

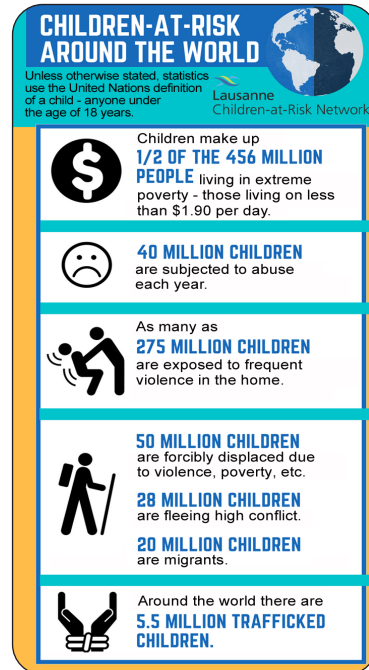
PRAYING FOR THE WORLD

WEEK 22, MAY 31 - JUNE 6

Children at risk

The world has taken strides in recent years to improve children's lives. Far fewer are dying from the preventable diseases of childhood. Around 90% have access to primary school. However, millions of children are at risk of serious harm:

1. Neglect: Risk is increased by poverty, alcohol- or drug-addiction, or domestic abuse, or where parents have learning disabilities or mental illness. Childhood neglect can also be a gateway to deeper problems.
2. Abuse: UNICEF counts that approximately one in 10 of all girls under 20 have experienced sexual violence.
3. Lack of Education: Children who are not in school are at greater risk.
4. War and disaster: Wars take place in streets these days, rather than on battlefields. In conflict areas, or where natural disasters have struck, vaccination rates plummet, education stops, trauma multiplies.
5. Mental health: Worldwide 10-20% of children and adolescents experience mental disorders.



The Church is uniquely well-placed to protect children at risk and make them more resilient, resourceful, and hopeful for a brighter future. No other organization can supply such time, compassion, volunteers, skills, and spiritual resources. Pray that the godly nurture of children everywhere will be a hallmark of the Christian Church.

For many thousands of children and adults, however, their memories of Church or Christian agencies are not of care or compassion but of abusive

adults. Uncovering this, doing justice and working towards restoration—a massive call to holiness and seriousness to the entire Church—is a huge and necessary task. Pray for justice, for transparency, for repentance, for healing.

Pray that the Church would advocate and support policies and practices that make our world fit for children. And when children suffer from anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues, may the Church be a place of safety, acceptance, and counsel where children are loved and cared for.

THE NATIONS

GERMANY



Europe's largest and wealthiest country, Germany (85 million people) has been, along with France, the main driver of European integration.

As in many European countries, Germany's traditional Christian background is fading, but the nation is not without green shoots of new life. More than half of Germans still claim to be Christians, divided roughly equally between Protestants and Catholics. But church attendance is low, evangelicals are relatively few (2% or so of the population) and theological liberalism widespread. Churches, funded by a voluntary tax, are closing as income and attendances fall.

Underneath these headlines, however, expressions of grassroots spirituality are springing up in the form of house churches, youth movements and multicultural congregations. Older traditions like Pietism also fan flames of living, personal faith. Further, the decline has led German evangelicals, Pentecostals and charismatics to bridge some of their internal divisions for the gospel's sake.

In 2015 Germany welcomed over a million Syrian refugees. A major national effort to assimilate them followed, led by the state but providing churches with unparalleled opportunities to serve. While many Germans are resentful, fearful, or confused by this influx, Christians engaged in loving outreach are seeing some encouraging response to the good news.

Pray for old and new streams of German Christianity to flow throughout the land. Despite a long Christian heritage many areas of Germany, and especially the former East Germany, are spiritually barren.

Pray for the Syrian refugees (and older communities of Turks and Iranians) to be re-settled in Germany economically, emotionally, culturally, and spiritually through Christ. Pray that the Christians will rise to this God-given opportunity to serve these Muslim peoples and find grace to serve for the long-term.

Praying for the World is a free weekly prayer guide to inspire and inform the whole church to pray for the whole world. Visit www.lausanne.org/pray to start any week. Created through the partnership of Operation World and the Lausanne Movement.