

[Prayer Ventures for October 2019]

1 Give thanks for ELCA Disability Ministries and its work of connecting and assisting congregations, ministries and members to invite all people into full participation in this church and in the world. Pray that the Spirit will enrich and further the work and advocacy of intellectual and developmental disabilities ministries, mental illness ministries, deaf ministries, and blindness and visual impairment ministries.

2 Give thanks for the reelection of Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton and pray that the Holy Spirit will strengthen her faith and will grant her wisdom, compassion and vision for the ministry of leadership to which she has been called.

3 Pray for our congregations that serve neighbors in need through food and clothing pantries, community meals, homeless shelters, community gardens, employment assistance and partnerships with local churches and organizations.

4 *St. Francis of Assisi, 1181-1226* Pray that our faith and lives may exemplify Francis' simplicity, service, respect for others and care for creation and all creatures.

5 Remember in prayer the Rev. Elizabeth Johnson, the Rev. Brian Palmer, the Rev. Linda Johnson Seyenkulo, Elie Sanda, Arnie and Willibroad Langdji, and James and Lorreva Foster — ELCA missionaries serving in partnership with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon, the Lutheran Church in Liberia and the Lutheran World Federation in health care, development, women's and youth ministries, Bible translation and literacy, and primary, secondary and theological education.

6 Pray that, as people of faith and disciples of Christ, we may demonstrate through our words, actions and service a spirit of humility that expects no reward, recognition or repayment.

7 Praise God for the Evangelical Lutheran Education Association and the Christian Education Network of the ELCA, organizations that support, advocate for and equip Lutheran schools, educators, professionals and volunteers involved in faith formation ministries through our congregations and partner organizations.

8 Pray for the people of Puerto Rico, that their hope will be renewed and sustained; that they will have good, just governance and smooth transitions between political leaders; and that they will experience progress in their economic recovery and their long-term recovery from Hurricane Maria. Ask God to bless the ministry, service and witness of the Iglesia Evangélica Luterana en América Sinodo del Caribe (Caribbean Synod), its leaders and its congregations.

9 Consider how our faith in Jesus Christ, God's grace, the word of God, the witness of other people of faith and the calling we have through our baptism has influenced and changed us — and give thanks!

10 Thank God for the ways our church engages its members and leaders in discernment, biblical study and reflection, prayerful decisions and commitments, and teachings that help us grow in

understanding of how our faith intersects with daily life and society. Pray that the recently approved social statement *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action* will guide and inspire us to act on a range of issues, including gender-based violence, workplace discrimination and economic inequality.

11 We are a church that believes the God-given gifts of science and technology should be used to respect and promote communities, life and human dignity. Pray that the Spirit will guide us in conversations about how faith and science intersect and that we will be mindful of the impact of technology — intended and unintended — on humanity and creation.

12 Ask for God's help to resist the temptations of envy and greed that draw us away from trusting God and committing our lives and endeavors to God.

13 Just as the one leper returned to thank and praise Jesus for healing him, we pray that we, too, will be eager to thank, praise and worship God for God's miraculous, awesome love and healing presence in our lives.

14 Remember in prayer our ELCA missionaries working in education, evangelism, parish ministries, and lay and pastoral leadership development with our companions in Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, Belgium, Germany, Poland, Norway and the United Kingdom.

15 *St. Teresa of Ávila, 1515-1582* St. Theresa was known for her life of contemplation and prayer, her theological reflection and writing, and her strong identification with people suffering poverty and illness. Remember the people who have helped shape our faith, values and life, and pray that, through the work of the Spirit, our faith, example and service will have a positive influence on our neighbors, the church, society and the world.

16 Pray for the members who serve on their congregation councils, that God will help them lead with wisdom, vision and compassion as they guide and manage their communities of faith for mission.

17 Remember God's just and merciful works throughout history, the help and compassion we receive, the gifts and resources that sustain our lives, and the new covenant made with us in Jesus Christ.

18 Pray for the countries of Central America, especially for children and youth who are traumatized by violence and have fled to other countries; for an end to gang violence and drug trafficking; for a more just distribution of wealth; and for Christians and communities of faith to have courage and persistence in living out the gospel.

19 Pray that we will seek ways of supporting and affirming youth and family ministers in their work of faith formation, equipping young people with life skills, engaging young people in service, supporting parents and inspiring and encouraging new leaders.

20 Pray that the Spirit will make us persistent and fearless in our prayers, especially on behalf of people who long for justice, mercy, peace and relief from suffering.

21 Look around and listen to the people you have encountered today. Remember in your prayers their joys, struggles, questions and sorrows.

22 Pray for the Lutheran World Federation's global study of contemporary Lutheran identities as they are lived in the local contexts of Lutheran churches, and for the leaders now gathering for "We Believe in the Holy Spirit: Global Perspectives on Lutheran Identity," a global consultation hosted by the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

23 Pray that we will be bold witnesses, evangelists and teachers inspired, equipped and sent by the Spirit and our sisters and brothers in Christ to proclaim the gospel and to counsel, encourage and help people to discern truth from falsehood.

24 Give thanks for the ELCA's long-standing commitment to interreligious and ecumenical relations that promote understanding among Christians and greater unity among Christ's people.

25 With humility and gratitude, give thanks to God, the creator of all that exists, for being our sure and trustworthy help throughout life.

26 Give thanks for musicians, composers and writers who share their gifts and skills to help us give expression to our faith and worship and to praise God together through hymns, music, songs and liturgies.

27 *Reformation Sunday* Praise God! Give thanks that Jesus — the light and truth given for the world — sets us free from sin and the bondage of death, and transforms us for lives of love, mercy, peacemaking, serving our neighbor and sharing the good news with everyone.

28 Pray that our church's relationships with the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches and the National Council of the Churches of Christ will continue to grow, and that we will share resources and utilize people's diverse voices and gifts to do God's work in the world and serve our neighbor.

29 Give thanks for the message of the apostle Paul — which had a profound impact on Martin Luther and the foundational beliefs of our church — that we are all flawed and broken human beings yet are reconciled to God by God's gift of mercy and love in Jesus Christ.

30 Pray for the witness of the nine young people serving alongside the Lutheran Church of Australia as part of the ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission program; the Rev. Kim Crawford and Rev. Henry Martinez, YAGM country coordinators; and the Rev. Sara Bishop, ELCA missionary serving in parish ministry.

31 *Reformation Day* Remember the reforming work and teachings of Martin Luther, who sought to re-center the church, its theology and its practices in Scripture and the gospel. Pray that the church today will always discern how best to participate in God's work in the world, to share the gospel in changing contexts and to reform our church, its practices and its traditions in response to the stirrings of the Holy Spirit for the sake of mission.