

[Prayer Ventures for October 2023]

1 Ask the Spirit to strengthen our faith in Jesus Christ and renew our trust in the authority of his teachings and actions as the Son of God, born among us for our salvation.

2 Remember in prayer those who have suffered tragedy, displacement and loss as a result of the wildfires in Maui. Ask God to stir their hope and strength for the long recovery ahead and inspire our generosity in supporting relief and rebuilding efforts, including the work of Lutheran Disaster Response and the Pacifica Synod.

3 “Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others” (Philippians 2:4). Pray that our lives might reflect the selflessness of Jesus and the work of the Spirit, which enable us to act with compassion and empathy for the well-being of our neighbor, our communities and the church.

4 *Feast of St. Francis of Assisi* Pray for the Spirit to stir within us humility, generosity and respect for our neighbors in need and for all living creatures. Give thanks for pets that provide joy and companionship and for service animals that benefit people with physical and cognitive disabilities.

5 Pray for those gathering for the Center of Addiction & Faith annual conference in Bloomington, Minn., including rostered ministers and lay leaders, health care professionals, addiction specialists, people in recovery and those who love people affected by addiction. Pray that we might grow in our awareness of addiction and respond with compassion.

6 Praise God for the love and mercy woven into the Bible, pray that we might share God’s story and the good news of Jesus Christ everywhere, and ask the Spirit to inspire our belief, faith and awe. “We will tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord and his might and the wonders that he has done” (Psalm 78:4).

7 Pray for the work of ELCA World Hunger in feeding the hungry and connecting people with education, health care, clean water and sustaining sources of income. Give thanks for our partners in this work, including global companion churches, the Lutheran World Federation, Bread for the World, Church World Service and Lutheran World Relief.

8 Jesus, the Son of God, was humble yet strong, and endured suffering and death to be resurrected for our sake. This is the cornerstone of our faith and salvation. Praise God and sing with thanksgiving and joy for all to hear.

9 *Indigenous Peoples’ Day* Remember in prayer and give thanks for Indigenous communities that have lived in the Americas and other parts of the world for thousands of years. Pray that we will not waver in our commitment to repentance, reconciliation, healing and unity as neighbors and children of God.

10 Pray for a peaceful resolution to the war in Ukraine, and be mindful of how it impacts every nation and our daily lives.

11 Praise God for our faith in Jesus Christ, who frees us from the restraints and shortcomings of our past so that we can move forward in our baptismal journey of connecting our faith with everyday life, serving neighbors in need, spreading hope and living with gratitude.

12 Ask God to guide and, when needed, temper our words so that others will know God's love and forgiveness and the truth of the gospel through what we say. "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer" (Psalm 19:14).

13 Pray for the vitality and effectiveness of our seminaries as they prepare leaders who will respond to God's call, equipping congregations and other communities of faith to nurture disciples of Christ and do God's work in the world.

14 Pray for our neighbors and siblings in Christ who are overwhelmed by confusion, conflict and suffering. Ask the Spirit to make us bearers of hope, encouragement and wisdom for our neighbors, reflecting the trustworthy light of Jesus Christ and the comforting love of God.

15 We trust in the promise of eternal life with God. Pray that, rather than take this gift for granted, we might be inspired to live in joy and gratitude, sharing that joy with others and proclaiming what God has done for us through Jesus Christ.

16 Remember in prayer the 131 ELCA missionary households and 25 Young Adults in Global Mission volunteers who serve alongside our siblings in Christ and global companions in 45 countries.

17 "Happy are those who observe justice, who do righteousness at all times" (Psalm 106:3). Ask the Spirit to fill us with love and reverence for our neighbors as children of God, that people of all backgrounds, abilities, ages, beliefs, needs and circumstances might be treated with respect, fairness and compassion.

18 Give thanks for the gifts and service of military chaplains, who care for U.S. military personnel and their families across our nation and in their countries of deployment.

19 Give thanks for writers, editors and photographers who serve the church by sharing the gospel, telling stories of faith and service, inspiring us and revealing how God works through our church, congregations and siblings in Christ.

20 Pray for those whose lives and communities have been forever changed by severe weather and wildfires, and who are immersed in the long, demanding work of rebuilding their lives and communities, here and around the world.

21 Ask God to bless the work of the Christian Education Network of the ELCA and its members, professionals and volunteers who are involved in lifelong faith formation ministries in congregations and ELCA-affiliated organizations.

22 Pray that we will be obedient and loyal to God and, at the same time, respond to God's call to live as responsible, involved citizens in our communities and the world.

23 Give thanks for Lutheran Men in Mission and Women of the ELCA, and pray for their ministries, which nurture faith, promote healing and wholeness, help people discern their spiritual gifts and vocations, and equip them to serve as disciples of Christ.

24 Pray for our congregations and synods, affiliated ministries and organizations, and full communion partners that we might encourage and support one another, share resources and ideas, and work together to spread the good news of Jesus Christ.

25 Pray that God will further the work of our church's AMMPARO strategy (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities) for welcoming and protecting migrant children and their families, accompanying them in court, advocating for just and humane immigration policies and supporting companions in Latin America who care for deported and returned migrants in their countries of origin.

26 "Sing to the Lord; bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples" (Psalm 96:2-3). Ask the Spirit for the words we need to share our faith and tell God's story of love, hope and forgiveness.

27 Ask God to make us a dynamic and engaged church of the present and future, driven by God's redemptive love to be attentive to the world and culture and agile in how we proclaim the gospel and do God's work in the world.

28 Give thanks for grandparents who inspire our faith, share their wisdom and gifts, care for grandchildren and enrich our communities of faith with diverse perspectives and ideas.

29 *Reformation Sunday* Give thanks for Martin Luther and other Protestant reformers who, at significant risk, challenged traditions and practices of the church that strayed from Scripture and proclaimed that God's love and forgiveness are ensured through Jesus Christ.

30 Pray for ELCA World Hunger's Education and Networking Grants, which assist congregations, synods and partner organizations throughout the United States and the Caribbean in developing education and service-learning programs that deepen our understanding of hunger and poverty.

31 *Reformation Day* "Faith is a living, bold trust in God's grace, so certain of God's favor that it would risk death a thousand times trusting in it. Such confidence and knowledge of God's grace makes you happy, joyful and bold in your relationship to God and all creatures" (Martin Luther). Lift up prayers of thanksgiving and praise for God's grace, which comes to us as a gift and sets us free, lifting our spirits and restoring our relationships with God.