

# ABCUSA Invites American Baptists to a Time of Prayer; Lifts Up American Baptist Policy Statements



American Baptist Churches USA invites all American Baptists to be united in prayer for our churches, country and brothers and sisters. Please join us for prayer on Friday, February 7, at 3:00 p.m. EST | 12:00 p.m. PST, as we seek God's wisdom and provision in these turbulent times, and as we pray for those who are suffering from natural disasters, policy changes and many concerns. [Learn more and register here.](#)

American Baptist Churches USA joins others in expressing concern regarding recent steps taken by the United States government implementing sweeping and harmful realities.

As American Baptists, we lift up our [Policy Statement on Immigration and Refugee Policy](#), which states, "Because of the Biblical mandate that we be a caring and hospitable community, that we love our neighbors, that we establish justice and proclaim liberty; because we have a sense of Christian responsibility to serve human needs; because of our commitment to respect the human rights of all people; and because we are mainly a nation of immigrants, we, the American Baptist Churches USA, shall: Continue our historical role as an advocate of human rights\* for immigrants, refugees, migrants

and asylum seekers...”

The statement concludes with these words: “For Christians, the only acceptable and sustainable immigration and refugee policy for the United States must be one that reflects humanitarian values, responds to the needs of people within and outside of our own nation alike, and recognizes the effect our trade and foreign assistance policies have on developing countries if internal pressures for emigration are to be reduced.”

And, we reflect on the American Baptist [Policy Statement on Human Rights](#), which says, “We recognize that basic human rights are given by God, and that the rights of persons interact and are interdependent with social rights.” (For more on basic human rights, see p.3-4).

The American Baptist Churches Policy Statement on Church and State notes, “We affirm the principle of religious liberty to be essential to the security and well-being of both Church and State. We embrace the institutional separation of Church and State as essential, demanding constant vigilance and reapplication, in light of changing governments, cultural and social practices and our own growing maturity in Jesus Christ. Contemporary challenges to this heritage prompt us to declare anew our dedication to the securing and maintaining of the following rights of both individuals and groups, and to oppose certain government intrusions into religion, including...the right of communities of faith to meet together and engage in ministry and worship, both publicly and privately.”

We share in the profound concern of the Burma Advocacy Group (BAG), a subcommittee/working group under the American Baptist Churches USA Burma Refugee Commission, who published a press release on January 24, 2025, related to the Executive Actions, stating, “The Burma Advocacy Group, consisting of Burma Diaspora Churches, Community Groups, and Advocates, joins with Church World Service, the Refugee Council USA and others in expressing our profound concern for the recent steps....The sweeping Executive Actions will affect thousands of displaced Burma nationals who have fled to Thailand, Malaysia and India to escape the ruthless bombings and attacks against them by the military junta which violently overthrew free and fair elections on February 1, 2021.

“Our immigration and refugee policies have human consequences. During the Burma Advocacy Group’s most recent visits with displaced Burma nationals in Malaysia and the border camps in Thailand we heard consistent testimony that suicides had increased, especially among young people, during the previous shutdown of the US Refugee Admissions Program. The new actions will again put at risk for suicide people who have looked to America for hope amid military oppression and religious persecution and who will once again find our doors shut.

“These executive orders tragically ignore the solid contributions immigrants and refugees from Burma and elsewhere have made to our country.”

[Read the full press release from the Burma Advocacy Group here.](#)

As American Baptists seek to be the hands and feet of Christ in this world, we, as children of the Most High God, must keep our focus on Him during these turbulent times. We are called to seek God’s guidance, unite in purpose, and act in accordance with our faith. We should grieve with those who mourn, extend compassion to the disheartened, feed the hungry, visit the sick and imprisoned, clothe the naked, provide shelter to those in need, and above all, engage in fervent prayer. This is why we

are urging American Baptists to be in prayer around recent actions and policy changes..

Through all the recent actions taken around us, our mission remains clear: to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We will seek divine guidance and strength as we navigate this critical chapter in American history.

We lift up the words of the American Baptist [Policy Statement on Church and State](#) in saying, “As American Baptists, born under religious oppression, nurtured in persecution, growing in a climate of religious freedom, we pledge ourselves to the continuing struggle for religious liberty and the separation of Church and State and to the support of all who yearn for the freedom we know in Jesus Christ.”

Prayerfully shared by American Baptist Churches USA

**Related links:**

Read the American Baptist [Policy Statement on Church and State](#) here.

Read the American Baptist [Policy Statement on Immigration and Refugee Policy](#) here.

Read the American Baptist [Policy Statement on Human Rights](#) here.