**Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia**

Prayers within the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle 2022

*Good and gracious God, our loving friend and merciful Savior*

*today, at the beginning of this new week we pray for the people and the churches of Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia. We give you thanks for their beautiful countries and gifted people and ask for help in facing challenges and difficulties they are struggling with.*

* We thank you for the beautiful folk costumes and rich folklore traditions in these countries

and for the wonderful folk and country music, especially in the Czech Republic.

* + *We thank you for the amazing nature with its mountains and lakes with pristine water, karst and ice caves and healing thermal springs, and bounty of fauna and flora; and for the abundance and the wonderful system of trails for hiking and the for healing power of forests.*
* We are grateful for the moving wave of solidarity and compassion, for all that the churches, NGOs, the state, and individual people are doing to help refugees fleeing to our countries in this tragic period of war in Ukraine.
  + *We are grateful for the loving ministry of churches, especially the clergy, religious and lay people from different churches, who served voluntarily in Covid departments in hospitals during the pandemic.*
* We give our thanks for the multifaceted work of the Ecumenical Pastoral Ministry in the armed forces, police and prisons in Slovakia and in the Czech Republic and for the project EkoKościół – that is Eco-Church – in Poland and their work for protection of creation and for climate justice.
  + *We pray for Ukraine that the war may stop and the suffering may end. Come with your mercy, o Lord.*
* We pray for all those who are helping the suffering people coming from the war-torn Ukraine to Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and other neighboring countries – may they have an abundance of inner strength, empathy and perseverance.
  + *We pray for God´s protection of these countries on the borders of the raging war in Ukraine,*

*for courage and consolation for people facing fear of the proliferation of the war.*

* We pray that the people would not fall into the traps of conspiracy theories and disinformation especially in the online space.
  + *We pray for health and school systems which for a long time have been under-supported and undervalued and have been especially hit and challenged during the Covid pandemic and which are now facing new challenges in the context of the war in Ukraine.*
* We pray for courageous steps in fighting corruption, for the victory of justice and for the healthy development of democratic processes.
  + *We pray for all believers that they would be examples in facing hate speech on social media with peaceful informed reconciliatory ways of expressing themselves and with nonviolent communication.*
* We pray that the painful consequences of anti-Semitism and other forms of dicrimination in these countries during the Second World War would never be forgotten and entreat for perseverance in fighting against their renewed spreading and against malicious forms of nationalism.
  + *We pray for openness to interreligious dialogue and for the ability to see and appreciate the value and the beauty of other religions.*
* We also pray for healing of old wounds and reconciliation between churches, especially between Protestants and Catholics.
  + *We ask for wisdom, guidance of the Spirit and hearts filled with love and compassion for the leaders of the churches so that the churches can be agents of reconciliation and motivators of goodness.*

*All of this we humbly put into the loving hands of God when we pray in the precious name of Jesus.*

Amen.

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