



THE DIVIDED METHODIST CHURCH

The biggest news in American Christianity in the last year, or so, was the decision announced in January 2020 by the United Methodist Church (hereafter UMC) that it will split in two, amicably, over the issue of the LGBTQ agenda. The UMC is the largest mainline denomination in the United States, presently numbering 12.5 million members. The news was announced here: <https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2020/january/united-methodist-church-umc-plan-protocol-split-plan.html> Commentary by Dr. Gene Veith, an LCMS retired professor and author, can be found here: <https://www.patheos.com/blogs/geneveith/2020/01/methodists-will-send-their-conservative-congregations-away/>

What does this mean? First, the meaning of the term “mainline.” The largest mainline churches are sometimes referred to as the "Seven Sisters of American Protestantism": the United Methodist Church (UMC), Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), Episcopal Church (TEC), Presbyterian Church (USA) (PCUSA), American Baptist Churches USA (ABCUSA), United Church of Christ (UCC), and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). These are the biggest, wealthiest, and most-widely distributed denominations in the USA. As of 2020, all of them approve or embrace the LGBTQ agenda. The ABCUSA follows its polity in allowing each congregation to make its own doctrinal and moral decisions. So on this issue, ABCUSA will let each of its congregations decide what to do.

Second, the meaning of the term “LGBTQ agenda.” In the realm of American religion, this does not refer to “civil rights,” i.e., the rights that LGBTQ people have under the civil law. It refers specifically to whether denominations and congregations will **ordain ministers** who are LGBTQ, i.e., lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, trans-gender, or queer and whether they will **bless the LGBTQ marriages** of such persons. In denominations or congregations where they do not ordain, it refers to whether they allow LGBTQ persons to serve as ministers of religion in some capacity.

Third, you might be thinking, “How can they approve of LGBTQ behavior and lifestyle when the Bible is against it?” Good question. It can only happen in Protestant denominations that have rejected the normative authority of Scripture. All of these denominations rejected the normative authority of Scripture in the 20th century. The normative authority of Scripture was what our Missouri Synod’s big “civil war” was all about in the 1960s and 1970s. By God’s grace, we retained our original view that all of Scripture is God’s Word and that the Bible is the “only rule and norm according to which all doctrines and teachers alike must be appraised and judged” (*Formula of Concord*, Epitome, Rule and Norm, 1; Tappert, 464).

Fourth, what about the other Lutherans? The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has approved the LGBTQ agenda, as noted above. How they got there is explained in my essay “Gender Theology and the Splintering of the ELCA,” which you can pick up in our Free

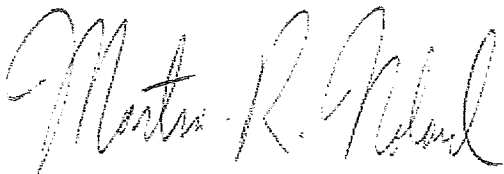
Literature rack in the church hallway. The new NALC and LCMC synods are former ELCA congregations that rejected the LGBTQ agenda. The Wisconsin Synod (WELS), the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS; the smaller Norwegian synod), and other smaller Lutheran denominations, synods, and groups agree with the Missouri Synod in rejecting the LGBTQ agenda.

Fifth, does this mean that churches that are opposed to the LGBTQ agenda are in favor of harassing or denying civil rights to LGBTQ persons? No. There are a few individuals, and a very few “nut-case” congregations, which harass LGBTQ persons and argue for denying them civil rights. But our synod does not do that, nor do I know of any Lutheran synod that does that. Of course, we believe, teach, and confess that LGBTQ behavior is wrong, because the Bible tells us so. But that is not “harassment.” That is a religiously-grounded moral norm, which has four thousand years of solid precedent and New Testament sanction. We also have civil rights under the First Amendment to believe, teach, and confess that moral norm, which is also not an irrational moral norm.

Sixth, what does this mean for your friends, neighbors, or relatives who are LGBTQ? It means, on the one hand, that they can find plenty of churches, of different types, that will bless their behavior and bless their marriages. But it also means, on the other hand, that God is against that behavior and will punish it, if they do not repent, are baptized, and believe in Jesus. Luther’s *Small Catechism* says: “God threatens to punish all who transgress these commandments. We should therefore fear his wrath and not disobey these commandments” (Close of the Commandments).

