

Violence in Kenya Leads to Torched AG Church

The Assemblies of God leadership in Kenya is asking that Christians pray after 50 churchgoers were killed and 80 were hospitalized after rioters set fire to an AG church earlier this week.



(01-04-08) The Assemblies of God (AG) leadership in East Africa is requesting that Christians pray for an end to the violent unrest in Kenya triggered by accusations of a rigged election that placed President Mwai Kibaki in office for a second term on Dec. 27.

The violence intensified earlier this week when 50 churchgoers were killed and 80 were hospitalized for severe burns after rioters doused the Eldoret AG church with gasoline and set it on fire reports the AG news service. Rioters accused church members hiding inside, which were mostly women and children at the time, of voting to re-elect Kibaki.

More than 300 have been reportedly killed since the rioting kicked off following last week's presidential election. Kenya's opposition party is claiming the election was a fraud and made a public appeal today for a new vote. Some international observers have indicated the election was rife with voting irregularities.

Many believers have fled their homes and are hiding in churches and police stations across the nation the news service said.

"This is entirely a political conflict that has unfortunately inflamed tribal prejudices," said Randy Hurst, AG World Missions' communications director. "What needs to be remembered is that the Assemblies of God has church members from all the major tribes, who not only live in peace, but worship together in the same congregations."

The opposition leader also scheduled a march for this Tuesday to protest the election, the news service reports.

AG leaders are asking that believers pray that the violence would not escalate after the march and that food and other relief supplies would come to one of Africa's most economically viable nations.

"Right now the urgent need is for food," said Peter Njiri, Kenya's AG superintendent to the news service. "We have two AG churches in Nairobi with more than 500 displaced AG people camping in them." **—Felicia Mann**