

AG's George O. Wood Offers Pentecostal Perspective on Ukraine

The dramatic events that have occurred in Ukraine over the last several weeks, including the ousting of former President Viktor Yanukovich and deadly attack by riot police, have drawn worldwide concern and attention to the region.

Dr. Marek Kaminski, general superintendent of the **Pentecostal Church of Poland (Assemblies of God)**, contacted AG USA General Superintendent **George O. Wood** on Sunday, updating him on the conditions in Ukraine, having just returned from a visit with **Christians** in Kiev, Ukraine's capital.

Kaminski explained that as the Pentecostal Church of Poland (PCP) **prayed** and fasted for Ukraine, he and his wife took an offering from the PCP churches to Kiev to help the families of the 100 protestors who were killed by riot police in and around Kiev's Maidan Square two weeks ago.

Kaminski says he spent an extended time with Mikhajlo Panochko, senior bishop of the Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith of Ukraine.

"He shared the stories of people fighting for their freedom and dignity," Kaminski recounts.

Revealing that some of the Christians in attendance at Maidan Square were killed by a sniper, Panochko shared with Kaminski that Ukrainian Christians have stepped forward to provide food, medical assistance and help in any possible practical way.

"There are **prayer** and Christian psychological help tents provided at Maidan Square by the church," Kaminski says. "The

gospel was preached at the main stage. I truly admire Ukrainian Christians and our Pentecostal brothers and sisters for their wisdom, sacrificial ministry, and for standing tall in the face of evil.”

However, Kaminski admits that much of the time he was there, he was fighting back tears.

“We personally went to Maidan,” he says. “The view was horrible. The destruction was beyond my ability to describe. The place was full of tents, barricades.”

But the destruction wasn’t the only thing bringing the emotional response. Kaminski says that the peace in the hearts and behavior of the people was striking.

“I saw no aggression, no hatred towards anybody, including Russians,” he says.

“My visit to Ukraine was a deep, emotional shock,” Kaminski continues. “I visited every place where the innocent civilians were killed by snipers. ... I do not think anybody can understand the character of Ukrainian problems without seeing Maidan. It was against the corrupted government, nothing else. I saw nothing nationalistic there, especially no signs of hatred or aggression towards Russian people.”

In concluding his letter to Dr. Wood, Kaminski said the Christians in Ukraine need spiritual support.

“We should make the choice not to be indifferent. Please, let us not leave them alone in their suffering,” he wrote.

In responding to Kaminski, Dr. Wood expressed his deep concern about the suffering in the Ukraine and for the heroic efforts of the people.

“Be assured of our prayers,” Wood wrote. “We stand ready to assist you and the church in the Ukraine in any way we can. ... I express deep gratitude to you and the Polish Assemblies of

God for all the **prayers** and help you have given. Truly, this desperate situation calls for intercessory prayers from the Body of Christ all over the world. We will do our best to inform the World Assemblies of God Fellowship and our USA Assemblies of God as well."

In light of Dr. Kaminski's request and the dramatic events taking place in Ukraine, Dr. Wood has issued the following call to prayer and peace for Ukraine:

"A call to **prayer**—Peace be unto you! We pray for the safety of our **missionaries**, ministers and churches in the wake of this season of unrest in Ukraine. We pray for God to restrain violence and to protect all peoples living in the Ukraine who are suffering uncertainty and fear.

"A call to peace—May the governing authorities involved seek to serve the best interest of all peoples in Ukraine. May there be a peaceful and positive resolution. May the Spirit of God empower His church to be filled with love and bring forth the peace that passes understanding. May God's people continue to bring Him glory during this difficult hour."