



Liturgy For World Refugee Day 2022



European
Methodist
Council

METHODIST.EU



Introduction

Migration in Europe in recent years has developed to radically new dimensions. Therefore, the European Methodist Council has decided to give particular attention to this theme which leaves no one unaffected. The EMC asks its member churches to dedicate a special Sunday for migrants and refugees, on the Sunday closest to the 20th June, which is World Refugee Day.

There are now more than 84 million refugees and displaced people around the world. In Europe, in less than a month, the crisis in Ukraine made this country the second-largest country of origin for the global refugee population. As of April 29, 2022, over 5.3 million Ukrainians have fled the country, with nearly 3 million taking shelter just across the border in Poland. Moreover there are 7.7 million internally displaced people.

This year we have invited contributions from people from Ukraine and from countries hosting refugees.

You can find additional resources on the European Methodist Council Website: www.methodist.eu/resources

With thanks to OPCEMI, the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe (UMC) and GBGM for contributing to the preparation of these materials.



Psalm 9:9

The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.

Call to Worship

Leader: We are gathered for worship today in the name of God

who takes care of every creature as a father and as a mother;

Who in Jesus Christ is on the side of the weak and those who are treated without justice;

Who in his Holy Spirit gives us the capacity to give solidarity to those who suffer

and the power to resist all that threatens and destroys life.

We believe that our help comes from the Lord

who made heaven and earth

for that we bless His name forever.

All: Be blessed His name forever. Amen

Hymn

Welcome and Introduction to the theme (during the introduction you can show stories, photographs and some figures from this cruel conflict)

The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble (Psalm 9:9).

Today is World Refugee Day and we decided to make the words of Psalm 9 the theme of this special service. The prayer of the psalmist gives voice to those who are in our thoughts today.

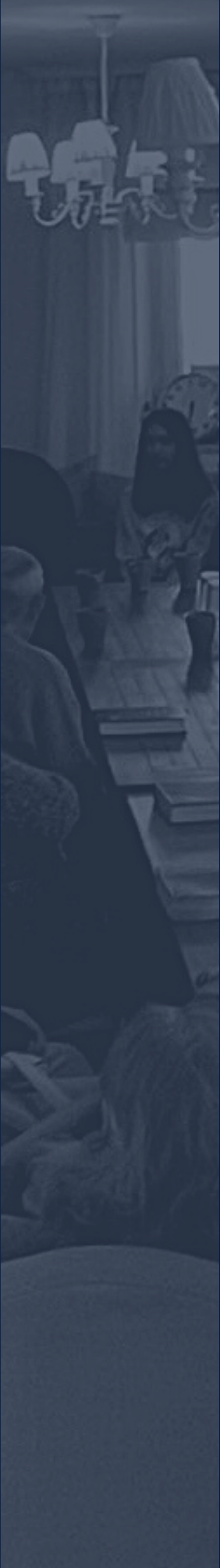
Poetic reflections on a recent trip to Poland – Ukraine

A roof over my head. A nice one too.
With ways and means. And money and food.
A laptop charger. A phone cable. My favourite baseball
cap. Things I leave behind.
Ridiculous in comparison to those in the Centre. Who know
loss of a different kind.
400 field beds in an overflow place.
Dog food and cat litter. Sim cards. With gigabytes and
minutes.
Men playing Guitars. Kids playing ball. Help in every corner.
And the best use of national flags I've ever seen.
Aid trucks and campers and lorries and vans.
Folks who cross a continent because they must. And can.
Indian Chai from a German of Pakistani descent.
Sikh, Christian, Muslim, Jew. Normal service has been
resumed.
Breakfast with dozens of policemen. Safe and secure.
Convoys of tanks and military vehicles.
Bringing hope. Or despair. Depending on who you talk to.
My heart breaks for those who are forced to choose.
Brothers and sisters singing songs of hope.
Believing. Hoping that Europe will now see them differently.
That Europe will see them. That Europe will see.
We will. We do. But why did we need a war to open our
eyes?

