

Prayers Needed

- **Turkey & Syria** –More than 41,000 people have been killed & thousands more are injured. These numbers continue to climb. Even as some people are miraculously still being found alive a week after the first quake. More than 150,000 survivors have been moved to shelters outside the quake zone. The area effected by the devastation is about twice the size of neighboring Lebanon – 4,000 square miles.
- **New Zealand** – still recovering from record heavy rain & flooding. Now a cyclone has hit causing more flooding, mudslides & other damage – a worst in a century event.
- **Refugees fleeing political crisis & violence** – the US has put in place “a safe & lawful way” for qualifying Haitians, Cubans & Nicaraguans, with US-based supporters, to travel by air to & temporarily reside in the US. They may apply for work authorization while here. Numerical caps on a similar program for Venezuelans have been lifted. Also remember refugees who do not have access to this option & those in other parts of the world with no safe place to go.
- **Haiti** – Gang activity is still creating terror, violence, hunger, & disease in Haiti. Kidnaping for ransom is a major & growing problem. Clergy & places of worship are increasingly being targeted. A priest, a Baptist pastor, & 2 worshipers were taken in the last week. Rape & murder are also being used to terrorize people. What remains of government has been unable to stop the gangs. No international help has been offered, though it has been requested. Pray for the country & for the Haitian Brethren there trying to survive in this crisis. Haiti is now on the US government no travel list because it is not safe to go there.
- **Ukraine where war continues** – attacks against Ukrainian civilians are ongoing. Russia is using both Russian forces & private troops against Ukraine. The Russians continue attacks that intentionally cut power, heat, & water to civilians in the midst of winter.
- **Somalia** – severe food insecurity continues. Drought & violence have displaced millions.
- **Victims of Gun Violence** – Already this year, 5,241 people have died in gun violence (up 796 from last week) including 218 children (up 38 from last week). 3,899 people have been injured (up by 573 from last week) including 485 children (up 68 people from last week). 2,970 of the deaths are suicides (up 462 from last week). There have already been 68 mass shootings (up 8 from last week) this year. This is more than 2 every day. (Gun Violence Archive statistics). Let us not forget, these statistics are not just print on paper. These numbers represent precious lives, loved ones lost; futures cut short, none of which can be replaced.
- **The continuing COVID Pandemic** – COVID, RSV virus, & flu continue to be a serious issue. Vaccines & treatments have reduced COVID death rates, but COVID continues to spread. The new COVID variants, now circulating, are the most contagious yet. 2,500 people (including 90 in Ohio) are dying every day of COVID.



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 and with God's creation. Shalom means health, safety, tranquility, wholeness, and rest – the welfare and 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, and resources to help others when disaster strikes, offering comfort in times of need, and 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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