

Who Are God's People?

Jesus, remind us that God's people come in different shapes, sizes, and colors. God's people do not all look alike, think alike, act alike or speak alike. They do not all share the same culture or the same history. They do not all call you by the same name. Even so, God created all people and loves all people. God gave all people the ability to love, learn and grow; solve problems, and make choices – both good ones and bad ones. God gave people the capacity for great good and incomprehensible evil. None of us is perfect; none of us is better than anyone else; none of us is entitled to special privileges or treatment. No one has the right to advance themselves at the expense of others. Just as God loves each of the people he created, God calls us to love them too and share his love with them. When Jesus taught that we are to love our neighbors, he did not put any limits on who our neighbors are, and specifically made it clear that neighbors include both friends and enemies alike. Help us strive to love as God loves without conditions or prejudice.

This week, remember in prayer:

- **April 24, marked the 106th anniversary of the start of the Armenian Genocide** which began April 24, 1915. More than 1,500,000 Armenians were killed by the Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1923. This was the 20th century's first genocide. (President Biden is the first US president to use the term "genocide" to refer to this event). The Church of the Brethren's first large-scale disaster response effort began in 1917 when Brethren began aiding Armenian survivors & refugees of this genocide. This year also marks 104 years of Church of the Brethren compassionate response to those affected by disasters & war. Pray for all victims of disaster or war & those who try to help them.
- **People who live with the ugliness of racism, bigotry, or prejudice.** That we have not learned the lessons Jesus taught about how to treat each other, or the lessons from our past about the dehumanizing nature of fear & the all-consuming & destructive power of hate, is demonstrated every day. The viciousness of hate crimes is part of this deplorable ugliness. Pray for those who live with the reality of racism & with those who do not understand or acknowledge that they play a role in continuing it.
- **People dealing with COVID-19.** Remember all whose lives have been touched by COVID, here & around the world; especially places like India where the healthcare system is being overwhelmed. The pandemic is not over yet.
- **Refugees & those displaced by violence** –especially the children. Remember that people do not flee their homes unless forced or because conditions where they live, are far worse than those, they know they will face when fleeing. The pandemic has made the refugee situation much more difficult. Help us work to make changes that will improve conditions at home for everyone so no one will be driven to flee.
- **In South Sudan,** prayers are requested for people facing food insecurity, violent conflict, corruption, & flooding.
- **A prayer request has been received from Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria)** for the Majalisa or annual conference of the denomination. The Majalisa, scheduled to be held April 29th to 30th, is the highest decision-making body of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria.



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