

Be In Prayer

- **Refugees fleeing political crisis & violence** – At the end of 2021 there were 89.3 million people forcibly displaced (people forced out of their home countries). Of these, 27.1 million were refugees (half were under age 18). There were also 53.2 million internally displaced people, 4.6 million asylum seekers, & millions of people who are stateless (their countries will not grant them citizenship). The largest group of stateless people in the world are the Rohingya, a Muslim minority group in predominantly Buddhist Myanmar (Burma). The Rohingya have faced discrimination and persecution for decades. The latest wave of violence against them began in 2017. Thousands have been killed and 980,000 Rohingya have fled to neighboring countries – most to Bangladesh seeking safety. In Bangladesh the Rohingya live in the world's 2 largest refugee camps. 1.1 million Rohingya are displaced within Myanmar as well.
- **Countries Dealing with Major Political and/or Economic Upheaval** including Sri Lanka, Venezuela, the Philippines, South Africa, Nigeria, South Sudan, Myanmar, Democratic Republic of Congo, Columbia, Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia, Iran, Mexico, the country of Georgia, Chili
- **Victims of Gun Violence** – Already this year, 7,669 people have died in gun violence (up 593 from last week) including 308 children (up 20 from last week). 5,720 people have been injured (up by 460 from last week) including 759 children (up 68 people from last week). 4,356 of the deaths are suicides (up 330 from last week). There have already been 105 mass shootings (up 10 from last week) this year. (Gun Violence Archive statistics). Do 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.
- **Ukraine where the war, now a year old, continues** – attacks against Ukrainian civilians are ongoing. Russia is using both Russian forces & private troops against Ukraine.
- **Weather** – those dealing with tornados in the Midwest & other weather issues including winter storms in the west that have left people stranded in California, & storms in the south.
- **Turkey & Syria** – The recovery is ongoing even as aftershocks continue to bring unstable buildings down.
- **The continuing COVID Pandemic** – COVID continues to be a serious issue. While vaccines & treatments have reduced COVID death rates, COVID continues to spread. (The number of new cases is increasing in some places while remaining flat in others.)
- **Migrant Workers** – many countries rely on migrant workers to do much necessary work – often unskilled work or work that citizens do not like to do. Many of these workers find themselves in this situation because they are desperate to provide for their families who live in extreme poverty in places where there is no work or living wages. Many migrant workers have little if any say about working conditions and little or no recourse if they face abuse or dangerous conditions – not even the right to change jobs, or quit & return home.



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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