Barry Sloan (Poland/Ukraine border, 25th April 2022)
Prayer

A Prayer Response to Zephaniah 3:17

The Lord, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing

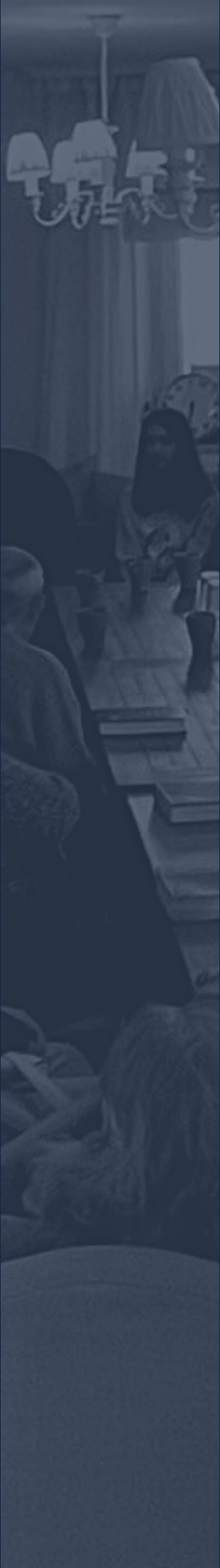


Lord you are with us. In each and every step of staying or fleeing. In each step of traveling across borders and setting up a new life in a new country and a new culture, you are with us. As our hearts break and tears fall, you are with us. In our longing and our praying, our fighting and our sighing, you are with us.

You are mighty to save. Lord as we walk new paths and as we walk alongside those who are walking new paths, Lord save us. We have seen you working things together for good in our new relationships and in the beauty that has come out of a truly tragic situation, but You working all things together for good does not inhibit our prayer for salvation. Salvation of lives, salvation of land, salvation in every sense of the word. Lord you are mighty to save. Continue to show up in mighty ways.

You take great delight in us. Lord we confess in this time it can be hard to find your delight. When things feel heavy and worries abound, nevertheless the truth prevails. You take great delight in us. You are endeared to the hearts of your children who have fled to new lands. Lord you have great things to say about caring for those in other lands for your heart is for them and not against them, and so Lord we celebrate your delight in the lives and hearts and minds of your children even as they learn to live and work and play in new places.

Lord, you quiet us with your love. We need this now Lord. As we continue to navigate the unknown and the changes that have occurred and may yet to come, Lord quiet us with your love. Instill in us your deep peace - the peace that passes all understanding for Lord it is when you quiet us that we are best able to receive and then to respond. Lord in all the ways we do not know the specifics to ask for, we ask for you to quiet hearts, minds, fears, worries, and sorrows with your love. Lord we know that this quieting is not a displacement or a distraction but rather your quieting involves healing and we pray for that.



You rejoice over us with song. Songs have long been a way for us to connect to your heart. Hallelujah, thank you Father that you are rejoicing over us with song. May your song continue to invite, heal, encourage, protect, and bring a sense of thriving over all refugees in all lands this day and every day moving onward.

Through the character and by the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

(Sarah Putman, Coordinator of the Work in Romaia with/for Refugees from Ukraine)

Hymn

Immigrants Creed

I believe in Almighty God,
who guided the people in exile and in exodus, the God of Joseph in Egypt and Daniel in Babylon, the God of foreigners and immigrants.

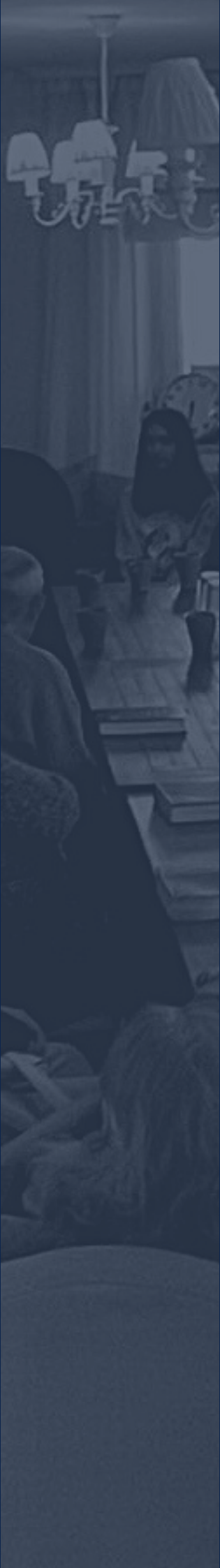
I believe in Jesus Christ, a displaced Galilean,
who was born away from his people and his home, who fled his country with his parents when his life was in danger.

When he returned to his own country he suffered under the oppression of Pontius Pilate, the servant of a foreign power. Jesus was persecuted, beaten, tortured, and unjustly condemned to death.

But on the third day Jesus rose from the dead,
not as a scorned foreigner but to offer us citizenship in God's kingdom.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the eternal immigrant from God's kingdom among us,
who speaks all languages, lives in all countries, and reunites all races.

I believe that the Church is the secure home
for foreigners and for all believers.



I believe that the communion of saints begins
when we embrace all God's people in all their diversity.
I believe in forgiveness, which makes us all equal before
God, and in reconciliation, which heals our brokenness.
I believe that in the Resurrection
God will unite us as one people
in which all are distinct and all are alike at the same
time.

I believe in life eternal, in which no one will be foreigner
but all will be citizens of the kingdom
where God reigns forever and ever. Amen.

