

24 What nagging questions do you have about Scripture, faith or God's actions in the world? Amid a life of doubt and uncertainty, ask God to grant us reassurance and insight; pray that our faith and belief will grow deeper and stronger through the work of the Spirit, the support of our siblings in Christ and the opportunities for study, prayer and discernment in our communities of faith.

25 Pray for church leaders and congregations participating in Valparaiso University's Institute of Liturgical Studies, a source of renewal and recreation through worship, music, study and reflection on the church's challenges and opportunities after the pandemic.

26 "Let everything that breathes praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!" (Psalm 150:6). Consider how each thing you do today can glorify God.

27 Pray for congregations and communities preparing for severe weather, that they might preserve human life, respond to community needs, and prove resilient in the face of natural disaster. Give thanks for our ability to respond to disasters through Lutheran Disaster Response in collaboration with companion churches, disaster response organizations and ecumenical partners.

28 Give thanks for ELCA Young Adult Ministries, Young Adults in Global Mission and their work of providing inspiration, opportunities, connections and resources to young adults and people facilitating young adult ministries.

29 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assemblies of the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana, Northeastern Minnesota and Arkansas-Oklahoma synods, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders, proclaim the gospel, serve our neighbor and do God's work in the world.

30 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assemblies of the Minneapolis Area Synod, Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod and Northwest Synod of Wisconsin, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders, proclaim the gospel, serve our neighbor and do God's work in the world.

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

PRAYER VENTURES

— APRIL 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 *Arab American Heritage Month* Remember in prayer the diverse gifts, cultures, heritages and stories of our Arab and Middle Eastern neighbors and siblings in Christ, who remind us of the rich history and tradition of Christ's church in the world. Ask God to bless and advance the advocacy, witness, leadership development and support for ministries provided by ELCA Arab and Middle Eastern Ministries and the Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage.

2 Give thanks for the resources of our church, including ELCA World Hunger's 40 Days of Giving, which guides us through Lent and helps us pray, study Scripture, respond to our neighbors in need and give generously for the good of communities around the world.

3 Pray that we will each use our unique gifts and passions as disciples of Christ, called to share the gospel and serve our neighbors, and that we will trust the Spirit to equip, inspire and embolden us for doing God's work in the world, together.

4 Give thanks for the commitment and work of planning team leaders, volunteers, youth ministry leaders in congregations and churchwide organization staff who prepared for the now-canceled 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering and are now refocusing their attention on the 2024 event; ask the Spirit to guide, strengthen and enliven their work.

5 Remember in prayer our neighbors in countries and regions beset by conflict, civil unrest or violence, including places we have forgotten because they have slipped from the headlines. Pray for healing, hope and strength for our neighbors who suffer trauma, loss, displacement or uncertainty, and pray that leaders will work to resolve conflicts, reconcile enemies and forge new relationships based on justice, respect for human life and mutual concern.

6 Pray that God will comfort and stir hope and joy in those who suffer grief; ask God to help us be present with them in their sorrow, bringing empathy, respect, support and patience.

7 Give thanks for Women of the ELCA and women of all ages who gather in more than 4,500 locations in the United States and the Caribbean for service, study, advocacy and fellowship, mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

8 Ask the Spirit to make us purveyors of grace, joy and unexpected generosity, especially to people who live with worry, despair, turmoil or loneliness.

9 *Dietrich Bonhoeffer, theologian (1906-1945)* Remember and give thanks for our siblings in Christ – past and present – who risk their lives for justice, the well-being of our neighbors and the truth of the gospel. Pray that their witness, courage and sacrifice will inspire and guide our pursuit of justice and peace in the world.

10 *Palm Sunday* Jesus endured false accusations, betrayal by his closest followers, an unfair trial, public humiliation and the pain of death on a cross for our salvation and the fulfillment of God's promises. Give praise and thanks to the Son of God, the promised Messiah!

11 Pray for pastors and seminary students serving as chaplains for the armed forces, Veterans Affairs hospitals and federal correctional institutions, and for pastors serving in other contexts, including hospitals, nursing homes, hospice programs, social ministry programs, state and local correctional facilities, and organizations serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

12 Give joyful thanks that God's boundless, unimaginable love is made known to us in ways that we can grasp: through Jesus Christ's humble birth, life of service, suffering, death and resurrection.

13 Ask God to renew and strengthen our commitment and courage to face the painful truth of gun violence in our country – to prevent gun violence; attend to individuals, families and communities traumatized by it; advocate for common-sense gun safety laws; and care for the perpetrators of violent acts.

14 *Maundy Thursday* "Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34-35). Pray that we will be mindful of how we bear witness to Jesus through our humility, sacrificial service, words of love and Spirit-inspired actions.

15 *Good Friday* Reflect on what we see in the cross, the feelings it evokes and what it represents in our faith and life. Pray that through the symbol of the cross we might see God's unconstrained power over death and God's awesome gift of grace that gives us life – both new life in the present and life eternal.

16 Pray that we will bear God's grace, mercy, hope and kindness to incarcerated youth and adults who experience isolation from society, our communities and the church.

17 *Easter Day* "This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:24). Hallelujah! Shout prayers of joy and thanksgiving for the enduring, trustworthy gifts of love, forgiveness, healing and new life fulfilled by God in the resurrection of Jesus Christ – our Savior, teacher, hope and salvation.

18 Give thanks for faith-based preschools and day care centers that encourage faith, support parents and serve communities. Pray that their teachers, staff and administrators will be strengthened for their work providing safe and nurturing care for children.

19 Pray that the gifts of forgiveness, love and new life we receive through Jesus will fill us with joy, moving us to share the good news and work for healing and justice in the world.

20 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assembly of the Western Iowa Synod, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders, proclaim the gospel, serve our neighbor and do God's work in the world.

21 Pray that the Spirit will lead us into conversations about faith and the good news of Jesus Christ with people we encounter in our daily lives; pray that we will see God working through us even when we feel uncomfortable or imperfect in expressing our faith.

22 *Earth Day* The mysteries and awe of creation defy our comprehension and stir wonder in us. Give praise, gratitude and recognition for all God has made for our sustenance and joy; pray that we will be wise, generous, responsible stewards and restorers of the earth's resources for the glory of our Creator.

23 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assembly of the Alaska Synod, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders, proclaim the gospel, serve our neighbor and do God's work in the world.