What we hope and pray for, when it comes to people of LGBTQ behavior and lifestyle, is that they will eventually see that it is contrary to God’s will, and that they will submit to God’s will by avoiding that behavior. I have seen many cases of people who were caught up in that behavior and lifestyle in their youth and middle-age, and as they grew older, they had a change of heart and mind about it, and abandoned it. We hope and pray that **everyone** who is alienated from God, through their rejection of God’s will, will someday have that change of heart and mind, which the Bible calls “repentance.”

Yours in Christ, Pastor Noland



Lutheran Women's Missionary League



Grace LWML Mission Statement

“Our mission is to encourage the women of Grace to grow spiritually through Word and Sacraments that they may serve our Triune God with their time, talents and treasures.”

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“Serve the Lord with Gladness”
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2018-2020

Mission Grants

14. LCMS Missionary Expenses

Mission Central (RSO)

\$10,000



Save your mites

Mission Project Day - Quilting

Tuesday, February 25, 2020 - 12:00 Noon
In the Grace Church Library

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Upcoming dates:

February 9, 2020 – Package Cookies for College Students

February 29, 2020 – Morning of Prayer, First Lutheran Church, South San Francisco (See next page)

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Thank You

Our LWML Christmas Love Offering of \$720.00 was given to Jan Froh to deliver to the Kenya Ladies Sewing Group.

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2020 LWML ZONE 8 MORNING OF PRAYER



Authored by The Rev. Dr. Gregory S. Walton, President of the LCMS Florida-Georgia District

WHEN: Saturday, February 29, 2020

TIME: 9:30 AM Coffee & Pastries

10:00 AM Prayer Service

WHERE: First Lutheran Church
350 Dolores Avenue
South San Francisco, California 94080

Rev. Jeff Schufreider— Prayer Leader

Contact Person: Mary Deger Seevers

650-787-7996 or seeversmd@aol.com

Christians are saved to serve. We are chosen and called to bear fruit for Jesus. We do this as we live in His love, not only in our home or church, but in the world, where it is often more difficult to love others. We are empowered by the love that Jesus showed us in His sacrificial death on the cross so that we would have life. Now we are blessed to live in His love, bearing much fruit for His sake. May this prayer service help us take time to reflect on His love for us, our love for Him, and how the fruit we bear is a result of living in His love.

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you (John 15:16).

School News

FEBRUARY 2020- DATES TO REMEMBER

2	Partners in Worship Choir Sings Church/School Pancake Breakfast
6	P/T Conferences (3:30-6:00p.m.)
7	P/T Conferences (8:00a.m.-12:00p.m.) No School or Extended Care
14	Valentine's Day
17	President's Day (No School)
21	Mid-Quarter
22	Spaghetti Feed!

Great things are happening at
 **Grace Lutheran School**
A Junior Kindergarten – 8th Grade Christian School since 1958



www.gracelutheransanmateo.org

2825 Alameda de las Pulgas, San Mateo, CA 345-9082

Grace Lutheran School is a Hidden Gem of Peninsula Private Schools

Intimate, vibrant and diverse, Grace is a special place to send your child.


Our Full-day Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten Programs prepare students for elementary school and results in earlier development of reading, social and learning skills.

Our State-of-the-Art Computer Center and Robotics Program prepares students for our high-tech world, and our Spanish Language Program builds minds.

Small Class Size is Important at Grace. All students receive the attention they deserve, no matter their educational level.

Grace Lutheran School Graduates excel in top public and private high schools and many enroll in top colleges.

Student who transfer to Grace at any grade level, find it to be a place to improve and excel.