(Jose Luis Casal)

Bible Readings: Isaiah 43: 1-4; Romans 12: 17-21; Mark 4:
35-41

Sermon

Hymn

HOLY COMMUNION

Prayer of Introduction

Our God, you are the God who loves the stranger, who
gives him bread and clothes.

You are the God who protects the foreigner, and
defends the orphan's cause.

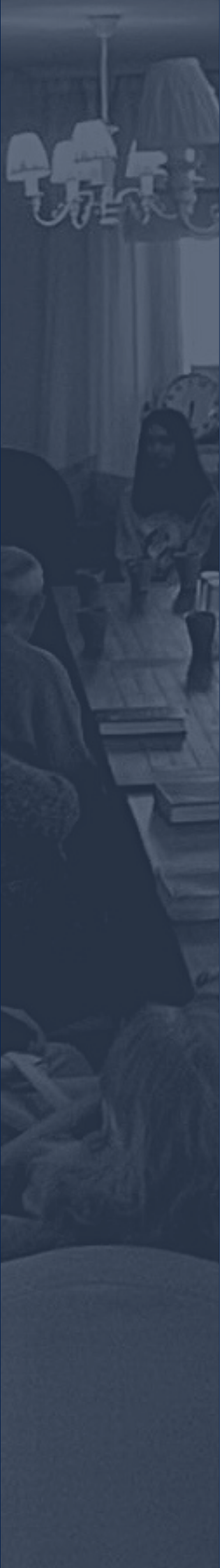
You are the God who becomes a foreigner with
foreigners, a refugee with refugees.

"I was a stranger and you did not accept me", your Son,
Jesus, warns us.

"When, Lord - is our answer - did we see you a stranger?
If we had seen you in need, we would certainly have
welcomed you ".

Forgive us, Lord, because despite our many words
we don't know how to recognize you and we don't know
how to welcome you
in the stranger, in the refugee, in the poor, in every
outcast.

Forgive our short-sightedness, our dryness,
and shatter the barriers we build every day
to avoid to recognize in the other a brother, a sister.



Lord Jesus, we are not worthy of being welcomed at your table:

but we ask you to perform the miracle of Emmaus once again,
when the disciples invited you, believing you a stranger.
When the evening came they urged him strongly to stay with them

And that poor dinner, shared with an unknown traveler, was transformed into your Supper: and their eyes were opened.

Open our eyes today, Lord, so that we know to recognize your presence, so that we know how to welcome the other

as you welcomed us, and that we welcome you in the other.

Turn our poor table into your Supper:

that we who have prepared this bread and this wine invite you, that we may become guests of your table.

Amen

Institution

On the night in which Jesus was betrayed, "he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me. In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you" (Luke 22,19-20)

Hymn or music

Invocation

On the night of the first day of resurrection, the stranger who had walked with the disciples stayed with them at Emmaus; and "When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him..." (Luke 24,30-31a)

Come, Lord Jesus, break with us the bread of your love and do that, by receiving it, through the Holy Spirit, we recognize you, and that, recognizing you, we know how to love you and our neighbour,
Amen



The Breaking of the Bread

THE BREAD THAT WE BREAK
IS THE COMMUNION WITH THE BODY OF CHRIST
WHO WAS GIVEN FOR US.

THE CUP OF BLESSING
THAT WE GIVE THANKS FOR
IS THE COMMUNION WITH THE BLOOD OF CHRIST
THAT WAS POURED out FOR US

COMMUNION

Prayer of Thanksgiving

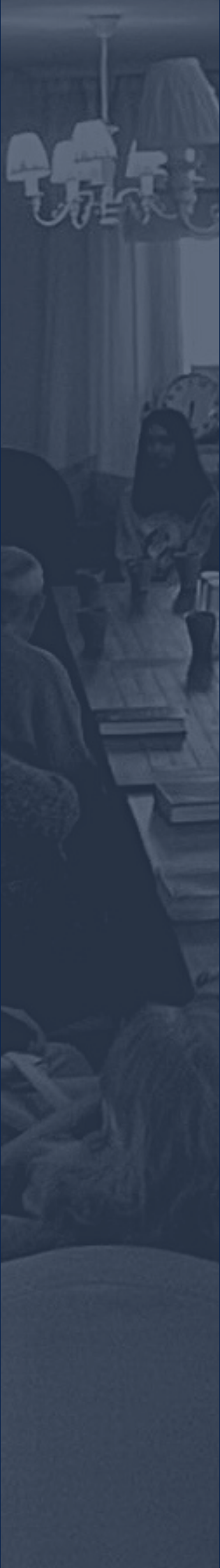
For this blessed and wonderful gesture,
for this gesture so divine and so human,
the gesture of blessing the bread and breaking it
and to multiply it for those who are hungry and thirsty for
justice;
for this friendly gesture that you renew in our midst,
we bless you in turn, unexpected and welcome guest,
who transforms our bread into yours, our home into yours.
We bless you in our turn, divine stranger who, by giving
yourself
you are not only no longer a stranger, but you make us
aware that we are all brothers and sisters,
you make us one body, just as there is one bread.
Amen

(Holy Communion liturgy adapted from a text of the
emeritus rev. Paolo Ricca)

Peace (during the sharing of the peace you may sing a
canticle or song)

Offering (before the offering you could describe a
national or local project related to migrants or refugees
that the congregation has chosen to support)

Prayers from Refugees



Dear Heavenly Father, God of peace.

