

and other believers throughout history and pray we likewise will be self-sacrificing, fearless witnesses and servants of Jesus Christ in the world.

**24** Pray that God will teach us, help us understand and open our hearts and eyes to God's word and commandments that we may follow in God's ways.

**25** We remember in our prayers the deaconess community and women who have been called to Word and Service ministry as deaconesses. We pray the Spirit will guide and sustain them in their commitment to justice and mercy, bridge-building with others in mission and public witness to the gospel.

**26** *Transfiguration of our Lord* Give thanks to God for revealing to us Jesus Christ as Son of God and Son of Man, our Lord and Savior, the promised Messiah, our salvation and light. Pray we not keep the good news to ourselves or become arrogant as Christians but willingly respond to God's sending us into the world to share the gospel.

**27** Turn to God in praise and thanks for the gifts of faith and clarity that enable us to recognize and embrace the good news of Jesus Christ amid false promises, prophecies and distractions that would lead us away from the truth.

**28** *Shrove Tuesday* On this day, we humble ourselves and pray for forgiveness and ask God to create in us generous hearts and caring spirits that we may attend to the needs of our neighbors who are hungry, living in poverty and long for hope.

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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](mailto:info@elca.org) for additional information. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631. Telephone: 800-638-3522, ext. 2458.*



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

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## PRAYER VENTURES

FEBRUARY 2017

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*These petitions are offered as guides to prayer for the global, social and outreach ministries of the ELCA. Thank you for your continued prayers for the life and mission of this church.*

**1** Give thanks for all people – and during Black History Month especially for those of African descent – who are participating in God's work of building a multicultural church and restoring and reconciling communities in the name of Jesus Christ throughout the world.

**2** Finding affordable housing is a challenge for many people in both urban and rural areas. Thank God for the ways in which congregations and communities work together to help people find places to live and pray that we not lose our vision of a world where all people live in safe, affordable and decent housing.

**3** Shout out words of praise and thanksgiving to God for the certain gift of salvation and true hope given to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**4** This year as we observe the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation give thanks to God for the work and voice of Martin Luther and other reformers—men and women alike—who were compelled to both challenge and encourage the church, that its traditions, doctrines and accepted practices be grounded in and true to God's word and the gospel of Jesus Christ.

**5** Pray that our lives and the work of our church be bright, clear witnesses of faith that all may know the good news of Jesus Christ and give glory to God.

**6** Remember in prayer the seven young adults and the country coordinators serving in the Young Adults in Global Mission program

in Argentina and Uruguay. Pray for their well-being, that their service and witness touch many lives and their partnerships help strengthen God's mission in the world.

7 Pray the Holy Spirit will turn our trust to God's wisdom and truth when we are tempted to rely on human teachings, wisdom, opinions or ways of thinking.

8 We praise the Lord, our source of joy and happiness, and steady light of hope and reassurance where there is darkness.

9 Pray those who continue to wage war and commit human atrocities in Syria will lay down their weapons and self-interests and redirect their energy and resources to establishing peace, reconciliation, creating a just and compassionate government, and rebuilding safe, prosperous communities for millions of refugees and internally displaced Syrians to return home to.

10 The Presbyterian Church (USA) has been a full communion partner of the ELCA since 1997. Thank God for our deepening, maturing relationship and the work we do together in the world sharing the gospel and serving our neighbor.

11 Laughter and humor are gifts from God. Smile and give thanks to God for people who help us laugh and see joy in life and for those whose humor helps break through our uneasiness with difficult issues, opening us to self-reflection and different perspectives on life.

12 We ask God to remove any hesitations, stubbornness or pride we may have that prevent us from approaching people with whom we have conflict, differences or grudges, or who have wounded us and that we will take initiative to seek reconciliation, forgiveness and healing.

13 In a world of conflict and division, even among people of faith, we ask God to strengthen our commitment to ecumenical and inter-faith relationships and conversations that lead to reconciliation and unity for the sake of the world and in the name of Jesus Christ.

14 Reflecting on God's unconditional love and forgiveness for all people, pray for a deepening and always maturing understanding of love and what contributes to healthy, growing relationships.

15 We remember in our prayers people who are still grieving and recovering from loss of life, home or livelihood because of natural disasters and severe weather and pray they find comfort, strength and hope in God's presence and the support of relief workers and volunteers who continue to accompany them.

16 Give thanks for the joy that comes from studying God's word, discerning God's will for us and walking in God's ways.

17 Throughout the coldness of winter, we pray all those who are cold, without adequate income to pay for heat or who are homeless find warm shelter, assistance and the welcoming comfort of caring neighbors.

18 *Death of Martin Luther (1546)* Give thanks for the life, bold faith, fervor for the gospel and teachings of Martin Luther, whose impact continues to influence and challenge the church and Christians today.

19 Pray to have the boldness and courage of faith and compassion taught by Jesus, that we may live and act far beyond the constraints and expectations for justice, love and mercy taught by society.

20 *Presidents Day* We give thanks for the peaceful transition of leadership our nation has known in its history, and pray our nation's leaders, and we as citizens and people of faith, work to ensure the voices of all people are heard and valued in the day-to-day deliberations and decisions made by our leaders and government.

21 The Rev. Michael Fonner and Elizabeth Hendrickson are ELCA missionaries in Kenya, and the Rev. Linda Johnson Seyenkulo and the Rev. Brian Palmer serve in Liberia. Pray for their ministries, witness and the skills they bring to our partnerships with companion churches for sharing the gospel and serving neighbors in need.

22 Nearing the mid-year for many teachers, teacher assistants, educators and professors, pray for their continued strength, creativity and enthusiasm as they teach and care for their students – children, youth and young adults of diverse needs, abilities and backgrounds.

23 We lift up and give thanks to God for followers of Christ who have lost their lives for their faith and have inspired the church