

[Prayer Ventures for October 2021]

1 Remember in prayer countries or regions where there is conflict, civil unrest or violence, especially Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Myanmar and the Middle East. Pray that God will protect and care for people who endure conflict; have been displaced from their homes and nations; suffer loss, despair, persecution or trauma; and long for peace, healing and stability. Give thanks for the work we do together through Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, Lutheran Disaster Response, ELCA Witness in Society, ELCA World Hunger and our partner organizations.

2 Continue praying for people and communities impacted by recent hurricanes, flooding, severe weather and wildfires, and for those working to recover from natural disasters. Pray that all will find comfort, strength and hope in God's loving presence and in the response and support of caring neighbors, faith communities, disaster response volunteers, Lutheran Disaster Response, and the global community of siblings in Christ.

3 Give thanks for the teachings of Jesus that clarify God's desire for us to value, respect and accept people of all ages, genders and circumstances.

4 *Feast of Francis of Assisi (1181-1226)* Pray that we will greet each day with a sense of awe, gratitude and respect for creation, for the organisms and creatures that inhabit the earth, for our pets, and for humanity in all its diversity and complexity — the handiwork of God entrusted to our care and love.

5 Praise God for the gift of Jesus Christ — the Son of God, born as one of us and the “exact imprint of God's very being” (Hebrews 1:3) — who fulfills the promise of God's love and mercy and assures us of our salvation.

6 Pray for ELCA congregations and our work together to serve our neighbor, share the story of Jesus, create vibrant communities of faith and reflect the radiant light of God's love, grace and justice in the world.

7 Pray for congregational leaders, laypeople and health care professionals participating in the Addiction & Faith Conference (“Awakening Faith Communities to Address Addiction”) in Bloomington, Minn., that they will be inspired and further equipped to care for people who struggle with addiction, as well as their loved ones.

8 We should be humbled to know that God has crowned us with glory and honor, especially given how insignificant we seem in the vastness of God's creation. Give praise and thanks to God!

9 Pray for the planning team of the 2022 Multicultural Youth Leadership Event, which precedes the ELCA Youth Gathering and focuses on youth of color. Ask God to nurture an inclusive, Spirit-inspired community, that we might celebrate our cultures together in the church, embodying equity, diversity, mutuality and oneness in Christ.

10 Pray that the Word of God, example of Jesus and work of the Spirit will inspire, equip and guide us to be service-minded disciples bearing faith, hope, justice, peace and love into the world.

11 Give thanks for the bounty of autumn and the people who tend crops and orchards that nourish and sustain us. Pray that we will work together year-round in our communities to help our food-insecure neighbors find convenient, consistent, affordable sources of healthy food.

12 God, we ask you to teach us to appreciate life and see each day as an opportunity to do God's work in the world — serving our neighbor, sharing our faith and expressing our gratitude for God's steadfast love and compassion.

13 Pray for soldiers serving in places of conflict, returning home from deployment or recovering from injuries or trauma. Give thanks for the people who attend to their well-being and daily needs, especially chaplains serving in the U.S. military and in Veterans Affairs hospitals, and congregation members providing care and support for soldiers and their families.

14 Nothing is hidden from God, who knows our every thought, intention, desire and need. Give thanks for Jesus, the Son of God, who lived in the world with us and reassures us that, in every circumstance, God is approachable, full of grace, mercy and understanding.

15 Give thanks for women today and throughout church history who have served as reformers and leaders, helping ground our church, institutions and ministries in the good news of Jesus Christ and the work God calls us to do in the world.

16 Pray that the Spirit will strengthen our wisdom and skills that we might better steward our oceans, which influence weather, provide bountiful food, facilitate global trade and travel, and renew us with their beauty and power, reflecting God's creative might.

17 Pray that, as siblings in Christ, we will encourage and assist one another in being diligent, empathetic and humble as we serve our neighbor throughout our baptismal journeys.

18 Pray that during this lingering pandemic the Spirit will guide us to show patience, exercise flexibility and care for our neighbor's physical and spiritual well-being, and that it will inspire in us a spirit of sacrificial love and concern for one another, especially the most vulnerable.

19 Pray for our elders, who strengthen our congregations and ministries with their experience, wisdom and passion for doing God's work in the world. Ask the Spirit to stir our creativity in reaching out to and engaging with elders who are homebound or in assisted-living facilities or senior communities.

20 Give thanks that in Christ we have a loving, patient teacher and a clear example of how to care for our neighbors in need and pursue justice, equity and healing in the world.

21 Give thanks that we can trust in God — our refuge, strength and hope in every circumstance.

22 Pray for the ELCA Innovation Lab, created to help our church respond to the opportunities and challenges of introducing more people to God’s grace in an ever-changing, increasingly complex world.

23 Praise God that our salvation doesn’t depend on who we are or what we do but comes to us as a gift of God’s love and forgiveness through the life, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

24 Pray that our faith in Jesus Christ will reassure us that God’s grace, mercy and compassion can be trusted and that only God can truly transform us and make us whole.

25 Pray for the work and ministries of our global companions during this time when we cannot accompany them in person. Give thanks that the Spirit continues to strengthen our relationships as siblings in Christ through prayer, technology, generosity, advocacy and shared resources.

26 Give thanks for our siblings in Christ who write hymns and songs that reflect on our faith, Scripture and God’s work in the world, helping us express our daily joys, sorrows and concerns.

27 The year-round outdoor ministries and retreat centers of our church provide opportunities for spiritual growth and renewal, leadership development and ministry with youth. Pray that they will flourish as they recover from and adapt to the impact of the lingering pandemic.

28 Praise God for the wisdom and intent of creating a wonderfully diverse humankind and world. Pray that we will respond with awe, respect and joyful thanksgiving.

29 “The Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoiced” (Psalm 126:3). Give joy, praise and thanksgiving to God!

30 Pray for our neighbors who are, in increasing numbers, homeless or on the verge of becoming homeless. Give thanks for communities of faith that respond with food, shelter, clothing, social services and health care, and that work diligently to end homelessness.

31 *Reformation Day* The impact of Martin Luther and other reformers has special significance for the global community of Lutheran Christians. Give thanks that we are set free by the grace and light of God to grow, change, confess our flaws and failings, and ground our church anew in the word and truth of God in Jesus Christ.