 Grace Lutheran Church & School

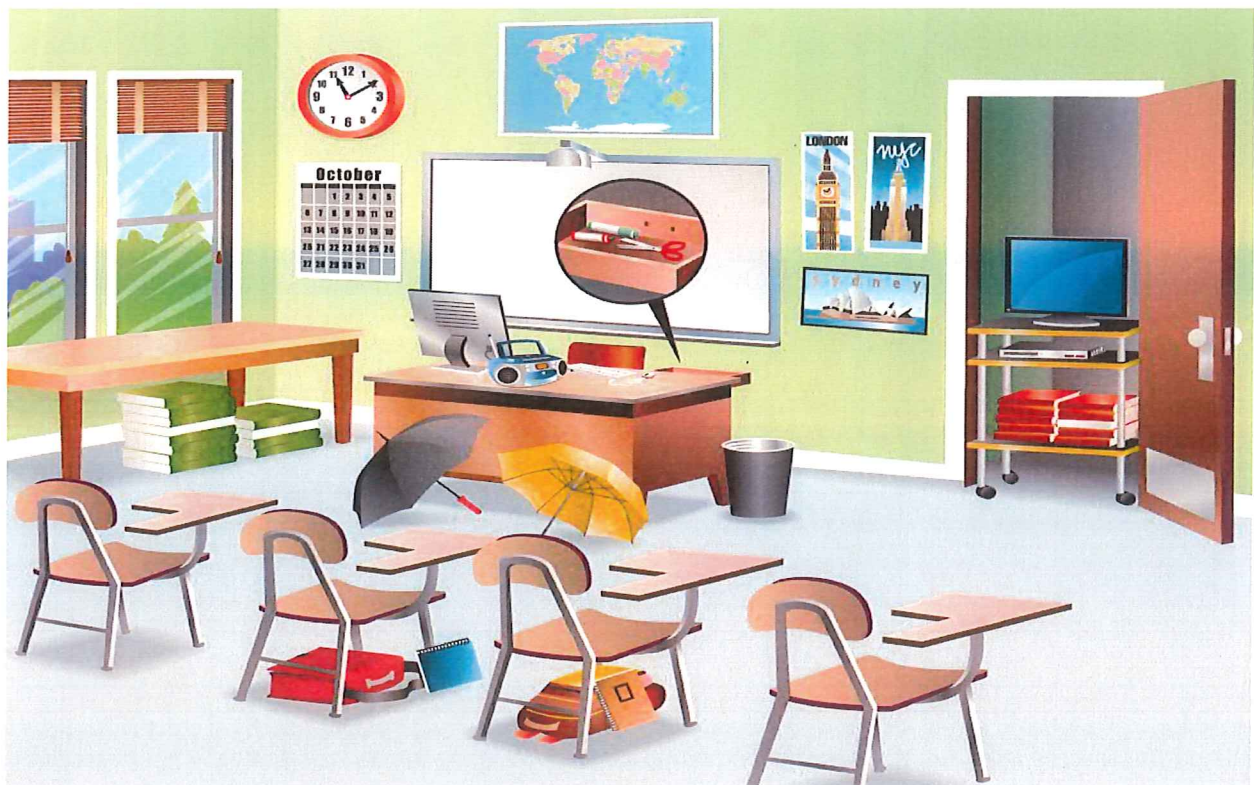


Grace Lutheran Church & School

THANK YOU!!!!!!

The GLS teachers would like to thank the GLC members for all the items you helped purchase for their classrooms from the **Christmas Wish Tree.**

All of your support for our school is greatly appreciated.



February 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						9:00a-Senior Choir 1:00p-LWML Zone #8 Executive Board Meeting
8:40a- Partners in Worship Choir Sings		9:00a-Adult Bible Study 10:15a-School Board	8:35a-Chapel	6	7 Parent/Teacher Conferences No School/No Ext. Care Church/School office closed	9:00a-Senior Choir
9:00a-Divine Service 10:15a- Church/School Pancake Breakfast		10:30a-Ann. Cmte.		11:00a-organ practice 2:00p-GLS library		Saber Wedding
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
9:00a-Divine Service 10:15a-Sunday School 10:30a-Adult Bible Study		9:00a-Adult Bible Study 10:30a-Ann. Cmte.	8:35a-Chapel	11:00a-organ practice 2:00p-GLS library	9:00a-Senior Choir	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
9:00a-Divine Service 10:15a-Sunday School 10:30a-Adult Bible Study	No School/No Ext. Care Church/School Office closed 5:00p-Elders meeting 7:00p-Council Meeting	9:00a-Adult Bible Study 10:15a-Circuit Pastors Meeting 10:30a-Ann. Cmte.	8:35a-Chapel	11:00a-organ practice 2:00p-GLS library	9:00a-Senior Choir	10:30a-Genearl.Society
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
9:00a-Divine Service 10:15a-Sunday School 10:30a-Adult Bible Study	President's Day	9:00a-Adult Bible Study 10:30a-Ann. Cmte 12:00-3p-Quilting	8:35a-Kids of Kingdom 7:00p-Divine Service Ash Wednesday	11:00a-organ practice 2:00p-GLS library		4:00p-PTL Spaghetti Feed!

