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[Prayer Ventures for August 2026]

[Intro text]

1 Give thanks for the resources provided by Lutheran Disaster Response, faith-based organizations and community agencies. These resources help us prepare for disasters, develop resiliency and nurture networks of disaster response volunteers, all expressions of our love and care for our neighbors.

2 Ask the Spirit to help us be attentive to our neighbors and siblings in Christ who suffer hunger and to stir us to respond with generosity, compassion and wisdom. Pray that, while responding to their immediate needs, we also work to address the causes of hunger and poverty that plague our society and the world.

3 Pray for God to strengthen families and ground them in the gospel, that they may foster relationships of love and forgiveness, encourage their children, nurture compassion, and accompany one another through the ups, downs and crises of life.

4 Remember in prayer those who are suffering in the aftermath of earthquakes in Venezuela, that they will find comfort as they grieve lives lost and receive support and resources to address their needs for medical care, shelter, safety, basic necessities and spiritual encouragement. Pray for Lutheran Disaster Response, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Venezuela, the Lutheran World Federation and other partners who are responding to immediate needs as well as undertaking the long-term work of recovery.

5 Praise God for being gracious and merciful toward us, present with us throughout life, slow to anger in response to our imperfections and attentive to our human needs and suffering.

6 Give thanks for the generosity of ELCA members, congregations and synods expressed through Mission Support, which helps us do God's work in our country and around the world — accomplishing more together than any one person or congregation can do alone.

7 Remember in prayer those who are incarcerated, imprisoned and leaving prison on parole to reenter our communities and rebuild their lives. Pray for the work of the ELCA Prison Reentry and Advocacy Network and Prison Congregations of America, which help us support, accompany and care for our neighbors and siblings in Christ in ways that exemplify God's compassion, justice and mercy for humankind.

8 "Earth is full of wit and wisdom, woven into harmony. Every creature has a purpose, every flower and bumble bee. Spider, human, redwood, gecko, monkey, chicken, mouse and snake live within a single fabric: cloth that only God could make" (*ACS* 1064). Lift up praise and

thanksgiving to God for the wonders, wisdom and beauty of creation! Pray for God to open our eyes to the inextricable and intentional connection we have to creation and the environment.

9 Give thanks and praise to God for *always* being with us on our journey of following Christ, proclaiming the gospel and loving our neighbors, especially when we feel ill-equipped, fearful and even terrified.

10 Give thanks for deacons — rostered ministers of Word and Service — who use their diverse gifts in response to Christ's call to serve our neighbors and embody the gospel in acts of justice, mercy and accompaniment in the church and society.

11 "As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'" (Romans 10:15). We are invited to share with the world the good news of Jesus Christ, a message of love, forgiveness, reconciliation and renewal. Pray for the Spirit to strengthen our faith in God's ability to use our unique gifts and personalities to touch the hearts of others with the gospel.

12 *International Youth Day (U.N.)* Pray for young people and the challenges they face. Give thanks for their gifts, insights and partnership in doing God's work in the world together. Recognize and lift up the youth in our congregations as valued siblings in Christ.

13 Give thanks and pray for nurses, faith community nurses (parish nurses) and those preparing for vocations in nursing. Pray for the Spirit to equip and sustain them for ministries of healing, wellness and care that attend to the needs of people of all ages in body, mind and spirit and in many different settings.

14 "Let me hear what God the Lord will speak" (Psalm 85:8). Pray for our hearts and minds to be open to the word of God that comes to us through Scripture, siblings in Christ, creation and inspiration stirred by the Spirit, so that our faith may be strengthened and we may be guided, comforted, encouraged and cautioned in our daily lives.

15 Give thanks and pray for teachers, student teachers, custodians, librarians, administrators, counselors, bus drivers and others who are entrusted to educate, inspire, equip and keep safe students of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. Give thanks for the Evangelical Lutheran Education Association and its ministry of nurturing a community that helps leaders be stronger, wiser and better equipped for the mission of providing faith-based education.

16 Ask the Spirit to help shape our words and actions so that they build up others, reflect sincere love and concern, and convey the good news of Jesus Christ. Ask for God's forgiveness and mercy when we hurt, disrespect and damage the reputation of our neighbors — intentionally or unintentionally.

17 "The proper prayer is not a deed, not an exercise, not a pious attitude, but the petition of a child to the heart of the Father" (Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *God Is on the Cross: Reflections on Lent and Easter*). Lift up in prayer today whatever is in your heart and mind, trusting that God is attentive and understanding and not confused by imperfect words, emotional rambling or difficulty in expressing yourself.

18 Give thanks and pray for ELCA Racial Justice Ministries and ELCA Ministries of Diverse Cultures and Communities, that their advocacy, resources and work will help us, individually and as a church, understand and repent of our brokenness, seek reconciliation and healing, and strive to change laws, policies and behaviors that marginalize people of color, neglect those who suffer poverty and vilify immigrants and asylum seekers.

19 Pray for those with whom we serve to do God's work in the world, including other denominations and ecumenical ministries, global companions, the Lutheran World Federation, social ministry organizations, the World Council of Churches, interfaith organizations and faith-inspired networks.

20 Persist in praying that the efforts of peacemakers, mediators and world leaders, imperfect as they may be, will bear fruit in lasting peace, justice and an end to the suffering of those affected by war and conflict.

21 Thank God for the ELCA's special relationship with the United Church of Christ, 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.

22 Remember in prayer faith-based daycare centers and preschools in our congregations and the leaders, teachers and volunteers who care for children, support parents and nurture faith in Christ.

23 "He asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?'" (Matthew 16:13). Who do you say Jesus Christ is? How do you respond when someone asks about your faith? Lift up your questions and uncertainties to God and ask the Spirit to give you confidence and clarity when you share your faith story and proclaim Jesus Christ as the true savior whom you love, trust and follow.

24 Give praise to God and thanks for people, things and experiences that give you hope, joy and strength today.

25 Remember in prayer ELCA missionaries and Young Adults in Global Mission volunteers who accompany global partners in Europe as they serve others in a diverse world and bear witness to the presence and work of a loving and merciful God. Pray that they may be emboldened to work for peace and justice and to care for those who suffer during this time of turmoil in parts of Europe.

26 Pray that our ELCA colleges, universities and seminaries flourish in their ministries of preparing students for lives of faith and vocation, equipping them to use their gifts in response to God's call to share the gospel and love and serve neighbors in need.

27 Give thanks for the impact of congregations that celebrate a long history and presence in their community. Pray for the Spirit to help them grow, evolve and discern what God is calling them to be and do in their community.

28 The Lutheran Campus Ministry Network (LuMin) serves over 175 colleges and universities through ELCA and ecumenical campus ministry organizations, including congregations near campuses. Pray that students, faculty and staff are blessed by the work of LuMin, which builds community, deepens faith, expands minds and inspires service.

29 "When schools flourish, all flourishes" (Martin Luther, *Table Talk*). The Lutheran church has a long, rich history of commitment to faith-based and public education. Pray that we support and encourage education for all ages, abilities and backgrounds for the sake of nurturing students to become confident, skilled, wise, creative, compassionate and service-minded citizens and disciples of Christ.

30 "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be arrogant, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are" (Romans 12:14-16). Paul seems to have written this for us today. Ask God to help us live by these words, which denounce vengeance, arrogance, indifference to neighbors and divisive conflict. Encourage us to be humble, forgiving, empathetic and to love our adversaries and those who are different from us.

31 Gift thanks for new members of our congregations. Pray that they experience belonging, growth, encouragement and opportunities to use their gifts together with those of siblings in Christ to do God's work in the church, their communities and the world.