

Evangelicals Issue a Joint Statement on Ukraine One Year After the Full-Scale Russian Invasion

New York, NY – February 27, 2023



The World Evangelical Alliance (WEA), the European Evangelical Alliance (EEA), and the Council of Evangelical Protestant Churches of Ukraine (CEPCU) join efforts to issue a statement on Ukraine marking one year since the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion. The statement precedes a partnering summit on March 1-3, 2023 in Poland that will bring together key leaders from various alliances, denominations, and organizations from Ukraine, Europe and around the world. The purpose of the gathering is to strengthen the response of the global Evangelical community to significant crises, responding to and learning from the situation in Ukraine.

One year has passed since Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The WEA joins the EEA and the CEPCU in condemning the aggression, honouring the people who are pouring out support to the victims, and challenging all evangelicals to follow Jesus as war continues to rage.

Above all, we [repeat our call](#) for the immediate withdrawal of all Russian forces from Ukraine in its internationally-recognized borders as the quickest way to end the war. The invasion of Ukraine is both unjustified and unprovoked. Claims that the attack was necessary to protect ethnic Russians within Ukraine and to stop Ukraine from threatening Russia are blatantly false. We pray that world leaders will not reward aggression but will have wisdom to find solutions that build a lasting peace. Such unprovoked attacks must never happen again.

In the past twelve months millions of people in Ukraine have been displaced, lost loved ones, or been affected in other ways. To those who grieve and struggle in impossible circumstances, we stand with you in solidarity. It is our prayer that a just peace would come quickly; that you may begin to heal and rebuild; and that even through your pain, you may tangibly experience God's presence (Ps. 34:18).

How can we follow Jesus at this moment, individually and collectively as Christ's Church? We look to amazing men and women in Ukraine, across Europe, especially those in bordering countries, and throughout the world who are pouring out their compassion, support and often their very lives for those affected by the war. We pray for those who are serving people on the front lines and across Ukraine in numerous ways: opening churches as epicentres of response, providing humanitarian aid and medical assistance, offering trauma therapy and counselling, and expressing the truth of God's love to everyone, even their enemies. Their examples inspire and challenge each of us to follow Jesus regardless of our social or geographic location. We call on all Christians today, and indeed all peoples, to join this work as Christ's hands and feet to heal, restore, and make all things new, from Ukraine to Turkey and Syria and beyond.

We know that many Christians in Russia are agonising as well, wondering what following Jesus looks like when they are part of a community that is inflicting harm on others. Jesus challenges us to stand with the vulnerable, even when that means confronting our own group and our own leaders. Throughout the history of the Church, courageous Christians have done just that, while many have overlooked or supported the hostile actions of their national or ethnic groups against others. In today's global and interconnected world, we call on all Christians, whatever their nation, to intentionally turn to God by reflecting on the ways in which our own groups may be perpetuating harm and then by holding our governments, social groups, and even church communities accountable for their actions or inaction.

We continue to pray that the Spirit will empower the Church to stand with and provide care to all those who are vulnerable, in Ukraine and beyond. May God grant us the strength and courage to recognize when our group is causing harm to others, that we might stand with those who are hurting. May we have ears to "... hear what the Spirit says to the churches. (Rev 2:29)"

The Council of Evangelical Protestant Churches of Ukraine is an interdenominational consultative body that brings together 12 denominations, uniting 10,000 Ukrainian churches. Its purpose is to join efforts to strengthen and protect freedom of conscience

and religion, equality of all religious organizations, and to advance Christian morals and values. The Council represents the united voice and common position of its members - the Evangelical Churches of Ukraine.

The European Evangelical Alliance (EEA) was founded in 1951. The EEA exists to foster unity and evangelical identity and provide a voice and platform to 23 million European evangelical Christians. The mission of the EEA is to CONNECT for common purpose, EQUIP for integral mission and REPRESENT with a united voice. It is a grassroots movement from all Protestant traditions present in 36 European countries. The Brussels office of the EEA promotes active citizenship of its constituency and represents it to the European Institutions.

Over two billion Christians in the world today are represented by three world church bodies. The World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) is one of those, serving more than 600 million evangelicals belonging to churches that are part of 143 national Evangelical Alliances in 9 regions. Launched in London in 1846, the WEA unites evangelicals across denominations for prayer, evangelism, mission, theological education, religious freedom, human rights advocacy and engagement in a wide range of social issues. It speaks with one voice to United Nations, governments and media in public or through behind-the-scenes diplomacy on issues of common concern to the Church.

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