February 2020 Vital Statistics

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Hannalore Starkowski		Michelle Semmler	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
						Marilyn Baillie
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	Glenn-Allison McEnroe					Arjanette Gomez
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

Prayer Page

“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.” ~Galatians 6:10

Egon Adam	Charlotte Custino	Donald Iocco	Doug O'Donnell	Hans Tuft
Bella Archer	Robert Doody	Heather Iocco	Patty O'Donnell	Gina Tuft
Marilyn Baillie	Natalie Dubbel	John Iocco	Elizabeth O'Donnell	Mark Tuft
Patricia Bailey	Bob Egan	Judy Iocco	Gil Ramirez	Sue Tuft
Richard Bailey	Maria Eggert	Ko Ishikawa	Kathleen Ramirez	Martin Udisches
Rev. Frank Balgeman	Doris Emery	Mariko Ishikawa	Fred Robinson	Leann Udisches
Valerie Balgeman	Bill Eng	Yuzo Ishikawa	Roberta Robinson	Christine Ulrich
Chandler Balgeman	Sara Eppler	Lance Johnson	Akram Saber	Zachary Ulrich
Mike Bannister	Carly Eppler	Doreen Johnson	Ghada Saber	Octavian Vasilescu
Tami Bannister	Larry Franquez	Katarina Johnson	Daniel Saber	Diana Vasilescu
Nathanael Bannister	Shelly Franquez	John Kilcullen	Michael Saber	Flora Lisa Vasilescu
Mike Beebe	Nick Franquez	Stefanie Kilcullen	Maria Schaefer	Joan Weckerle
Jolene Beebe	Chad Franquez	Katie Kilcullen	Martin Semmler	Randy Wimmer
Kay Bell, III	Pam Frisella	James Kilcullen	Michelle Semmler	Caden Young
Kay Bell, Jr.	Shirley Gangelhoff	Michael Kilcullen	Scott Semmler	Rebecca Young
Nathanael Bell	Rev. Glennon Genthner	Barbara Kilpatrick	Daniel Semmler	Chandler Young
Adele Bergstrom	Brooke Genthner	Bill Koester	Julia Semmler	Logan Young
William Bethke	Alex Gomez	Faye Koester	Sandy Shanks	Rowan Young
Susan Bethke	Anjanette Gomez	Ryan Koester	Jessica Shanks	Eugene Zahnow
Alice Boerschinger	Angelique Gomez	Amanda Koester	Detlef Starkowski	Judy Zahnow
John Bordy	James Graziano	Glenn McEnroe	Hannelore Starkowski	Marnie Zimbelman
Ellen Bordy	Roger Guse	Alison McEnroe	Ethan Smith	
Judy Boyd	Dan Hahn	Alexis McEnroe	Dave Smoot	
Fred Brauer	Lori Hahn	Fred McKenna	Barb Smoot	
Karla Brauer	Abby Hahn	Marilyn McKenna	Paul Soals	
Jordyn Brauer	Arthur Hayame	Steve McLaughlin	Stacey Soals	
Justin Brauer	Barbara Hayame	Heather McLaughlin	Jacquelin Soals	
Klayton Brauer	Tim Hayame	Sandra Means	Dimitry Spencer	
Paul Brownlee	Darren Hayame	George Melke	Tamaray Starling	
Lois Brownlee	Joy Hayame	Molly Munson	Darryl Sterner	
Marcus Brownlee	Hannah Hayame	Caroline Nagy	Sandra Sterner	
Scott Brownlee	Miriam Hitzeman	Pamela Nelson	Michelle Sterner	
Katherine Brownlee	Richard Hoffmeister	Rev. Martin Noland	Chris Strom	
Robert Crews	Theresa Mui	Karla Noland	Brett Toensing	
Veronica Crews	Robert Innes	Renee Noland	Anne-Marie Toensing	
Clara Crews	Shirley Innes	Heidi Noland	Brooke Toensing	
Celeste Crews	Michael Innes	Floyd Oatman	Ryan Toensing	