

[Prayer Ventures for November 2023]

1 *American Indian Heritage Month* Give thanks for our Indigenous neighbors and siblings in Christ, whose diverse gifts, traditions and wisdom help shape and enrich society and the church. Pray for Indigenous ministries and faith communities in the ELCA and the work of ELCA Indigenous Ministries and Tribal Relations, and ask God to guide and further the work of our church and society to build better, right and just relationships with Indigenous peoples.

2 Pray for our neighbors who have experienced great losses and turmoil as a result of the earthquake in Morocco and the unprecedented flooding in Libya, that they will find hope, comfort, relief, resources and assistance for the difficult recoveries ahead.

3 “I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people” (Jeremiah 31:33). The new covenant that God made with us long ago permeates every aspect of our life and can’t be broken or voided, because its foundation is God’s enduring grace. Give praise and thanks to God!

4 Remember in prayer those who have been impacted by recent tropical storms and hurricanes, that they might find relief, assistance and hope in the support provided by neighbors, faith communities, synods and relief agencies, including Lutheran Disaster Response. Ask God to strengthen our resilience and wisdom to meet the mounting challenges of natural disasters and climate change.

5 Pray that we will take to heart and respond to the same instructions Jesus gave to his disciples: to care for our neighbors who suffer poverty, hunger and illness and to bless those who commit their lives to caring for others, pursuing justice and making peace.

6 Pray for outdoor ministry professionals, staff and board members as they gather for the Lutheran Outdoor Ministry conference in Lake Geneva, Wis. Ask God to bless their time together for worship, renewal, networking and enhancing their skills.

7 *Election Day* Ask the Spirit to help us exercise concern for our neighbor, the well-being of communities, and racial, gender and economic justice as we discern whom to elect as our leaders and public servants. Give thanks for ELCAvotes, an initiative to help us citizens and people of faith understand our role in promoting dignity and respect for all.

8 Remember in prayer foster families and programs that provide transitional and long-term homes and care for infants, children and youth. Ask the Spirit to inspire people to consider becoming foster parents, and give thanks for foster care services provided by member organizations of Lutheran Services in America.

9 Pray for the leaders of our church as they gather for the ELCA Church Council, that the Spirit will guide their deliberations and decisions to further our mission of spreading the good news of Jesus Christ, serving our neighbors and growing the church.

10 Give thanks and praise to God, creator of diverse, abundant creatures in the seas and oceans that feed the hungry, inspire awe, reveal secrets that lead to medical discoveries and keep aquatic ecosystems healthy and thriving.

11 *Veterans Day* Remember and give thanks for those who have served our country in times of peace and conflict — here and around the world. Pray that they will never be forgotten or taken for granted.

12 We all want to know what the kingdom of heaven is like and when Jesus will come again. Express your trust that Jesus Christ has made a place for us in the kingdom of God, and pray that the Spirit will focus us on doing God’s work in the world now, as we look forward with gratitude to life eternal.

13 Give thanks for ELCA Campus Ministry and the Lutheran Campus Ministry Network (LuMin), which bear witness to God’s grace through worship, study, fellowship and service with students, faculty, staff and others at 230 college and university campuses across the country.

14 Pray for youth and family ministry leaders in our congregations, and promise to express appreciation, support and encouragement for their work of faith formation and caring for young people and their parents.

15 Give thanks to God for the comfort of knowing that we, and those who have gone before us, will one day be gathered together in the kingdom of God — forever.

16 “O God, to you I cry in pain when sickness makes me weak, when mind and body out of tune bring fears I cannot speak” (*ACS* 1021). We are never alone in times of distress. Praise God for being attentive to us through caring neighbors and siblings in Christ, especially when we find it difficult to express our infirmities and suffering.

17 Pray for the 800-plus rostered ministers who have responded to God’s call to provide specialized pastoral care in ministries across the ELCA and in our communities, including hospice, counseling, corrections, long-term care, and police and fire chaplaincy.

18 Thank God for the ELCA’s special relationship with The Episcopal Church, a full communion partner since 1999. Pray for the church, its members and its leaders, that together we will find strength and resources for the work of sharing the gospel and serving our neighbor.

19 Thank God for the example of Jesus Christ, who guides our understanding of generosity, for the sake of the world and our neighbors at the margins of society.

20 Pray for the success of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service’s Preferred Refugee Employer Program, which helps employers offer support and services of particular benefit to the refugees in their communities.

21 Pray for youth, parents, youth leaders and congregations registering for the 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering. Ask the Spirit to stir their enthusiasm, guide their preparation for their experience in New Orleans, and help those who are discerning whether to participate.

22 Pray that our acts of generosity will come from a place of gratefulness to God and concern for our neighbor and will “produce thanksgiving to God through us” (2 Corinthians 9:11).

23 *Thanksgiving Day* “We lift our voices, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you: we are an offering, we are an offering” (*ELW* 692). Pray that we will see every aspect of our life as an offering for the sake of our neighbor and the well-being of the world — an expression of thanksgiving for the blessings and resources that God has generously given to us.

24 *Native American Heritage Day* Praise God for the rich and diverse legacies of Native American neighbors and siblings in Christ. Give thanks for the continuing influence of Indigenous cultures, traditions, spirituality, arts and concepts of community.

25 Remember in prayer neighbors and siblings in Christ who are without safety, shelter, food or basic social services. Promise to be tireless, creative and respectful in providing immediate and long-term care for those who are homeless, and in boldly advocating for just laws that yield appropriate and truly affordable housing.

26 Pray that our concern, empathy and service for the well-being of our neighbors in need will be bold and boundless, especially when we are pressured to serve only select groups.

27 Remember in prayer pastors and their families, and pray that we will demonstrate our concern for their well-being and renewal through ongoing encouragement, support, affirmation and guidance.

28 Pray that our daily lives will reflect joy and thanksgiving to God, our maker and the rock of our salvation.

29 The suffering and devastation mount with every day the Russia-Ukraine War continues. Pray for an end to the war, and that our allies will remain steadfast in valuing and pursuing peace, justice and recovery for Ukraine.

30 *Andrew, the Apostle* Andrew, a humble fisherman, was the first person to respond to Jesus’ invitation to set everything aside and follow him. Pray that we too will answer the call to learn, to serve and to spread the gospel with our unique gifts.