

West Bank. Pray their ministries will be blessed as they work alongside companion churches and institutions to share the gospel, strengthen and grow the church, advocate for justice and peace, and serve the needs of communities.

27 Pray for congregations and ministries serving rural and remote areas that they are assured of our support and encouragement for their pastors, leadership and members, and find effective training and resources for their contexts and challenges. Lift up recognition and appreciation for the gifts and perspectives they share with this church.

28 Give thanks for church musicians and composers who help us worship, draw us into the meaning and strength of liturgical tradition, explore new expressions of faith and praise, and help lead us into the future through their creativity.

29 *Mary, Martha and Lazarus of Bethany* People who are close to us and stand with us in every situation are important blessings and assets in life – gifts from God. We pray all may know the love, care and support of family, friends and community, especially in times of loneliness, crisis, despair and illness.

30 Give thanks that when we can't find the words to express our needs, feelings, thoughts or depth of desperation, the Spirit is present to help us; when we have no idea how to pray, the Spirit intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words.

31 Remember and give thanks for saints and servants throughout history who dedicated their lives to sharing the good news of Jesus Christ, growing the church, equipping disciples and serving neighbors in need. As children of God and followers of Christ following in their footsteps, we pray we are inspired and moved by their stories and examples.

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

PRAYER VENTURES

JULY 2017

These petitions are offered as guides to prayer for the global, social and outreach ministries of the ELCA, as well as for the needs and circumstances of our neighbors, communities and world. Thank you for your continued prayers for the life and mission of this church.

1 Pray that we encourage, engage in and plan responsible, respectful, safe tourism and vacationing that fosters better understanding and respect among people and nations, provides opportunities for greater awareness of diverse heritages and cultures, contributes to the well-being of local communities and economies, and contributes to the strengthening of world peace.

2 Pray for missionaries, evangelists, leaders developing new congregations and ministries, and all disciples of Christ who toil to share the good news and hope we have in Jesus Christ that they are welcomed wherever they serve, sustained in their faith, equipped to face challenges, and supported in their work.

3 Pray for the Global Church priority of *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA* and its work to strengthen and grow Missionaries and Young Adults in Global Mission, International Women Leaders and Global Ministries, programs helping build up Christ's church by sending missionaries and volunteers, training leaders, planting new churches and growing existing ones.

4 Give thanks to God for our national and state parks, wilderness areas, wildlife reserves and urban parks and green spaces, places of renewal and beauty that reflect the wonders and creative powers of our Creator.

5 Give thanks to God for freeing us from a life bound up in sin and pray for the Spirit to guide us in living free, grace-filled lives of sharing the gospel, serving our neighbor, and following God's paths of righteousness and justice.

6 For communities, families and individuals recovering from damaging tornadoes, flooding, severe weather and wildfires, we ask God to grant hope, healing, calm and resilience.

7 Pray for the United Methodist Church, a full communion partner with the

ELCA, and ask God to deepen our partnership and bless our work together sharing the gospel and serving our neighbor.

8 We remember in our prayers ELCA missionaries the Rev. David and Alicia Brondos, the Rev. Lindsay Mack and Omar Mixco, and the seven young adults serving in the Young Adults in Global Mission program in Mexico. Pray their ministry will be blessed as they work alongside companion churches and institutions to share the gospel, strengthen and grow the church, and serve the needs of communities.

9 Give thanks for the comfort and relief we find in Jesus and his promise to teach us by word and example his humility, gentleness and compassion.

10 The Association of Lutheran Church Musicians is meeting in Minneapolis and celebrating the music, song and liturgical treasures of the last 500 years and looking to the future. Pray for musicians who use their gifts to help us understand God's word, express our faith and love for God, share the good news, and worship together.

11 Pray for the 2,500 Lutheran women gathered in Minneapolis to sing, dance and respond to the Holy Spirit during the Tenth Triennial Convention of Women of the ELCA – "All Anew."

12 We ask God to make us steadfast in our commitment to justice and peace in the world, guide our leaders in effective diplomacy and move us all to be concerned advocates for people and communities suffering in places devastated by violence, war, persecution, injustice and poverty.

13 Pray to be filled with words and actions that give witness in the world to God's gracious and almighty actions across all generations, the glory of God's everlasting kingdom and God's mercy and love.

14 Pray for people who labor behind the scenes, serve in jobs hidden from our view, work while we sleep or play, or who are forgotten or ignored that we be mindful of their lives, grateful for their gifts and skills, and affirming of what they do in our communities and world.

15 Pray for congregations accompanying migrants and refugees through difficult situations and complex processes they encounter in our country, and give thanks for the ELCA Welcoming Congregations program and network serving local migrant communities.

16 While the impact and reach of our ministries, programs and endeavors may vary greatly and not be clear to us, we trust that God is at work through us. Pray for faith in the presence and activity – seen and unseen – of the Spirit of God in the world.

17 Pray for the eight young adults and their coordinators, the Rev. Rachel Eskesen and Zach Courter, serving in the Young Adults in Global Mission program in Hungary that God will bless and further their witness, service and work with our global church partners.

18 Ask for God's mercy and forgiveness for our actions and inactions that contribute to divisions, tensions and threats that exist in our country and world and that the Spirit of God will stir in us the desire and determination to work for understanding, reconciliation, peace and justice with neighbors, communities and nations, and between groups with which we identify and affiliate.

19 Pray for the summer staff and volunteers serving in ELCA outdoor ministries that their faith, energy and enthusiasm are renewed and sustained, especially at this mid-point in the summer and for the weeks that follow.

20 We offer God praise and thanksgiving for the abundant blessings and wonders of creation that sustain us and inspire awe for our Creator and pray that we will be careful, wise stewards of our resources and environment.

21 We unite in prayer, fasting and advocacy with our brothers and sisters in Christ of The Episcopal Church that our nation, elected leaders, public service agencies and communities will address with compassion, wisdom and concern for justice the cuts to public programs that are vital to hungry people who are living in poverty.

22 Pray for the men of all ages gathered in Minneapolis for the Lutheran Men in Mission BOLD Gathering. We ask God to strengthen their faith in Christ, build new relationships and networks, and inspire them for leading and growing ministries with men in their congregations and communities.

23 Pray for enduring faith and abundant energy in sharing the good news of Jesus Christ in the world, always trusting that the Spirit of God is at work everywhere for the sake of all people.

24 Pray for the specialized, focused work of agencies, ecumenical programs, associations, organizations and networks related to the ELCA that serve diverse communities and needs in the world.

25 Give thanks that God knows us – our every thought, motivation and behavior – and still loves and forgives us as beloved children.

26 We remember in our prayers ELCA missionaries the Rev. Colin and the Rev. Jennifer Grangaard, the Rev. Victor and Sara Makari, the Rev. Carrie and the Rev. Robert Smith, Deaconess Adrainne and Ben Gray, and the seven young adults serving in the Young Adults in Global Mission program in Jerusalem/