

UKRAINE, CANADA, AND THE CHURCH

Calls to Action and Prayer

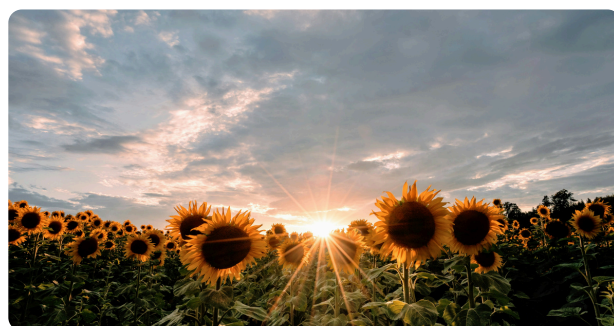


FEBRUARY 24, 2026

As we approach the fourth anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and the twelfth anniversary of its illegal occupation of Crimea and parts of eastern Ukraine, we once again address Canadian Christians with urgency, grief, and hope.

These calls to action build on the witness offered in February 2024 when we released A Canadian Pastoral Letter on Ukraine, Canada and the Church. It arises from relationships of shared prayer, co-suffering, and discernment among Ukrainian Orthodox, Ukrainian Catholic, Evangelical, and other Christian leaders, together with the World Evangelical Alliance Peace & Reconciliation Network, The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, and The Canadian Council of Churches. We write again because the war continues, suffering deepens, and faithful Christian witness remains urgently needed.

We grieve the unending violence, the immense human suffering, the devastation of communities and ecosystems, and the tragic loss of life caused by Russia's invasion. We lament that the consequences of this war continue to multiply, a significant factor in a disturbing global trend toward the normalization of violence. We are heartbroken that, for many Ukrainians—whether living in unoccupied Ukraine, in temporarily occupied territories, or displaced beyond Ukraine's borders, including here in Canada—life has not become easier with time. Trauma persists. Loss remains unresolved. Hope is repeatedly tested.



As Christians, we seek to manifest the Gospel of Jesus Christ in concrete and faithful ways.

We stand united with Christian leaders in Ukraine and throughout the world in rejecting the “Russian World” ideology, which has been used by both secular and religious authorities to justify Russia’s war of aggression and to sacralize violence.

We stand firm in our confession that Jesus Christ is Lord. Our first allegiance is to His Kingdom and to His ways of peace, justice, truth, and mercy. We therefore reject all nationalist, ideological, and apocalyptic narratives that distort the Gospel and demand our ultimate loyalty. With the Apostle Paul, we affirm “one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all” (Ephesians 4:5-6).

We insist that Ukrainians not be forced to live in fear but be able to flourish in a society grounded in respect for human rights, the rule of law, international order, and the dignity of every people—including their language, culture, and spiritual life.

We continue to serve as ambassadors of Christ: prayerful, attentive, and active in walking alongside the hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians who have come to Canada since 2022. They carry the burden of war in their homeland even as they contribute richly to the life of our communities. Together, we share one body and one mission as the Church in Canada.



WHAT IS GOD CALLING CANADIAN CHRISTIANS TO DO NOW?

As the war enters its fifth year, the call before Canadian Christians is not abstract. It is lived and embodied. We therefore reaffirm the following calls to action, many of which have already borne fruit across denominations, traditions, and communities.

PRAYER AND WORSHIP

As members of one body in Christ, we are called to pray to the Triune God of peace: for the cessation of hostilities, for a just and sustainable peace, for healing from trauma, and for reconciliation grounded in truth. We encourage prayer that is rooted in Scripture and attentive to concrete realities, including the suffering of civilians, abducted children, prisoners of war, and those worshipping under threat. We urge churches to pray together in worship services, with Ukrainians, and through denominational and ecumenical prayer networks.

CALL TO ACTION:

Commit to praying regularly and explicitly for Ukraine using language that names real and ongoing suffering (e.g. abducted children, prisoners of war, families of those killed, political authorities, Christian congregations, chaplains, and leaders).



SUSTAINING CARE FOR UKRAINIANS IN CANADA

We give thanks for the many Canadians and faith communities who have offered generous practical, emotional, spiritual, and material support to Ukrainians. This care has mattered deeply and continues to be needed. Trauma does not resolve quickly and the work of settlement and belonging unfolds over time. Faithfulness requires consistency and presence. Churches are called to persevere in faithful accompaniment, resisting fatigue and discouragement (Galatians 6:9).

