

Pray For Peace!



- **Ecuador** – has experienced increasing violence since the start of the COVID pandemic. Remember the people there including Marianne, a BVSer who has been serving in Ecuador since August. She is safe now, but BVS is monitoring the situation.
- **South Sudan** – The Brethren have many sister churches around the world. South Sudan is currently the only mission fully funded by the Brethren in the U.S. The country sits somewhere between peace & war. Most of the country's food comes from Uganda. The Sudanese are afraid to invest in farming because they are scared that war may come again. Many Sudanese are still refugees in Uganda. At the same time, refugees from neighboring Sudan, where war rages, continue coming to South Sudan (South Sudan became independent from Sudan in 2011). The church is trying to live the gospel, heal the wounds of war, bring reconciliation, & encourage the people to start farming again so they can feed themselves. Pray for this work & the country.
- **Japan** – people are still recovering from the Jan 1 earthquake. Not everyone affected has been reached with help. Aftershocks continue so people cannot return, even to undamaged homes. The quake even extended the affected coastline some 820 feet.
- **Those dealing with storms & flooding** – Brazil (flooding), Australia (flooding); Nepal (earthquake); Democratic Republic of Congo (rain & landslides); U.S. (storms, tornados, wind; flooding; extreme cold); Thailand (flooding), China (landslide)
- **Those dealing with COVID** – Almost 1,500 people a week are dying of COVID in the U.S. Most are unvaccinated people.
- **Middle East.** the war continues. Gaza is under constant attack. Over 25,000 people, more than a third of them children, have been killed in Gaza where no place is safe. 90% of the people have been displaced. 1 million people in Gaza are starving. Most have no access to clean water or medical care. Disease is flourishing. Violence against Palestinians in the West Bank is also on the rise. Israeli & American air strikes on targets outside of Gaza & attacks on Israeli targets credited to rebel groups from outside Gaza threaten to widen the war. Some Israelis want Israeli settlers to be allowed to take over Gaza after all Palestinians are forced to flee by the Israeli bombing & assaults. This would mean never allowing Palestinian survivors to return to their homes. South Africa has taken Israel to the UN International court accusing them of genocide in their treatment of Palestinians in Gaza, & calling for an immediate end to the Israeli campaign. South Africans believe Israel's retaliatory actions are way out of proportion to the Oct. 7 Hamas attack. Remember people calling for an end to the violence.
- **Ukraine. The war continues.** 6 million people have fled the country & 4 million are internally displaced. Russia's alliance with North Korea & Iran is providing military supplies to Russia that may expand the war. Media attention's shift to the Middle east, has made the situation in Ukraine more difficult.
- **Victims of Gun Violence** – Already this year, 2,441 people (up 644 in a week) have died in gun violence including 91 children (up 27 in a week). 1,504 people (up 373 in a week) have been injured including 171 children (up 40 in a week). 1,518 of the deaths are suicides (up 396 in a week). There have already been 24 mass shootings this year (up 12 in a week – double the number last week). (Gun Violence Archive).