[Prayer Ventures for December 2025]

1 *World AIDS Day and HIV/AIDS Awareness Month* At the end of 2024, an estimated 40.8 million people worldwide were living with HIV, 1.4 million of them children and 39.4 million of them adults. Remember in prayer health care professionals and care providers who work in HIV/AIDS education, prevention, treatment and research.

2 Hanging Advent wreaths and lighting candles to anticipate the birth of the Messiah are Christian traditions that date back hundreds of years. Thank God for the gift of Jesus Christ that continues to change our identities, our lives and our understanding of life as beloved children of God.

3 Pray for people and whole communities in the Caribbean that have suffered devastation and loss from Hurricane Melissa, especially across Jamaica, Haiti, Cuba and the Bahamas. Ask God to strengthen their faith as they recover and rebuild and to bless them with support, resources, funding, volunteers and prayers for the duration of their recovery.

4 Pray that, throughout this season of gift-giving, we will be mindful of those, nearby and far away, who lie beyond our familiar circles of family, friends, neighbors and co-workers.

5 LWF (Lutheran World Federation) World Service is composed of 154 churches, in 25 countries, that embrace the Lutheran tradition, including the ELCA. Pray for the LWF's humanitarian and development work, which promotes peace, justice, reconciliation and dignity for individuals and communities.

6 Pray that we will exercise hospitality and generosity by inviting others to be part of our Advent traditions, worship, meals and celebrations.

7 Pray for the Spirit to form us into faithful yet ever-maturing disciples of Christ who, like John the Baptist, proclaim the gospel, invite others to believe, and boldly serve our neighbors.

8 Martin Luther is supposed to have said, "I have so much to do that I shall have to spend the first three hours in prayer." For what and whom will you pray today?

9 Ask God to help us find paths to peace and reconciliation in places of conflict where they have proved elusive, especially in Palestine, Israel, Eastern Europe, Northern Africa and sub-Saharan Africa. Remember in prayer the millions of people who have suffered and been displaced to unfamiliar lands.

10 Theologian Henri Nouwen wrote, "The Lord is coming, always coming. When you have ears to hear and eyes to see, you will recognize him at any moment of your life. Life is Advent; life is recognizing the coming of the Lord." Say a quiet prayer every day, acknowledging Advent as a time of remembrance, anticipation, celebration of God's presence and hope for Christ's return.

11 Pray that the light of God's love and forgiveness will shine brightly, renewing your faith and guiding you every day.

12 Remember in prayer local, state and national leaders, that they will exercise their responsibilities with compassion, justice, fairness and commitment. Ask God to help them as they address intractable problems in our communities and nation, including poverty, racism and limited access to health care.

13 Give thanks for students returning home from colleges, universities and seminaries. Pray that their journeys will be safe and that they will be renewed by the blessings of family, friends and welcoming faith communities.

14 How will you tell others about your faith throughout Advent? Pray for the Spirit's inspiration as you articulate what God is doing in your life and how you have been changed by the embodiment of God's amazing grace in Jesus Christ.

15 Give thanks for far-reaching programs and ministries of our church and congregations that encourage hope, comfort and healing, grounded in God's infinite love and forgiveness.

16 *Las Posadas* This tradition uses lighted paths and processions from house to house to remember Mary and Joseph's journey through Bethlehem in search of shelter. Pray that this experience will prompt us to welcome, accompany and serve strangers, immigrants, refugees and neighbors in need.

17 Ask God to help us be patient and merciful with ourselves, our siblings in Christ and the people around us.

18 *International Migrants Day* Pray for immigrants and refugees around the world who seek safety, a welcoming community and a place to rebuild their lives. Give thanks for the ministries of our church and other organizations that enable us to respond with compassion, support and resources, including Global Refuge, Lutheran Services in America, LWF (Lutheran World Federation) World Service, and the ELCA's AMMPARO strategy (Accompanying Migrants with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities).

19 Pray that, throughout this season of celebration and gift-giving, our faith and the example of Jesus will inspire our generosity toward neighbors who suffer poverty, loneliness and isolation, especially during the holidays. Pray that our actions and words might reflect the light of God's love, stirring hope, joy and compassion.

20 Pray for Global Mission personnel and those serving in the Young Adults in Global Mission program who celebrate Advent and Christmas far from home, and thank God for our global companions, whose traditions enrich our faith.

21 *Winter solstice* On this shortest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere, give thanks for the brilliant light of God's love.

22 Remember in prayer those who serve our communities, often working hours that prevent them from participating in worship and holiday activities. Pray for those working in health care,

law enforcement, retail sales, emergency response, the military, social services, the hospitality industry and other vocations that we have come to rely upon.

23 Pray that our hearts and minds will be receptive when the work of the Spirit surprises us.

24 *Christmas Eve* "Jesus' voice from lowly manger softly thus calls to us: 'You are safe from danger; come and see; from all that grieves you you are freed; all you need I will surely give you'" ("All My Heart Again Rejoices" *ELW* 273). Praise God for knowing what we yearn for most and responding with generous, tender mercy. Let your hearts overflow with thanksgiving.

25 *Christmas Day* Oscar Romero, the martyred Roman Catholic bishop of San Salvador, wrote, "The more simple and humble, the more poor and detached from ourselves, the more full of troubles and problems we are, the more bewildering life's ways, all the more must we look up to the skies and hear the great news: 'A Savior is born to you.' And let us listen in chorus to that great news, sung throughout the universe: 'Glory to God in the heavens, and on earth peace to those whom God loves.'" Give praise and thanksgiving to God!

26 *Kwanzaa* Pray for our African-descent neighbors and siblings in Christ who observe Kwanzaa, a weeklong celebration of African culture and tradition that emphasizes family, community and culture. Give thanks for the rich and enduring practices of our siblings of African descent and of the global African community.

27 Pray for those who are often forgotten, including neighbors who are incarcerated, are held in immigration detention centers, live in institutions, move from shelter to shelter or are unable to leave their homes.

28 Pray that we might express the life-giving joy of Christmas and that Jesus Christ will continue to bring light, hope and salvation into the world for all people.

29 Lift up prayers of thanksgiving and praise that God illuminates our dark times, gives us strength to endure and surrounds us with love and mercy when we need it most.

30 Give thanks for our siblings in Christ and for our divine parent, who created all that exists and gathers us together.

31 *New Year's Eve* Our baptism sets us on a lifelong journey of thanksgiving, hope, generosity, learning, service and sharing the gospel. Pray for the Spirit to stir our faith in the year ahead and prepare us to continue our journey even though we don't know where it will take us.