

24 Nativity of Our Lord, Christmas Eve

Listen closely for the voice of the angel as the birth of Jesus is announced this night and join with the multitude of the heavenly host in saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven." Give thanks and praise for all that God has done.

25 Nativity of Our Lord, Christmas Day

With the shepherds go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, return glorifying and praising God for all that you have heard and seen.

26 Stephen, deacon and martyr

Pray for the young people in our criminal justice system that they will find the help needed to change their lives and that the justice system will be open to reforms as outlined in the ELCA's "The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries."

27 Give thanks on this day for the 435 new congregations that the ELCA has started since it was formed 25 years ago.

28 The Holy Innocents, martyrs

Give thanks for the directors for evangelical mission in the ELCA synods as they help new congregations develop and help bring renewal and vigor to the mission of current congregations.

29 First Sunday of Christmas

Almighty God, thank you for your love and the greatest gift ever given – Jesus Christ. We lift in prayer all who are searching for this gift and remember those who are in dark places and ask that you light their way.

30 Include in your prayers ELCA missionary in Cairo, Egypt, Michael Parker and his ministry in theological education.

31 New Year's Eve

On this last day of the ELCA's anniversary year, give thanks for 25 years together in Christ, and pray for God's guidance for the next 25 years as we are "always being made new."

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 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.

PRAYER VENTURES

DECEMBER 2013

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 First Sunday of Advent

Merciful God, as we light the first candle of Advent, we lift up our prayers – at altars, in homes and in waiting rooms – for the health of all your people. We also remember, on this World AIDS Day, all those who have died or currently live with or are affected by HIV and AIDS; though Jesus Christ, our healer and lord. Amen

2 Pray for the continued support and success of the ELCA Malaria Campaign, which has added the countries of Namibia and Burundi, for a total of 13 countries in Africa where strides are being made in containing malaria.

3 Remember in your prayers new ELCA missionary in Hong Kong Abraham Peterson, who teaches English at the Lutheran Theological Seminary to students from all parts of Asia.

4 John of Damascus, theologian and hymn writer

Lift up the efforts of many in this church working to include people living with intellectual and developmental disabilities in our worship services, including Susan Lindberg's All Right Ministry in Wayland, Mass., which strives to create worship experiences where all can participate.

5 Pray that our youth will make their faith relevant in all aspects of their lives, including the many ways they experience and participate in today's online digital society.

6 Nicholas, Bishop of Myra

Pray for the children who attend ELCA schools and early childhood education centers. Ask that the message of God's love in Jesus Christ

may come through strongly for them in this season of many distractions.

7 Ambrose, Bishop of Milan

Remember in your prayers the staff of the ELCA Wittenberg Center in Wittenberg, Germany, as they expand their programs to include seminars for women from the Global South and from minority Lutheran churches.

8 Second Sunday of Advent

O Lord, as we light the second candle of Advent we ask for you to open our eyes to see the face of Jesus in the eyes of strangers. Enlighten our way as we journey together toward the celebration of the birth of your son, Jesus. Amen.

9 Lift up the ministries of ELCA congregations that bring God's love and care to their members living in assisted-living facilities.

10 Pray for the seven young adults who are serving for a year with the church in Argentina and Uruguay through the ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission program, working with young people, human rights and the differently abled.

11 Pray that we will remember to involve our young people in the ministries of this church by making, as Wartburg Theological Seminary professor Kristine Stache says, a "shift from providing ministries to children, youth and families to that of ministering with children, youth and families."

12 Pray that God's love for others will be as evident in our online relationships as it is in our face-to-face ones, and give thanks for the efforts of the people and congregations helping to make us aware of the dangers of online bullying.

13 Give thanks for the unity shown through this church's full communion partnership with six other churches – Presbyterian Church (USA), Reformed Church in America, United Church of Christ, The Episcopal Church, The Moravian Church, The United Methodist Church.

14 Include in your prayers the Rev. David and Mary Kuck, ELCA missionaries in Jamaica, and their theological education ministry.

15 Third Sunday of Advent

Holy God, as we wait in the glow of the third candle of Advent, we hear the words of your messenger, John the Baptist. Help us to prepare a way for Jesus in our communities, our congregations and throughout the world. We especially hold up in prayer missionary children, who live, learn and grow in their faith around the world.

16 Pray for congregations seeking creative ways to deal with reduced income and attendance – such as St. Andrew Lutheran Church in Caledonia, Wis., and Emmaus Lutheran Church in Racine, Wis. These congregations chose to alternate weekly worship between their two buildings.

17 Give thanks for the 800 International Leaders who have received ELCA scholarships to complete their studies at colleges, universities and seminaries in the United States and around the world in the last 25 years.

18 Remember in your prayers the Rev. Kevin Jacobson, an ELCA missionary in Suriname, and his service in leadership development and parish ministry.

19 Pray for the many programs supported by the donations of ELCA members that help people escape poverty, such as the Nairobi International Lutheran Congregation's knitting training school in Kenya, which helps its students achieve self-reliance.

20 Lift up in your prayers the nine members of the ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission program who are walking in accompaniment for a year in the United Kingdom.

21 Include in your prayers the multicultural ministries of this church and our need in an increasingly diverse world to welcome all God's people.

22 Fourth Sunday of Advent

O God, our life and our strength, as we light the fourth candle of Advent, we pray for the people of Mexico, Nicaragua and Nigeria. Give strength to congregations in these countries as they witness to your peace and joy.

23 Pray for ELCA missionaries Dr. Leland Albright and Susan Ferson and their work in health care in Kenya.