

March 21, 2022

An Open Letter to Premier Jason Kenney re. the Unjust Imprisonment of Pastor Artur Pawlowski

Dear Premier Kenney:

I write on a topic upon which I am sure you have already received much correspondence. Alberta is the only province to have imprisoned at least three pastors during the period some refer to as a pandemic. One of those pastors is still behind bars: Pastor Artur Pawlowski of Calgary, the Street Church pastor who has been ministering to Calgary's homeless and down-trodden for many years. His consistent and sacrificial efforts to provide comfort and food for the hungry are legendary. Such sacrifices should have earned him the thanks of the Province and the City, but instead, he has been harassed and even imprisoned for his bold speaking of the truth.

You are well aware that Pastor Art is not a violent man and has never advocated violence, yet police forces operating within your jurisdiction have repeatedly targeted him and have attempted to humiliate him with public displays of brute force . . . ostensibly for the crime of preaching.

Pastor Art, arrested on Feb. 8, has been unjustly detained without bail for 42 days. Real criminals, including some who have committed violent crimes, are often released on bail in much less time. Artur has spent much of this time in solitary confinement. Why? Is it not a vindictive action to humiliate and punish a man who has not been tried or convicted of any crime?

You know very well that the lockdowns, edicts and mandates imposed on Albertans by your government were never justified and have been completely ineffective in stopping the spread of COVID-19. There is much to be said about every aspect of misguided government policies in response to COVID, but even now, when your government and other provincial governments are sheepishly and belatedly beginning to reopen the economy and to relax the restrictions, you still hold an honest and zealous pastor prisoner, without bail and without a trial in violation of our God-given Charter rights and freedoms.

I appeal to you Premier Kenney, Justice Minister Shandro, Calgary Mayor Gondek, Calgary Chief of Police Neufeld and all who continue to enforce and to justify the ongoing detention of Pastor Art. It is not only unjust to him and his family but to the flock he serves, to the hundreds of people who benefit from his ministry of compassion and mercy and to all Canadians who expect to be treated with dignity and to be judged as innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Pastor Art deserves to be released on his own recognizance, even without bail; certainly the denial of bail is unconscionable. He deserves a fair trial before an unbiased court. He deserves an apology and compensation for the unreasonable period of time he has been kept from his family and from his work.

If Alberta is to move forward and shake off the trauma of the past two years, it can only do so if elected authorities and bureaucrats admit their mistakes and take steps to ensure that top-down bully tactics will never again be used in the pursuit of public health and safety.

Sincerely,

Rod Taylor

National Leader, Christian Heritage Party of Canada

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The Christian Heritage Party of Canada

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