

HOPE COUNTRYSIDE

Seeds of Prayer

'The nations rage'

As the “nations rage and the kingdoms totter” ([Psalm 2:1](#); [Psalm 46:6](#)), give thanks that the Lord “sits on His holy throne” and “rules over the nations” ([Psalm 2:4-6](#); [Psalm 11:4](#); [Psalm 47:8](#); [Psalm 22:28](#)). He is coming to judge the peoples of the earth with righteousness and equity ([Psalm 98:9](#)) and people from all nations will turn to and worship Him ([Psalm 22:27](#)). While fear is “on every side” ([Psalm 31:13](#)), give thanks that we are not to fear but trust Him ([Isaiah 12:2](#)), as He will keep those who trust Him in “perfect peace” ([Isaiah 26:3](#)).

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea... Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations ([Psalm 46:1-2,10](#)).

This issue departs from our core concerns to pray for Ukraine. We want to root our prayers in God’s word, so please read and pray the scriptures referenced, especially the psalms. And please join us for a special **'online prayer gathering' on 26 March, 9.00-10.30**; email as above for details/ login.

Lord our God, great and almighty, we your sinful children turn to you with humility in our hearts and bow our heads low before you. We beseech your loving kindness and abundant blessings upon the nation - the people - of Ukraine during these days of great danger to their safety and wellbeing (from 'Statement of the Council of Bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA - bit.ly/uocusa).

'The breadbasket of Europe'

Agriculture is the largest sector of Ukraine's economy (10% of GDP and 41% of total exports in 2021). Ukraine supplies 10% of the world’s wheat; Russia a further 18%. The war and sanctions will severely disrupt Ukrainian and Russian agricultural production and trade, with profound effects on national and global food supplies, especially hitting lower income countries reliant on imports from these countries. It will also impact farming and food in the UK, and globally. *Pray for Ukrainian and Russian farmers and for all whose livelihoods rely on farming and food production in every country affected. Pray for all who will suffer food shortages and higher costs, that they will turn to the Lord, who will not only “keep them alive in famine”, but also “deliver their souls from death”* ([Psalm 33:19](#)).

'The household of faith'

We are called to pray for, and do good to, all, especially those of the “household of faith” ([1 Timothy 2:1](#); [Galatians 6:10](#)). *Pray for believers in Ukraine and Russia - that they will know the peace that Jesus gives, which “passes understanding”* ([John 14:27](#); [John 16:33](#); [Philippians 4:7](#)) and will be shining lights in the darkness ([Matthew 5:14-16](#)). As the “nations rage”, pray that believers will be given boldness to speak His word and that the Lord will 'stretch out His hand to heal and that signs and wonders may be done' ([Acts 4:23-30](#)). As people in Ukraine are turning to God in the face of adversity (bit.ly/eternityukraine), pray that many will find Him both as a 'refuge and strength' in their present trouble ([Psalm 46:1](#)) and Saviour and Lord for eternity.

'All in authority'

We are also to pray for “kings and all who are in authority” ([1 Timothy 2:1-2](#)). *Pray for Volodymyr Zelenskyy (Ukraine's first Jewish president) and Vladimir Putin (a professing Orthodox Christian), and for Western leaders (who seem weak, distracted and compromised). The 'kings of the earth' may have “terrifying power”, but they will pass away and “the meek shall inherit the earth”* ([Psalm 37:9-11](#); [35-36](#)). *Pray for rulers to be 'wise and kiss the Son before His wrath is kindled'* ([Psalm 2:12](#)). “Put them in fear, O Lord! Let the nations know that they are but men” ([Psalm 9:20](#)).

'Shame of face'

The attack on Ukraine is also a ‘judgement’ on a weak, decadent, morally bankrupt, ‘woke’, West, which has abandoned its Christian heritage and instead ‘imagine vain and ungodly things’ ([Psalm 2:1](#); [2 Timothy 3:1-5](#)), and on a church that has been complicit in this. As with any calamity, but more so, it is a call to ‘humble ourselves, pray, seek God’s face and turn from our wicked ways’ ([2 Chronicles 7:14](#)). “O Lord, to us belongs shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You.... O Lord, hear. O Lord, forgive. O Lord, listen and act” ([Daniel 9:8-19](#)).