Thank you for a new day in my life, for a peaceful sky above me in a foreign country, for the people that help us here.

Thank you for saving lives of my family back in Ukraine. My God, you are the One Who holds the universe, and there is nothing impossible for you.

Please protect the people in Ukraine, especially the children and pregnant woman.

May your Hands close the sky from the rockets, may your Holy Spirit comfort those who lost their loved ones.

My hope and trust is in You alone, strengthen my faith and the faith of your children in Ukraine. Give wisdom to all the Ukrainians to bow before You. Please stop the enemy in your mighty way.

In Jesus name I pray. Amen.

Vasylyna from Western Ukraine, currently in the United States, May 5, 2022

Dear Jesus, thank you for my mommy, daddy and little brother. For all blessings you give me, for my toys and tasty food. Please be with my grandparents and aunt in Ukraine. Please stop the war that we can go back home. Love You Jesus. Amen.

Vasylyna's son Viliam (3 and half years old), May 5, 2022

Devote yourselves to prayer. (Colossians 4:2)

Please pray with us:

For their security and integration in Europe.

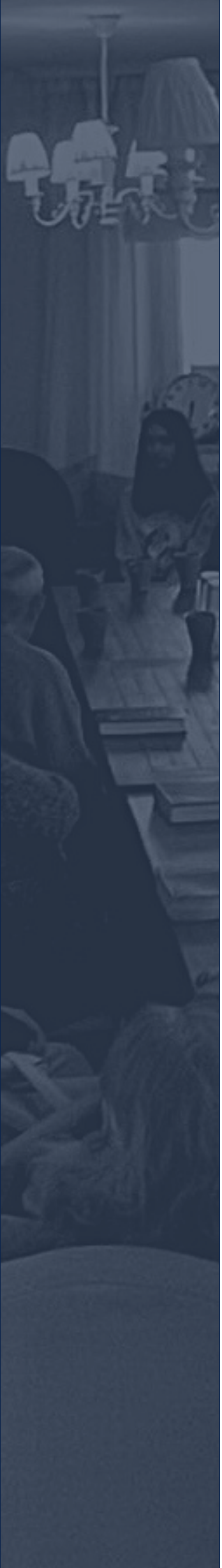
For the youth, their studies and their future without war.

For the reunification of families; many husbands and fathers are in Ukraine and their wives and children are in the European countries.

For the preaching of the Gospel among the refugees and for their acceptance of Jesus Christ as their Savior.

For the revival of Christ's church and open doors for refugees.

Pastor Lev Shults, Prague (Agape UMC, the Russian/Ukrainian-Speaking UMC in Prague (Czech Republic) stays in prayer for the millions of Ukrainian refugees in the European Union.



O God, establish justice, in other war-torn countries:
Myanmar, Syria, Ethiopia and the Tigray region, Yemen,
Armenia, South Sudan.
Free us from the hardships of war.
Open the hearts of those in the west,
Caught as we are in the web of our own self economic
interests, making our governments often unable to boldly
confront evil.
Guide those with responsibility in our governments.
Soften the hearts of those who have hardened them
And let us return to the knowledge of your wisdom.
Give us courage to respond to the cry of the church and
the people in Ukraine.
Protect and encourage those within Russia
Who advocate for peace and justice at the risk of their
own safety.
Blessed are the peace-makers.
Bless all with your peace so that we can work together,
hand in hand, for a more free and just society, to your
praise and glory.

**(Ecumenical Forum of European Christian Women, 2
March 2022)**

The Lord's Prayer

Sending and Blessing

L.: As we prepare to go out from the church
to face the challenges of our existence and of the world,
we invoke God's blessing on us.

May God bless us giving the strength to seek justice.

May God bless us giving the wisdom to take care of
every living being on earth.

May God bless us, giving the love that raises us to new
life.

In the name of the Father, creator of the whole world,
of Jesus Christ, our new Covenant,
and of the Holy Spirit, which opens our eyes and hearts
to God.

May we go in peace giving witness to the hope that we
receive in Christ.

A: Amen.

Closing Hymn