

## FFWPU USA: Our hearts are saddened by Eastern Europe's suffering from war

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It has been nearly a month since Russia began a military invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24 - an escalation of the Russo-Ukrainian tensions that arose in 2014. Since then, Unificationists and people of faith worldwide have continuously called for prayers for those caught in the ongoing conflict and for a return to peace.

"Our hearts are deeply saddened for our brothers and sisters in Eastern Europe suffering because of the military activities in the region," said FFWPU USA President, Rev. Naokimi Ushiroda. "Given that we have many family members in both Ukraine and Russia, let us offer serious prayers and devotion for their safety and resolution of the conflict."

"True Mother has asked for reports which have been sent from both the Ukraine and Russia," he said. "She is following events closely and praying for peace, as are we all."

An outpouring of support has continued through a series of national and global prayer calls, as well as donations toward relief efforts.

"All people of faith worldwide are now coming together in prayer," said Angelika Selle, national president of the Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP). "Even Pope Francis mobilized all bishops worldwide to join in prayer, because prayer works."

Selle, in addition to other Unificationist leaders, has led a weekly prayer call for healing and peace between Ukraine and Russia. FFWPU leaders in Europe have also held a daily prayer call and set up donations through their official PayPal account. But for many Unificationists, the conflict still remains unsettling, and it hits close to home for some.

"As a former missionary to Ukraine, from 1991 to 1993, I know many of the Ukrainian brothers and sisters affected by this and am in contact with them," said Claude Aubert, a Unificationist in Maryland. "Our Ukrainian brothers and sisters are in continued need of our support."

Aubert quickly set up an online fundraiser through GiveSendGo to help community members after coordinating with a leader in the region. In just a few weeks, more than \$50,000 has been raised of the \$70,000 goal.

"The financial help will go to address immediate needs," said Aubert. "And once this war is over, funds will also go toward reconstruction. Our members are very grateful for all the help they have received so far - the financial support as well as the prayers and love."

Aubert said many Ukrainians unexpectedly fled their homes, leaving everything behind. "The majority of blessed families living in Kyiv and other cities have left for refuge in safer locations," he said. "Some are in Poland, some are close to the Polish border, and some are in a village near Lviv."

Toward the end of the Cold War, True Parents notably met with Russian President Mikhail Gorbachev in the 1990s, and visited Kyiv, Ukraine, in 1995 and 2005 to engage in peace talks. At the time, True Father described the two countries as "Cain and Abel," stating, "If Ukraine and Russia unite, then it will not be difficult to resolve the mistakes of the past and peace will be established without problems."

Over the years, True Parents have been committed to building a world of lasting peace and unity, especially in conflict areas such as the Korean Peninsula, Middle East, and Eastern Europe. In June 2021, the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) in Ukraine held a conference focused on the theme "Building Bridges Across Boundaries," where some 40 leaders discussed diplomatic methods of conflict resolution.

"There are currently more than 40 military conflicts happening throughout the world," said UPF Ukraine leader Dr. Mykhailo Ilin during the conference. "Nobody expected that our country would be involved in an armed confrontation again."

Nonetheless, Unificationists in America and around the world remain hopeful for a swift and peaceful resolution between Russia and Ukraine. "Our prayers are with you throughout the day," said Keith McCarthy, a Unificationist in California.

"My eyes and heart are crying day and night," added Albertine Clarke, a Unificationist from Suriname. "But our members are very brave and we are determined to do whatever we can for a miraculous victory."

You can join Europe's daily prayer call at 9 a.m. CET (3 a.m. EST) on Zoom [here](#), or live on Facebook [here](#). Donations can be submitted to the official FFWPU EUME [PayPal](#) account at [donate@ffwpu-eu.org](mailto:donate@ffwpu-eu.org).