

## Prayer Ventures for November 2019

**1 *All Saints Day*** Give thanks for people passed from this life who have cared for us, inspired our dreams, nurtured our faith, and equipped and encouraged us for the challenges of life, and who have boldly exemplified compassion, justice, mercy and generosity.

**2 *National American Indian Heritage Month*** Give thanks for the gifts and witness of American Indian and Alaska Native members of the ELCA. Pray for native congregations and ministries and the work of the American Indian and Alaska Native Lutheran Association, all grounded in reconciliation and the mutual building up of the saints — people of all backgrounds, tribes, regions, communities, congregations and unique needs.

**3** Ask God to help us be fearless and radical in our love and service, following the example of Jesus by demonstrating love, respect, empathy, mercy and active concern for all, especially for people suffering poverty, hunger and illness, those forgotten and neglected, and our enemies.

**4** Pray for people living with and recovering from the devastation and loss of life in the Bahamas and along the southeastern coast of the United States following Hurricane Dorian, and for Texas communities similarly suffering from flooding caused by Tropical Storm Imelda. Ask God to give these people strength and hope, resources for recovery and, during this time of vulnerability, protection from subsequent storms. Ask the Spirit to stir our caring support, generosity and volunteer service during short- and long-term recovery efforts.

**5** Pray for the leaders of our communities, states and nation, that they will ground their priorities, decisions, work and legislative actions in concern for justice, the environment, the well-being of people in need and the diverse contexts and communities in our country.

**6** Entrusted with sharing the gospel and doing God's work in the world, pray that we will be faithful in our baptismal calling and encourage one another in following the word and ways of God.

**7** Pray for the leaders of our church who serve on the ELCA Church Council. Ask the Spirit to guide their work of enabling and supporting our church as we strive to do God's work in the world

with thoughtfulness, integrity, respect and partnerships that share a common vision.

**8** Remember in prayer students who find school challenging or difficult, and pray that the people in their lives will be patient, encouraging, creative and skilled in understanding the unique ways in which we each learn.

**9** Give thanks that when we confess our sins, the good we have failed to do and our misbehaviors to God, we are met with mercy and forgiveness.

**10** Rejoice and give thanks that in God all have life — eternal, abundant and renewed life for doing God's work in the world and serving our neighbor now.

**11 *Veterans Day*** Remember people who have served or are currently serving in the military, and give thanks for their service and sacrifices. Pray for military chaplains, caregivers, congregational and synod programs, and special ministries that care for veterans and their families.

**12** Lutheran outdoor ministry leaders are joining with their ecumenical peers and partners in Lake Junaluska, N.C., for the Great Gathering conference. Pray for their time together, that they might build relationships, discover each other's gifts and equip vital ministries to meet the emerging needs of God's people.

**13** Pray that, in the midst of the questions, distractions, hesitancy and opposition we experience in daily life, we will remain focused on the good news of Jesus Christ and on encouraging one another to share the gospel and do good in the world.

**14** The ELCA is the first North American denomination to declare itself a sanctuary church body. As a sanctuary church, the ELCA is committed to serving and supporting migrant children and families in communities across the country. Pray that we and our faith communities, moved by the Spirit, will see welcoming people not as a political issue but as a matter of faith.

**15** Give thanks that God is attentive to our prayers, acting as our refuge, strength and guide throughout life and in every situation.

**16** Remember in prayer ELCA missionaries serving in partnership with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania to support theological education and health care in clinics and a network of 21 hospitals.

**17** Anticipating Christ's return, ask for God's help to recognize and value what is important to God.

**18** Give thanks for the leaders, ministries and resources of our church that deepen our understanding and practice of stewardship and generosity. Pray that we might spread the gospel, serve our neighbor and do God's work in the world with the gifts and resources entrusted to our care.

**19** Pray for the vision and impact of the 26 congregations, synods, ministries and ELCA-related agencies and organizations that have been awarded mental health ministry grants. Pray that their work will inspire others as they address mental health issues and develop new approaches to advocating for and assisting people with mental illness and their families.

**20** Ask the Holy Spirit to guide and shape our lives so that we might exemplify how to live and work together, care for one another, exercise generosity and tirelessly do what is right and just for the sake of our neighbor.

**21** Pray for congregational and synod ministries and ELCA-related organizations that attend to the unique needs of women and men by encouraging faith, offering opportunities for service, helping develop and support leaders, creating safe environments for conversation and mutual care across generations, and affirming both our unity and our diversity in Christ.

**22** Sing praises and make joyful noise for the wonderful things God has done and for God's undeserved steadfast love and faithfulness.

**23** Praise God for the critical work we do together through ELCA Disaster Response and for our partners, who bring God's hope, healing and renewal to people in the United States and around the world whose lives have been disrupted by natural disaster.

**24** While we profess our faith in Jesus Christ, we sometimes puzzle over who Jesus is and over his resurrection. Pray that our wisdom and faith will grow and mature as, together with our sisters and brothers in Christ, we pray, study, converse and give ourselves over to the Spirit's inspiration.

**25** Remember in prayer our ELCA missionaries and young people serving as Young Adults in Global Mission as they support the programs and ministries of companion churches in Senegal,

Eswatini, South Africa, South Sudan, Kenya and Zimbabwe.

**26** Give thanks that — despite war, conflict, hunger, poverty, suffering, illness and injustice — “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” Pray that we will be emboldened by this grace-filled promise and reality to help and strengthen our neighbors in every situation and corner of the world.

**27** Pray for people who suffer hunger, food insecurity or lack of access to the nutrition necessary for life and health. Ask that the Holy Spirit will move us to bring relief, instill hope and end hunger and poverty wherever it exists.

**28 *Thanksgiving Day*** Give thanks for the abundant resources God has entrusted to us, and for family, friends and other people who bless and enrich our lives. Give thanks that the spirit of God is generous, compassionate and fair, and that our unique gifts and abilities are brought together in the body of Christ for the sake of the world, especially those in need who have been neglected.

**29** On “Black Friday” — a day of sales, buying and consumption — take time to reflect prayerfully on the difference between wants and needs, on generosity toward our neighbors, on stewardship of wealth and abundance, on everything God has entrusted to us, and on our true identity as children of God who are loved, forgiven and granted a new vision of life.

**30** Give thanks to God for rescuing us from the power of darkness and bringing us into the light of new life in Jesus Christ — our Lord and savior, head of our church and the one who has reconciled us to God.