

This Week Pray For

- **Ukraine:** The Church of the Brethren raises up prayers for peace in concert with other Christians around the world, continuing to support the calls for peace in Ukraine from the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCC) and the World Council of Churches (WCC).



Called as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace; inspired by scripture; remembering the steadfast commitment to peacemaking expressed by our Annual Conference; and with deep concern and compassion for the people of Ukraine and Russia—civilians and soldiers alike—we pray:

- That a diplomatic solution to this crisis will be found.
- That Russia will remove its troops from the rebel-held areas of Ukraine and from its borders.
- That Russia, the United States, NATO, and other European and world powers will not resort to warfare.
- That every possible means are attempted to prevent escalation.
- That the devastating threat of nuclear retaliation will be avoided at all costs.

From Church of the Brethren *Newsline* February 22, 2022

- **The people of Tonga** recovery efforts from the Jan. 15 volcanic eruption continue. Some outlying settlements were wiped out. Some people may not be able to return home. After 5 weeks, Tonga's main communications cable has been repaired. Work on a secondary cable that connects outlying islands is ongoing. Needed aid arriving, brought COVID with it. Tonga, had only 1 case of COVID before the eruption, they now have 250. Nearly all eligible residents are vaccinated, so cases have been mild.
- **Madagascar** – where most people are desperately poor, is struggling to recover from 2 cyclones (190 people were killed & 190,000 were displaced). The destruction has been devastating & another storm is on the way. Part of the country is also facing drought & food shortages.
- **Petropolis, Brazil.** Torrential rain caused flooding & mudslides. More than 120 are confirmed dead & 100 are still missing; many are left homeless.
- **The COVID Pandemic.** The number of reported new COVID cases is declining, though still high. Experts fear fewer new case reports may be due to a reduction in testing. The number of deaths is rising. The U.S has seen more than 78.5 million cases of COVID and more than 937,000 deaths. More than 12 million children have had COVID.
- **Victims of Gun Violence** – there have been 64 mass shootings (up from 50 last week) in 2022 in which 69 people died & 244 people were injured. The 2022 gun death total is now 6,284. 221 deaths & 537 of the injured have been children (17 or younger).



When we pray for the people in need in our world, we are praying for peace. Peace is not just the absence of war, it is Shalom – living in harmony with each other & with God's creation. Shalom means health, safety, tranquility, wholeness, & rest – the welfare & prosperity of all. Praying for the needs of others is an important first step in loving people as God calls us to. Next steps include using our time, talents, & resources to help others when disaster strikes, offering comfort in times of need, & working for change when the suffering of others comes from discrimination, persecution, exploitation, or abuse. When shalom does not exist for everyone, no one is fully at peace!

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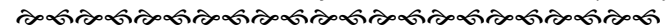


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