovery efforts.

9 Pray for summer camp staff at our ELCA outdoor ministries across the country, that the Spirit will renew and sustain their faith, energy and enthusiasm at the midpoint of their summer season. Give thanks for how they impact the lives and faith of campers of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

10 Thank God for the ELCA's special relationship with the Reformed Church in America, 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, especially in these challenging times for the church and society.

11 Pray that our lives will express gratitude and praise for God's ever-present, boundless love, patience and forgiveness. Ask the Spirit to help us bear public witness to God's grace and what God is doing in our lives and the world.

12 Pray for the Gathering Expeditions, regional retreats that enable youth and the adults who walk alongside them to step away from everyday life together and dive into questions of faith, purpose, identity and calling in preparation for the 2027 ELCA Youth Gathering.

13 "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate" **(**Romans 7:15). Give thanks and praise to God for the boundless love, forgiveness and patience that enfold us just as we are — complex and wonderful children of God who nevertheless are often weak, broken and undisciplined.

14 Give thanks for ELCA Racial Justice Ministries. Ask God to bless and further its ministries, which that equip leaders, provide anti-racism education, build relationships across differences, and develop resources to help congregations address racism and move toward reconciliation and healing.

15 Praise God for our life in Christ, which sets us free from the darkness and despair of sin and death, and for the Spirit, which dwells in us and keeps us focused on what pleases God — faith, humility, love, mercy and caring for our neighbors in need.

16 Remember in prayer the women gathering for worship, advocacy, inspiration, learning, service and relationship-building at the Women of the ELCA Triennial Gathering in Des Moines, Iowa. Ask God to bless and advance the organization's mission to mobilize women of all ages to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

17 *Emanuel Nine Commemoration and Day of Repentance* Reflect on the martyrdom of the Emanuel Nine, killed by a self-proclaimed white supremacist on June 17, 2015, during a Bible study at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, S.C. Ask the Spirit for the power to be agents of change in society, confronting racism and injustice and living as children of God who value, respect and love one another.

18 Ask God to strengthen and expand the work we do together through Lutheran Disaster Response as it provides emergency relief, supports disaster recovery and helps communities develop disaster preparedness and resilience. Give thanks that this work — our work — is mindful of people's spiritual, physical, emotional and social needs, including food security, shelter, self-sufficiency and community.

19 Who prompts joy in your life these days? What causes you to smile and laugh? Lift up prayers of gratitude and celebration for those people and things that lighten your spirit when life feels heavy and dark.

20 Remember in prayer those who serve in the military and are currently deployed overseas to areas of conflict and war. Pray for their safety, for the Spirit to strengthen their faith and hope, and for the support of their families and faith communities to comfort and renew them.

21 "Nothing helps more powerfully against the devil, the world, the flesh, and all evil thoughts than occupying oneself with God's Word, having conversations about it, and contemplating it" (Martin Luther, the Large Catechism). Ask the Spirit to stir our desire to study and reflect on Scripture together with our siblings in Christ to find encouragement, guidance and strength for our lifelong baptismal journeys and doing God's work in the world.

22 Remember in prayer ELCA missionaries who return to the United States every two years for two months to gather with friends and family, renew themselves and engage with congregations that support them. Give thanks that the Spirit works through their witness, inspiring others to do God's work in the world.

23 Pray for the Spirit to help us better understand God's ways and wisdom and incorporate them into our daily lives as we strive to follow Christ, love and serve our neighbors and reflect God's truth in everything we say and do.

24 Remember in prayer church musicians, music directors and worship leaders gathering at Augsburg Fortress Summer Music Clinics across the country, that the experience might nurture their skills, stir their creativity and enthusiasm, deepen their theology of worship and equip them with new resources to use in their congregations.

25 Give thanks and pray for our LGBTQIA+ neighbors and siblings in Christ — our children, parents, siblings, elders, friends, co-workers and leaders. Pray that we will be persistent advocates and catalysts for intentional inclusion, full participation, and the valuing of diverse gifts and perspectives in the church and society.

26 Remember in prayer newly elected synod bishops, that God will grant them wisdom and strength for their ministry with their synods' leaders, congregations and special ministries.

27 Pray for Stephen Ministries, which minister one-on-one with people experiencing grief, illness and other crises. Give thanks for Stephen Ministries lay volunteers in communities of faith, caring and supportive companions who walk alongside those in need, embodying Christ's call to love and serve our neighbors.

28 Pray for the Spirit to remind us over and over again to be kind and merciful with others *and* ourselves.

29 Give thanks for Lutheran Disaster Response partners who together care for communities in times of crisis: synods, ecumenical partners, tribal nations, community-based organizations,

social ministry organizations, global companion churches, Catholic Charities, the Lutheran World Federation and many others.

30 "Lord, I will lift mine eyes to the hills, knowing my help is coming from you. Your peace you give me in time of the storm. You are the source of my strength. You are the strength of my life" (*ACS* 1080). Lift up prayers of thanksgiving and praise to God for being an ever-present and dependable source of strength, courage and hope, particularly in times of struggle and crisis.

31 Pray for leaders, diplomats, mediators and others involved in peacemaking and reconciliation efforts around the world, especially in the Middle East, Russia and Ukraine, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, South Sudan, Yemen and Haiti.