**PRAY FOR OUR COUNTRY, ELECTED LEADERS, AND THE CHURCH**

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Today, we find ourselves stunned by the mayhem that we witnessed at the U.S. Capitol yesterday. These actions of horrific and lawless violence and chaos are unacceptable and reflect a nation in need of revival. I am particularly grieved by the association of Christian symbols with these acts of lawlessness. Lord, forgive us.

Early this morning, the U.S. Congress certified Joe Biden to be the 46th president of the United States.

Today, as general superintendent of the Assemblies of God, I am asking all our credentialed ministers and congregations to pray for our country and our elected leaders.

The Bible says that we should pray for those who govern and explains why we should do so:

“I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people— for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:1–4).

The Bible also gives us very specific ways to pray for those who hold office. Psalm 72 encourages us to pray for justice, righteousness, peace, safety, and blessing.

We have a strong tradition in the Assemblies of God of praying for our elected leaders. As Pentecostal believers, we have confidence that God actively hears and responds to our prayers. Prayer is not meaningless, nor is it an excuse for inaction. Prayer is “powerful and effective” (James 5:16).

Four years ago, my friend and predecessor as general superintendent, George O. Wood, asked our Fellowship to pray in three ways: for our elected leaders, for the issues we’re facing, and for a spiritual awakening. I’d like to echo those prayer themes.

In addition, I would like to pray for unity in the local church. A divided nation is discouraging, but a divided Church is devastating. Jesus said in John 17:20-21, “I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”

Remember that Christ in you is the hope of glory. And Christ working through you is greater than any force of evil.

Yes, yesterday was an unsettling and embarrassing day for our nation. But don’t lose hope. The Church, God’s Church, is the pillar of truth (1 Timothy 3:15), the extension of God’s love (Matthew 5:16), and a family of fervent intercessors (Ezekiel 22:30). We have confidence that even in the darkest of times, the gates of hell will not prevail against the Church (Matthew 16:18).