



Dear Pastors, Congregations, Partners in Ministry, Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Over the past several days, Russia has invaded Ukraine and is working to remove its government from power to replace it with its own. The actions of the Russian leader, Vladimir Putin, are unprovoked, the conflict is bloody, and the hostile takeover is one being protested by many nations throughout Europe and the entire world.

As a church body, the North American Lutheran Church (NALC) is in strong opposition to this war and is urging its pastors and congregations to be praying for an end to this senseless conflict. The NALC also has strong ties to the Ukrainian people through one of our partner ministries, the [Spiritual Orphans Network \(SON Network\)](#). Formerly EEMN, the SON Network, led by Executive Director Pastor David Breidenbach, serves people in parts of the world that are often overlooked as a mission field. They excel at reaching spiritual orphans in the unique context of former communist nations. In this case, they are actively involved in supporting missionaries in Ukraine, as well as providing humanitarian support to the hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing that country in the war.

As you consider how to support the people of Ukraine, know that the SON Network is an official partner ministry of the North American Lutheran Church and that their work amidst this devastating conflict is being done openly in the name of Jesus Christ.

We encourage you to be praying for the people in Ukraine, for the families torn apart by the war, for the humanitarian efforts that will be needed for some time, as well as for the hearts of the leaders of Russia and Ukraine to find ways to bring this conflict to an end, to move forward in ways that would lead to peace, and that people would be drawn to the One in whom all lasting peace is found, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The following prayer is offered for your use, individually, as families and in your congregations:

Gracious God, we come to You as people who know we have fallen short of Your call, who are in daily need of Your forgiveness and grace, and who have no lasting hope apart from the promises we have in Jesus. And yet we come with thankful and expectant hearts, knowing that You have promised to hear and to answer prayer.

We pray for You to be working in the hearts and the lives of the people in Russia and the Ukraine who are caught in this senseless war and whose lives are being torn apart because of the conflict. We pray for the families who have been separated from their loved ones, for those who have been physically hurt as a result of the fighting, and for those lives that have been lost. We pray, Lord, that You would open doors for peace talks and negotiations to happen that would bring an end to the war and that would save the lives of many for whom our Lord Jesus died.

Work through the nations of our world, through their governments, the United Nations, and through those leaders who have authority and opportunity to influence and impact what is happening in Christ-honoring ways. Be with our missionaries and mission agencies — that their work would be a witness to the love You have for all people, and to the desire You have for Your world that we would live in peace.

Help us to never lose sight of the promises we have in Jesus and to never lose hope in the One who, through His cross and resurrection from the dead, has overcome the world. In His most holy and precious name we pray. Amen.

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

—John 16:33 NIV

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bishop Dan Selbo" with a horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Bishop Dan Selbo
North American Lutheran Church