

Johnson, Mary Margaret Powers, Bethany Sack, Greta Steeber, and Rachel Zarnke, young adults serving with the new YAGM program in Israel/Palestine.

**23** As we give thanks for the gift of God's Son, pray for missionary children, who live, learn and grow in their faith in a variety of settings around the world.

**24 Christmas Eve** We ask for God's guidance on our journey to the stable, to help us hear the voice of the angels as the birth of Jesus is announced.

**25 Christmas Day** Give thanks today for the gift of Jesus and for all those who give the gifts of time and talent to their neighbors here and throughout the world.

**26 Stephen, Deacon and Martyr**

Thank God for Penn-Zion's Lutheran Church, Harrison City, PA, and all who offer shelter, food, and comfort to those in their communities affected by life's storms.

**27 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmas**

O God, give peace to all people, guide the leaders of all nations so that the earth will be filled with your love.

**28 The Holy Innocents, Martyrs**

Ask God to bless the Alaska Synod and Bishop Michael Keys as they commit themselves to *making disciples* as the primary task of the synod and to every congregation sponsoring a second faith community.

**29 John, Apostle and Evangelist**

Give thanks for the 30 ELCA members who volunteered for three to 11 months through the ELCA Global Mission Volunteer program in 2009. Thank God for the generosity of these teachers, medical trainers, financial consultants

and pastors.

**30** Please pray for God's continuing guidance for Kaw Prairie Community Church and its developer, Pastor Dan McKnight, who dedicated their first building in September. Planted and nurtured by many ELCA partners, including retired laypeople working full-time *pro bono*, this Lutheran congregation seeks to change lives with Jesus' love!

**31** As we welcome another new year let us give thanks to God for all that we have, for our health, our families and our friends. Let us serve those who are sick, in need and alone.

*This resource may be copied and shared among members and friends of the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Prayer Ventures is produced by ELCA Communication Services in cooperation with other units of the ELCA. Contact [info@elca.org](mailto:info@elca.org) for additional information: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Communication Services, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631. Telephone 800/638-3522, ext. 2458.*



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

## PRAYER VENTURES DECEMBER 2009

*Prayer petitions for Sundays follow the World Council of Churches Ecumenical Prayer Cycle and can be incorporated into the prayers at weekly worship. Weekday entries are offered as guides to prayer for the global, social, and outreach ministries of the church. Thank you for your continued prayers for the life and mission of this church.*

**1 World AIDS Day**

On this World AIDS Day, remember those who have died of AIDS. Pray for those infected and affected by the virus, and for caregivers, family and all who minister to them. Lift up Dr. Kris and Rebecca Hartwig, who work with AIDS patients through the Selian Hospital in Arusha, Tanzania.

**2** Pray for Pastor Stephen Deal and his wife Martha Giron. Stephen assists the ELCA in its accompaniment of churches throughout Central America. Martha teaches local women income producing skills through the Costa Rican Lutheran Church.

**3** Let us pray for Dan, Kristen and Andrew at St. Olaf College and for all students at ELCA colleges and universities who are preparing to take part in Advent and Christmas concerts and services, that their gifts may offer worship times of memory and hope for the campus community, alumni and friends.

**4 John of Damascus, theologian and hymn writer**

Please ask the Holy Spirit to use "The Gift of the Magi," a musical being offered on December 4-6 by Cecil County Lutheran Outreach, Colora, Md., to gift and bless both the participants and the listening audience.

**5** Give thanks for Regional Representatives for West Africa, Anne and Willie Langdji, who foster church to church relationships in Cameroon, Senegal, and Central African Republic. Willie serves as liaison with LWF World Service and Lutheran Malaria Initiative, and with EELS/SLDS in Sénégal.

## **6 2nd Sunday of Advent**

### **Nicholas, Bishop of Myra**

God of the nations, we entrust to you the children of the world. Give hope where hope is lacking, strength where there is weakness, and faith where it is sought.

## **7 Ambrose, Bishop of Milan**

Pray that the ELCA will strengthen its efforts to end all forms of human trafficking within the U.S. and abroad and will find new ways to care for and protect those who are the most vulnerable through education and advocacy.

**8** Let us pray for Pastor Megan Jones as she begins a new ELCA/Episcopal campus ministry in the South Loop of Chicago and for all the students in that area who are completing a semester's work and preparing to head home for Christmas—that their work may be blessed and their homecomings joyful.

**9** Thank God for Bob Kasworm, serving the Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Center in Moshi, Tanzania. And for the surgeons and other health care volunteers donating their time and talents to the orthopedic surgical center at Machame Lutheran Hospital, Kilimanjaro Tanzania.

**10** Ask that the Holy Spirit guide and nurture Trinity Lutheran Church, Pelican Rapids, Minn. With 10 different languages spoken in this town of 2,400, Pastor Laurie Skow-Anderson is anxious to find ways to develop long-

lasting, caring relationships.

**11** Pray for all those who are incarcerated and for crime victims, that they may find justice and mercy in God and through our society.

**12** Let us pray for children and teachers in the 1,200 ELCA schools and early childhood education centers that the message of God's love in Jesus Christ may come through strongly for them in this season of many distractions and even more opportunities.

## **13 3rd Sunday of Advent**

We pray, O God, for the people of Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, and Togo. Give strength to congregations as they witness to your peace and joy in the midst of great challenges and changes in their countries.

**14** Let us pray for Diaconal Minister Margy Schmitt Ajer and those with whom she works—students from ELCA Region 1 preparing for rostered in ministry—that preparation and ministry may both nurture their faith and serve the mission of Christ through this church.

**15** For Lutheran ethicists who teach at Lutheran and other colleges, universities, and seminaries as they prepare for their annual meeting in early January in San Jose, California.

**16** Rejoice with and give thanks for Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church, Buffalo, Minn., as they move into their first facility. Started in 2001, the new congregation led by Pastor Josh Nelson has grown to 315 baptized members.

**17** Lift up the ministry of Paula Powell, who serves with Lutheran Communion in South Africa (LUCSA), Located

in Johannesburg, South Africa. LUCSA members include churches in Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

**18** Pray for those who have recently lost their jobs and are now looking for ways to provide for their families. May they find comfort and peace.

**19** Give thanks for the ministry of the regional representatives as they accompany ELCA companion churches in various regions. Ask God's wisdom for Richard Sarker and Phillip Baker in Asia and the Pacific; Lou Marie and Philip Knutson in Southern Africa; Andrew and Barbara Hinderlie and Bob and JMe Lowden in East Africa; Anne and Willie Langdji and Viking and Marissa Dietrich in West Africa; Michele and Peter Johnson and Arden and Janna Haug in the Middle East and Europe; and Kathryn Lawler and David Wunsch and Stephen Deal in Latin America and the Caribbean.

## **20 4th Sunday of Advent**

Gracious God, look with favor upon the churches in Ghana and Nigeria. May they find, in the midst of great challenges of witnessing to your mercy, strength and nourishment in your Word.

**21** Pray for Pastor Philip and Lou-Marie Knutson and their family, who serve with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (ELCSA). Philip is a resource person, advisor and trainer for ELCSA's Christian education program. He also serves ELCA Global Mission as regional program assistant for Southern Africa.

**22** Praise God for the ministry of presence that Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) provide throughout the world. Today, ask God to bless Laurie Blank, Anna