ENGAGING GOVERNMENTS FOR JUSTICE, SETTLEMENT, AND RECONSTRUCTION

Christian concern also extends to public responsibility. We encourage respectful and persistent engagement with municipal, provincial, and federal authorities to support fair and timely pathways to permanent residency, access to settlement and mental-health supports, recognition of professional credentials, and family reunification. We also urge Canada's continued humanitarian and reconstruction support for Ukraine, including the rebuilding of hospitals, schools, energy systems, places of worship, and the restoration of social well-being.

CALL TO ACTION:

Move from "welcome" to sustained accompaniment of Ukrainians already living in Canadian communities (e.g., monthly shared meals, English conversation circles, pastoral care for grief and trauma, navigating adjustment to Canadian systems).

CALL TO ACTION:

Engage governments on specific, clearly defined issues. Solution-based advocacy protects human dignity and avoids paralysis from trying to address everything at once: for example, fair pathways to permanent residency status and family reunification, mental health and settlement supports, and continued humanitarian and reconstruction support.

SEEKING COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Ukrainian and Slavic Christian congregations in Canada have served as first responders throughout this war. While patterns of arrival have shifted, the realities of trauma and cultural adjustment remain acute. Building cooperative relationships between these congregations and other Canadian churches strengthens humanitarian response, deepens ecumenical witness, and builds resilient communities.

HOLDING THE HOPE OF RECONCILIATION

While wounds remain raw and reconciliation cannot be rushed, Christians must never relinquish the long horizon of hope. Violence must cease. Truth must be told. Justice must be pursued. We honour those—especially within the Russian Federation—who have courageously spoken against the war. We call on Ukrainian, Russian, and Canadian Christians alike to hold fast to the promise that God has reconciled us to Himself in Christ and entrusted to us the ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18–20).

CALL TO ACTION:

Build intentional, cooperative relationships with Ukrainian and Slavic Christian congregations, both Ukrainian and Russian speaking (e.g., share prayer and worship services, meals, and learning events; explore practical ways to support ministries already established; partner with an existing or newly established Ukrainian or Slavic congregation or settlement organization rather than creating something new).

CALL TO ACTION:

Commit to ongoing learning and truthful teaching about the causes and history of the war and its current reality so that the past, present, and the hoped-for future are understood, not through propaganda or in isolation, but with humility and in light of the Gospel of Christ (e.g., host documentary screenings, education or listening sessions with Ukrainian voices, address misinformation directly and pastorally, train in reconciliation theology and practices).

REMEMBERING FEBRUARY 24

On this sobering anniversary, we invite Christian communities across Canada to centre Ukrainian voices in worship and prayer. We encourage denominations, churches and prayer networks to offer focused, public prayer on Sunday, February 22, 2026, and to continue remembering Ukraine beyond this date.

CALL TO ACTION:

To support this shared witness and provide focus we offer the following resource as a foundational national prayer which may be used in this form or adapted or expanded for your context:



PRAYER

Holy, Holy, Holy God of life, justice, and love, You who hear the cries of the suffering and remain faithful, We come before You in prayer, united with our brothers and sisters in Christ—those near to us and those across Canada.

Today we lift before You, with particular urgency, the people of Ukraine: women, men, elders, and children created in Your image and likeness, now enduring the suffering of war, trauma, and grief.

We lift before You the children who have been forcibly taken from their families. Protect them, preserve their identity, and bring them home.

We remember also prisoners of war, held in captivity and far from comfort and care. Be near to them, strengthen them, and guard their lives.

We remember Your Church—its clergy and faithful, worshipping under threat. Sustain them in courage, witness, and hope.

We commend to Your compassionate mercy the land of Ukraine itself—its cities, villages, and homes, its rivers, fields, mountains and seas—part of your beautiful world now scarred by violence, destruction, and loss.

God of justice and truth, we pray for a just and sustainable peace and for righteousness and justice to prevail over evil and hatred.

Bring an end to this war, bring peace, justice and healing to Ukraine. And turn the hearts of those who perpetrate this war toward repentance and restoration.

In these days of lament, O Lord, we live in hope that you will strengthen Your Church with your holy faithfulness and creativity to act with compassion, courage, and generosity as instruments of your active healing. Grant that we might participate with all that we are in the beating of swords into ploughshares so that for all people and creation justice will roll down like water and righteousness as an ever-flowing stream.

This we pray in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

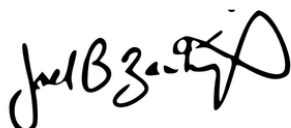
In the spirit of Christian unity,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Amanda Currie".

Rev. Amanda Currie
President
The Canadian Council of Churches

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Dr. Guretzki".

Dr. David Guretzki
President and CEO
The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Joel B. Zantingh".

Rev. Joel B. Zantingh
Canadian Coordinator, Peace and Reconciliation
Network World Evangelical Alliance (WEA)