



Forgive (Colossians 3:12-17)

Lord, forgive us for the unintended hurt we cause. So often we act or speak without thinking. We do not listen and so do not hear the pain and hurt in people around us. We let self-righteousness get in the way of understanding and empathy.

We let our agenda get in the way of seeing the needs of others. Open our hearts, our eyes and our minds. Move us to love as you love. Lead us to speak and act as you would speak and act. Help us to be as forgiving as we want to be forgiven. Amen

Many of us are living in fear, even in the places where we should feel the safest – our homes, our places of worship, our schools, our communities. Lord be with us all. Help us overcome fear. Help us channel our energies into building up our neighbors and communities rather than tearing them apart. Help us to work for unity not division. Help us to seek dialogue not recrimination. Amen

- The number of hate crimes against Jews is up 57% since 2016.
- The 2 most common fears expressed by school children in this country are being bullied and having a shooting at their school
- Some American politicians regularly include hate speech and even calls to harm their opponents in their rhetoric
- A growing number of people approve of hateful rhetoric and assume anything they do not agree with is not true

This week pray for:

People who are living in fear and those in mourning – last week there were three unspeakable examples of acting out hate make the national news.

- We mourn with all those affected by the loss of 11 lives and pray for the 7 others injured (including the shooter) in Pittsburgh on Saturday when a man with guns attacked people gathered for worship at a synagogue.
- We mourn with those affected by the fatal shooting of two black people at a Kroger store in Kentucky after the shooter's apparent failed attempt to attack a black church.
- We give thanks that no lives were lost when many people were put in harm's way by at least 15 pipe bombs sent to political leaders through the mail.
- We should not forget to pray about other incidents of violence in the U.S. in the last week. There were at least 7 other multiple shooting incidents between October 21 & the 28th. 30 were injured and 4 killed in these incidents. On average 96 people die in gun violence every day in the U.S. (<https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/reports/mass-shooting>; <https://everytownresearch.org/gun-violence-america/>)

People seeking refuge from physical, mental, or economic violence – thousands of people are on the move seeking a better life or even the chance for life itself. They continue to flee from wars and violence, from authoritarian governments that persecute their own people, and economic situations that often leave people with little choice – either stay 'home' and starve or leave home in search of survival.



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