

Rooted in Grace and Rising in Love

Pray Without Ceasing for September 16 2026

Welcome

Welcome to Pray Without Ceasing. Today we gather as people rooted in God's grace and sent by the Holy Spirit. We bring gratitude for the faithful story God has already written among us, and we ask for courage to make Christ's love visible in the next chapter.

Opening Prayer

Gracious God, you were at work before we arrived, you are present among us now, and you will remain faithful in every season ahead. Quiet what distracts us. Open us to your Word, join our prayers with the prayers of the whole church, and send us in the love of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Scripture

John 15:9-12 NRSVUE

[Insert the full NRSVUE text from New Spirit's licensed source before public use.]

Reflection

Jesus does not tell his disciples to invent love from nothing. He invites them to remain in the love they have already received and to let that love shape how they live with one another. Grace comes first; our response follows.

New Spirit's story contains many signs of that response: people carrying groceries for a food pantry, gathering around Scripture, serving meals, packing bags, making quilts, knitting caps, welcoming neighbors, and praying together. These actions do not earn God's love. They make visible the love in which Christ has already rooted us.

A new season asks us to receive that history without becoming trapped by it. The cross remains at the center. The gospel remains our foundation. The Holy Spirit continues to move us toward people who are hungry, lonely, frightened, or told that their worth is uncertain. We rise when the love we confess becomes the love our neighbor can experience.

Silence For Reflection

Keep two minutes of silence. Ask: Where have I received grace, and whom is God inviting me to notice?

Candle and Prayer Invitation

You are invited to light a candle or hold a quiet posture of prayer. Speak a name, place, or need aloud, place it in the online comments if appropriate, or hold it silently before God. After each prayer, the leader may say, “Root us in grace,” and all respond, “Send us in love.”

ELCA Prayer Ventures

Prayer prompts for September 16 through 22 are adapted and expanded from the official ELCA Prayer Ventures resource for September 2026. Individual dates are omitted for congregational use.

Accompaniment in Latin America and the Caribbean

God of the whole church, bless ELCA missionaries who accompany companion churches in Latin America and the Caribbean. Strengthen young adults serving through Young Adults in Global Mission in Mexico and Argentina and Uruguay. Make their relationships mutual, humble, and alive with the gospel.

Our Moravian Siblings in Christ

God of unity, we thank you for the ELCA’s full communion relationship with the Moravian Church in America. Sustain its members and leaders in challenging times, and help our churches share strength, wisdom, and resources. Through our common witness, make the good news of Jesus visible in service to our neighbors.

Forgiveness and Healing

Merciful Christ, you call us beyond keeping score and into the difficult work of forgiveness. Give patience and courage where relationships are strained, and protect people from pressure to return to situations that are unsafe. Lead us toward truth, accountability, healing, and peace.

Spiritual Directors and Companions

Guiding Spirit, we thank you for spiritual directors, coaches, and companions who help people deepen faith and discern vocation. Give them wisdom to listen well and humility to point beyond themselves to your presence. Equip those they accompany to encourage and serve others.

The Parables of Jesus

Teacher Jesus, thank you for the parables that reveal God’s reign through ordinary stories. Be patient with us when we are puzzled, doubtful, defensive, or full of questions. Open our imagination so that your Word changes how we love and serve neighbors in need.

Autumn and Care of Creation

Creator God, we give thanks for changing seasons and for the intricate relationships that sustain all life. Teach us to receive creation as gift rather than possession. Guide our congregation, our community, and our leaders to steward water, land, air, creatures, and shared resources wisely and justly.

The Conference of Bishops

Holy Spirit, be with the 65 synod bishops gathering for the ELCA Conference of Bishops. Deepen their trust in one another through prayer, worship, study, reflection, and counsel. Give them courage and wisdom to guide the church's mission for the sake of the world you love.

New Spirit and Our Neighborhood

A New Chapter

Faithful God, thank you for the people and ministries that have shaped New Spirit across the years. Keep us rooted in Christ as we live more fully into our core values. Let our new visual identity point beyond itself to grace, belonging, mercy, and courageous love.

Worship and Music Transition

God of song and silence, sustain everyone carrying added responsibility during New Spirit's worship and music transition. Renew Phil, Kimmi, the praise team, Becky, Marty, and all who prepare music, sound, media, and ProPresenter. Guide the search process toward a minister of worship and music who will lead with faith, skill, collaboration, and an inclusive welcome.

Ministries of Love Made Visible

Jesus, bless Blessings in a Backpack, 2nd Saturday Blessings, the quilters, those who knit caps, those who prepare blessing bags, and every ministry that feeds, shelters, welcomes, and accompanies our neighbors. Protect volunteers from exhaustion, provide needed resources, and keep each person at the center of our service.

Our Neighborhood

Compassionate God, draw near to neighbors who are hungry, unhoused, lonely, grieving, ill, or afraid. Guide public servants and community partners toward just and practical care. Make New Spirit a trustworthy place where people are seen, respected, and welcomed without pretending.

Those Without Someone to Pray for Them

God who knows every name, we pray for those without someone to pray for them. Hold close those who feel forgotten, isolated, or invisible. Send signs of your care through neighbors, caregivers, congregations, and unexpected companions.

Closing Prayer

God of grace, receive the prayers we have spoken and the prayers for which we have no words. Center us again in the cross of Christ. Give us courage to notice the neighbor beyond our usual circle and make love visible through welcome, care, listening, and service. Lead New Spirit into this new season, not by our strength alone, but by the power of your Holy Spirit. Amen.

Blessing

The God who has rooted you in grace keep you in Christ. The Holy Spirit give you courage to rise. And the love of Jesus become visible through you, today and always. Amen.

Suggested Timing

- Welcome and opening prayer — 3 minutes
- Scripture — 3 minutes
- Reflection — 4 minutes
- Silence for Reflection — 2 minutes
- Candle and personal prayers — 4 minutes
- Prayer Ventures and New Spirit prayers — 8 minutes
- Closing prayer and blessing — 2 minutes

Source

ELCA Prayer Ventures September 2026:

https://cdn.elca.org/cdn/wpcontent/uploads/PV_0926_letter.pdf