

A PRAYER FOR 2022
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Washington, DC
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This Shabbat, as we leave 2021 behind, I want to take a moment to thank each and every one of you who are with us this evening for showing up and in doing so contributing to helping to make the Micah community who we are.

This has been an extraordinary year. You don't need me to tell you that. How many of us thought when we celebrated erev Shabbat on January 1, 2021 that we would be together in this same way for this Shabbat of December 31, 2021?

These 21 months—in different ways have been an emotional roller coaster for each one of us. For some the roller coaster has been too dizzying, too rocky, the inclines too much of a strain, the downward plunges too steep.

Others have gone through the period with softer, gentler bumps. None of us are untouched. Our world is changed. We are changed in ways we cannot yet grasp or understand.

The gift of Zoom enables us to see our faces. We see each other. Never has the wisdom of Genesis 33:10 been so true “to see your face is like seeing the face of God...”

These Shabbat moments have been sustaining.

For even with this pandemic, there are ways—tangible ways—ways that we can somehow feel—that our Micah community has never been stronger—more critical—more present.

In a book I read just last week, Masha Gessen writes words to the effect that in times of chaos and disruption there are places that “reach for a higher note.” That is what I sometimes think that we are trying to do through our Judaism here at Micah—“reach for a higher note.” We do this together—all of us.

We have a remarkable staff whose devotion to this place is inspiring. As 2021 ends, I want to thank and honor them as well. Most of all this evening—thank you to all of you for filling our computer screens each week.

As last year at this Shabbat, my next remarks are inspired by my dear friend Pastor Michael Bledsoe, the retired minister of Riverside Baptist Church in Southwest Washington a great church and our former Southwest neighbor. I heard him preach a “lyrical list” sermon about four years ago.

I have to also, of course, pay homage to the Torah—whose many sections of lists reassured me that lists, too, are a form of literature. Deuteronomy 28 reminded me that my list could be both blessings and curses.

My prayer for 2022

One less traitor.

One less insurrection.

One less enabler.

One less treason.

One more patriot.

One more citizen who puts country before self.
One more for democracy.

One less liar.
One less mob.
One less storm of intolerance.

One more circle of love.
One more truth teller.
One more lover of neighbor.

One less gun.
One less assault rifle.
One less automatic weapon.
One less vigilante.
One less border cage.
One less lame excuse.

One more court of justice
One less corrupt judge.

One more hug.
One more heart.
One more school.
One more safe school.
One more conversation.
One more open border.

One more mature, responsible, loving adult.

One less curse.

One less No.

One less lie.

One less idolater worshipping at the altar of mediocrity.

One less conspiracy theory.

One less pretender.

One less spin at the ticket wheel of self-pity.

One more voice of faith.

One more voice of hope.

One more expression of love.

One more prayer for all of humanity.

One more congregation that embraces difference.

One more community of faith that celebrates the goodness in everyone.

One more church, synagogue, mosque and temple that repairs the world,
heals the world, redeems the world and wages peace as fiercely as a government
wages war.

One less bully.

One less poll.

One more steadfast moral principle.

One more dreamer.

One more peacemaker.

One more prophet of justice.

One more 'amen' from people who really believe that we are all created in God's image.

One more blessing.

One more Yes.

One more act of mercy.

One more candle in the darkness.

One more offer of an hour or a day to solve a problem.

One more faithful person in the crowd.

One more person standing up.

One more voice singing with the choir.

One more hand on the plough, one more shoulder to the wheel, one more to row, row, row the boat gently down the stream so all of us can make safe passage.

One more commitment to excellence.

One more person to wave the banner of inclusion.

One less extinguished torch.

One less commercial.

One less infomercial.

One less pop up window.

One less hour spent on the trivial.

One less hour watching spirit-crushing news.

One less piece of spirit crushing news.

One less morning waking up to NPR and wanting to turn it all off.

One less day spent peering at a smart phone.

One more day or night peering into the sky.

One more honest conversation.

One more dialogue into the depths of our souls.

One more prayer.

One more verse on the doorposts of our homes, hearts and souls.

One more moment to ponder the noble, the beautiful, the true and pure, the right, the lovely, the honorable.

One more book read.

One more word of thanks to the front line cashier, custodian, teacher, health care worker, mechanic, the person on my right and on my left.

One less demagogue.

One less narcissist.

One less neglected child.

One less character assassination.

One less second guess.

One less Monday morning quarterback.

One less bitter cup to drink, bitter pill to swallow, or bitter retribution.

One more loving mother.

One more loving father.

One more protective, kind and selfless parent.

One more wonderful childhood.

One more honest leader.

One more honest citizen.

One more compliment sincerely offered.

One more person willing to risk and lead despite the second-guessers.

One more person willing to risk standing behind the leader even if you only agree with some or part of what he\she\they says because they are decent and honest and filled with love of neighbor no matter their color or faith or native language.

One more person anticipating good things, hoping for good things, working for good things.

One more cup overflowed by joy.

One more peace like a river.

One more “mighty stream” flowing down with justice.

One less demand. One more offer to serve.

One less demand. One more blessing.

One less demand. One more bridge built.

One less bridge burnt.

One more bridge crossed.

One more hand clasped. One less fist clenched.

One more mouth opened in praise.

One more child taught.

One more elder honored.

One more sanctuary of peace and refuge.

One less arena of demeaning entertainment.

One more seed sown and watered.

One more kindness planted in peace.

One less divisive gesture.

One more healing embrace.

One more library filled with light, love and learning.

One less hungry. One less poor.

One more fed. One more sheltered.

One more wound healed.

One more hand to the lost and the sick.

One less illiterate. One more educated.

One less cynic. One more to give a hand.

One less bigot.

One less Proud Boys.

One more with liberty and justice for all.

One less unwanted baby born into this world.

One more my body my choice.

One less waiting period for women's health care.

One more waiting period for an assault rifle.

One more welcoming, loving, safe and open women's clinic.

One less scream of certainty.

One more song of love and support.

One less Covid case.

One more Covid vaccine and Covid treatment.

One less Covid death.

One more access to healthcare for all.

One less quarantine in place.

One more go outside.

One more mask until we can have one less mask.

One less tweet.

One more kind word.

One less "losers and suckers."

One more voice for the disenfranchised.

One less act of treason.

One more act in defense of the Constitution.

One less wall.

One more Statue of Liberty.

One less polluted pool.

One more spring of sweet water.

One less Settlement Expansion.

One more Breaking the Silence.

One less Occupation.

One more Negotiation.

One less West Bank and Gaza.

One more Palestine.

One more Israel of our greatest Zionist dreams.

One God.

One People.

One nation.

One world.

One more day.

One more life, lived in the company of others.

One more tomorrow.

Shabbat shalom and much love to all of Temple Micah—to all of you who mean so much to all of us.

Welcome 2022

Amen