

[Prayer Ventures for May 2022]

1 *Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month* Praise God for Asian and Pacific Islander members, congregations and ministries of the ELCA that use God's gifts of culture, language and heritage to share the good news of Jesus Christ, loving and serving our neighbor in a multicultural world.

2 Pray for the safety and well-being of those directly impacted by the war in Ukraine — both the people inside its borders and the nearly 4 million who have left the country. Pray for peace, wisdom, justice, repentance and reconciliation, and give thanks for the assistance provided by Lutheran Disaster Response, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, and our partners and companion churches in Ukraine and across Eastern Europe.

3 “O Lord my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me” (Psalm 30:2). Pray for healing, comfort and peace for all who suffer sorrow, trauma, illness, fear or hardship, and ask the Spirit to equip us for responding to our neighbors in need with love, hope and support.

4 Give thanks and pray for Lutheran Men in Mission and other ministries with men in our congregations, that they will reach and serve men of all ages, strengthening their faith in Christ, equipping them to love and serve their neighbor, and creating faithful communities of men.

5 Remembering the story of how God transformed Paul's life, purpose and spirit, pray that people everywhere might be changed by the grace of God, the work of the Spirit and the influence of caring and loving people, including ourselves.

6 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assemblies of the Metropolitan New York Synod, the New Jersey Synod and the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders, proclaim the gospel, serve our neighbor and do God's work in the world.

7 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assembly of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders, proclaim the gospel, serve our neighbor and do God's work in the world.

8 On Mother's Day, thank God for mothers, stepmothers, foster mothers, expectant mothers, women struggling with parenting, women trying to conceive and women who cannot bear children of their own but serve as loving and caring adults in the lives of children and youth.

9 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assembly of the Rocky Mountain Synod, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders, proclaim the gospel, serve our neighbor and do God's work in the world.

10 Remember in prayer students at college, university and seminary as they prepare for final exams, celebrate graduation or begin their careers, that they might find opportunities to use their gifts, faith and passion in service to their neighbors and communities.

11 “The Lord is my shepherd” (Psalm 23:1). Pray that we might find clarity and be reassured of God’s love and attention through the psalmist’s description of a shepherd who restores, leads, nourishes and accompanies us, calming our fears and showing us mercy.

12 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assemblies of the Delaware-Maryland Synod, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders, proclaim the gospel, serve our neighbor and do God’s work in the world.

13 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assemblies of the Oregon Synod, the Saint Paul Area Synod, the Northeastern Ohio Synod and the East Central Synod of Wisconsin, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders, proclaim the gospel, serve our neighbor and do God’s work in the world.

14 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assemblies of the Northern Great Lakes, Southeast Michigan and North/West Lower Michigan synods, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders, proclaim the gospel, serve our neighbor and do God’s work in the world.

15 Pray that we will be faithful to Jesus’ commandment to love one another, and pray that we might be recognized as disciples of Christ and communities of faith through our Spirit-inspired acts of love, kindness, service, justice and hospitality.

16 Remember in prayer the conflict in Ethiopia, which has caused displacement, suffering and loss of life among the most vulnerable — women, children and older adults. Pray for relief, hope and strength for those who have been impacted and for an end to the violence and ethnic discrimination. Give thanks for the relief work of Lutheran World Relief and the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, and for the financial support of Lutheran Disaster Response.

17 Ask the Spirit to stir our enthusiasm for sharing the good news of Jesus Christ throughout the world, that all people might know the boundless love of God that renews and unites us as siblings in Christ.

18 Pray that we might not grow weary or apathetic about the needs of our neighbor, especially when their difficulties and situations seem complicated, overwhelming or distant from us. Ask the Spirit to nurture within us love and concern that are enduring, impartial and wise.

19 Praise God for everything that brings joy, hope, encouragement or brightness into our lives.

20 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assemblies of the Pacifica, Greater Milwaukee, Southeastern Iowa and Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast synods, that the Spirit

will strengthen, guide and encourage them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders, proclaim the gospel, serve our neighbor and do God's work in the world.

21 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assembly of the Northwestern Minnesota Synod, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders, proclaim the gospel, serve our neighbor and do God's work in the world.

22 Promise to respond to those we encounter who are struggling, homeless, lonely, grieving or ill; ask the Spirit to encourage, equip and guide us when we feel ill-equipped to love and care for our neighbor.

23 Thank God for our special relationship with The Episcopal Church, a full communion partner with the ELCA 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, especially in these challenging times.

24 Among your siblings in Christ, who has surprised you with their welcoming spirit, generosity, wisdom or eagerness to share their faith? Give thanks to God for people who unexpectedly enrich our lives.

25 Give thanks for young adults from across the country who have responded to the call to serve in summer ministries at ELCA camps. Ask the Spirit to equip, inspire and sustain them for sharing their faith in Christ and developing caring communities of faith with campers of all backgrounds, abilities and ages.

26 *Ascension Day* "Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with loud songs of joy. For the Lord, the Most High, is awesome, a great king over all the earth" (Psalm 47:1-2). Praise and honor our wonderful God!

27 "The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you" (John 14:26). Remember in prayer the gift of the Spirit in our midst, working through us to call, gather, enlighten, bless and unify the church on earth.

28 Pray for the ELCA Justice for Women program and its work fostering gender awareness, justice and dignity, that our congregations and communities might value, embrace and be shaped by the unique voices and experiences of people across race, ethnicity, ability, class, sexuality and age.

29 Ask God to unite us as communities of faith and siblings in Christ, introducing others to what God has done in the world through the life, teachings, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus.

30 *Memorial Day* Remember, honor and give thanks for members of the armed forces who sacrificed their lives for the sake of peace. Pray for those who serve in harm's way today and for

our neighbors around the world who have served their own countries in pursuit of peace, justice and freedom.

31 Pray for congregations as they prepare for mission trips, service-learning experiences and local community ministries, that their efforts might exemplify compassion, respect, mutual relationship, intentional partnership and our call to love and serve our neighbor as Christ loves and serves us.