

[Prayer Ventures for October 2018]

**1** Give thanks for our elders who share wisdom and inspiration, pass their faith on to others and contribute so much to our communities; pray we continue to engage daily the wisdom and gifts of our elders, are attentive to the needs of people as they age and work to ensure no elder is neglected or forgotten.

**2** Give thanks for the faith, gifts and service of people of all gender identities and gender expressions, and pray our congregations and communities are welcoming and affirming safe places for everyone to thrive.

**3** Pray for situations and people who are on your mind today, be they cause for celebration and joy or concern and healing.

**4** *Feast of St. Francis* Pray the behaviors and values we learn from our redeemer, teacher and true example – Jesus Christ – are evident in our faith and daily life with respect to our neighbors, all living things and creation: simplicity and humility, respect and justice, compassion and love, and selfless generosity.

**5** National Disability Employment Awareness Month reminds us that while our society and work places are making progress, they are not yet free of discrimination and obstacles for those who live with physical, sensory, intellectual, mental and developmental disabilities. Trusting in God's mercy and wisdom, pray we are advocates and agents for change that all God's people – with a wide spectrum of abilities and gifts – have equal opportunities for appropriate, equitable and supportive employment.

**6** We remember people, communities and regions affected by recent flooding and widespread wildfires and pray for their safety, recovery and rekindling of hope and fortitude in the wake of devastation and loss.

**7** Pray we work diligently to change our perspectives, behaviors and practices that make assumptions based on traditional roles or bias, undervalue or ignore the value and gifts of women and children in the church and society.

**8** Pray for victims of domestic violence and all those it impacts, asking for protection and healing and that congregations and communities work together to care for victims, prevent violence and change attitudes, values, culture and institutions that – intentionally or unintentionally – encourage, hide or brush aside domestic violence.

**9** The story of creation in Genesis imparts a sense of importance and purpose for relationships and community. Give thanks for relationships and communities that provide support, encouragement, hope and joy, and hold us accountable to one another; ask God to help us rebuild relationships that are strained or broken and to grant us wisdom and patience for working through conflicts in our communities and congregations.

**10** Pray the bounty of fall harvests is distributed fairly and helps feed the world; give thanks for all those who work farms, ranches, fields and fisheries, and remember and give thanks for the countless people involved in moving our food from field to table.

**11** Churchwide and synodical networks help connect people, organizations and resources for God's work in the world. Pray the Spirit is at work in and through our networks to equip and support leaders, gather new gifts and perspectives, and strengthen congregations and ministries to meet new and evolving challenges and opportunities.

**12** Give praise and glory to God, creator of the universe and its mysteries, humanity in all its diversity, animals and wildlife, and the wonders and resources of earth that both inspire and sustain us.

**13** Give thanks for the rich partnership and relationship we have with the Moravian Church in America, a full communion partner with the ELCA since 1999. Pray for the Moravian church and ask God to further our respect for one another and work together sharing the gospel and serving our neighbor.

**14** Pray we grow to value what God values, even when it stirs discomfort or defiance in us.

**15** Ask God to bless the numerous ways in which our congregations, ministries, members, synods, churchwide programs, organizations and ecumenical partners work together to care for our neighbors and spread the good news and hope of Jesus Christ.

**16** Discouraged by life's challenges, the state of the world, the presence of evil and injustice? Finding it difficult to wake up in the morning and face life? Pray for reassurance of God's compassion, presence and power, and for the Holy Spirit to refresh our faith and hope.

**17** Give thanks to God for the concern and generosity of youth, individuals and congregations in achieving the \$515,000 goal of the Global Farm Challenge – the youth-driven fundraising challenge to help end hunger and poverty by supporting ELCA World Hunger's agricultural programs and equipping communities around the world with livestock, seeds, tools, training and more.

**18** Pray for leaders, volunteers and resource people serving on the staffs of our 65 synods; give thanks for their service and gifts, and pray the Holy Spirit will guide, inspire and sustain them for ministry in diverse and unique contexts.

**19** With our every human thought and intention laid bare before God, pray for God's mercy and grace promised through the life, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

**20** Remember in prayer ELCA missionaries and those in the Young Adults in Global Mission program accompanying and serving in a variety of roles alongside our companions in Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and South Korea.

**21** The ELCA and The Episcopal Church are committed to prayer, fasting and advocacy addressing cuts to public programs that are vital to hungry people who are living in poverty. Remember to pray for these concerns, our leaders and people in need on the 21st of each month through December 2018.

**22** As children of God – disciples and followers of Christ – pray for humility, accepting that we are not granted privilege, praise or reward for being members of the body of Christ but are instead called to lives of service, sacrifice and witness for the sake of the world and our neighbors in need.

**23** Pray for those who are running for public office and upcoming elections that what we stand for and decide reflects concern for the well-being of all communities and people, justice and care for people dealing with poverty, hunger and the need for health care; give thanks for the work of the ELCA Advocacy program, the ELCAvotes initiative and all those who have joined in these efforts.

**24** Give thanks for the fruitful service and witness of our church in accompaniment with our brothers and sisters in Christ and companion churches around the world and for the programs, mission opportunities and resources of ELCA Global Mission that enrich these global partnerships and ministries.

**25** With joyful hearts, give loud thanks and praise to God for the gifts of mercy, love and salvation we receive through faith in Jesus Christ.

**26** Pray for the continuing work, resources and influence of the ELCA’s Book of Faith Initiative that encourages members of all ages, congregations and synods to explore our book of faith – the Bible – through reading, study, conversation and prayer.

**27** Remember in prayer the Deaconess Community of the ELCA, a community of women – of all ages – using their theological training and gifts in specific areas of service in congregations, partner organizations, communities and the world.

**28** *Reformation Sunday* Rejoice in God’s promise of the true freedom we have in the good news of Jesus Christ, that nothing stands between us and God’s love and mercy – no institution, authority or human decree.

**29** Give thanks for the healing, hope and new life we have through the gift of being justified by faith in Jesus Christ and liberated from our sins, weaknesses and consequences of our human imperfection.

**30** Pray that as a publicly engaged church we remember and remind one another of our call to participate in God’s work, in the thick of life, embracing individuals, families and communities that are hungry for hope and healing, justice and peace.

**31** *Reformation Day* Give thanks for Martin Luther and other leaders of the reform movement who immersed themselves in prayerful study of Scripture, tough questions, lively discussion and

careful discernment of God's will for the church and our baptismal journey as children of God; pray we are open and responsive to how the Holy Spirit is still at work in us and the church today.