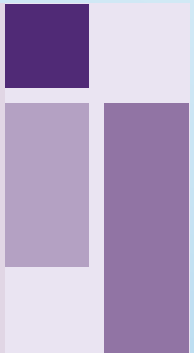




Just Protestant.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church
in Bavaria



► Imprint

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► Content

4 A Little History of the Protestant Church in Bavaria

5 Facts and Figures

6 Church Leadership

7 Parish life in an average Bavarian congregation

Just Protestant

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria



Your experience with the word "church" is probably manifold. Maybe you immediately think of church buildings, which are often the landmarks of the town. Maybe you also think of the minister or an experience which you have had with the church.

In this brochure you can learn something about the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria. Maybe you will be surprised at how many places and in how many things our church is actively engaged. And maybe you find some of it so interesting that you wish to hear more or even get involved with us. I dare to predict that you will not regret it.

Even if we are involved in many areas: the center of all our engagement continues to be worship. Time for taking breath and gain solid ground simply feels good and nourishes the soul.

This is the well from which we drink with everything we do as the church.

God's blessings to you!

Yours

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Heinrich Bedford-Strohm". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Prof. Dr. Heinrich Bedford-Strohm

Landesbischof

A Little History of the Protestant Church in Bavaria

Rooted in Martin Luthers teachings

The Good News of the gospel spread quickly all over the Roman empire. The area of Bavaria of today was located within the borders of the Roman empire. There is evidence that since the 3rd century there were Christian congregations in the Bavarian cities of Augsburg, Kempten und Regensburg. Preaching monks wandered through the villages and helped to establish the Christian faith in many places throughout the Middle Ages. By visiting 700 years old churches we learn about the strong faith of our predecessors.

The doctrine of Martin Luther came early to Bavaria. Augsburg, Nuernberg and Coburg became important places to Martin Luther and the reformation. At that time a person could not choose his or her own denomination - it was the nobility that made the decision if a county was to be roman catholic or protestant.

30 years of war in the 17th century among protestant and catholic nobility brought death and destruction all over Europe in the 17th century.

It was common practice during the 19th century, that the head of state was also head of the protestant church in his reign. This close relationship of state and church played

an important role for the protestant church during the "3rd Reich" (1933-1945). Millions of Germans, Catholics and Protestants alike followed Adolf Hitler enthusiastically. This caused World War II. 50 million people died, most larger cities in Germany were destroyed, almost all Jewish citizens in Germany were killed or fled.

After the war the Bavarian Lutheran Church took responsibility for anti-judaism in her teaching and preaching, and consequently for the death of 6 million Jews. Today many members of our church are engaged in projects of reconciliation with Jews and Jewish congregations.

Since World War II until today Bavaria is a place many Christians leaving Rumania, Hungary and Russia choose to live in.

Worships, counselling, teaching and caring for people in need are the main areas of church life. Since 1975 women are ordained as pastors. Today about 30% of all pastors are women.

In 1999 the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant Church signed the "Gemeinsame Erklärung zur Rechtfertigungslehre" (Common Declaration of Justification by Faith) in Augsburg.



Facts and Figures

about the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria

General:

Area: 70.000 km²
 Church headquarters: Munich

Organisation:

6 regional bishops oversee 67 church districts with 1.541 congregations.
 With 2.6 million members, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria is the 3rd largest protestant church in Germany.

Staff:

Employed by the church: 26.000
 Employed in the "Diakonie" (social services): 71.000
 Volunteers: 149.000

Pastors: 2.441
 Parish pastors: 1.900
 Deacons and Deaconesses: 1.167
 Church musicians: 2.500

Church teachers

in public schools: 1.082
 Church teachers in kindergartens: 8.676

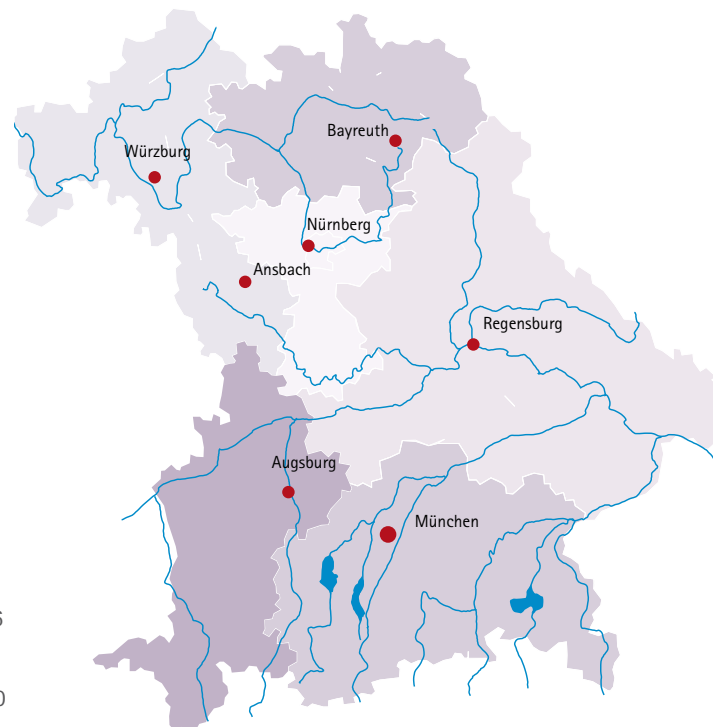
Church Life (per year)

Church services: 113.726
 Persons attending a Sunday service: 150.000
 Persons attending the service on Christmas Eve: 865.000

Baptisms: 22.507
 Weddings: 6.166
 Funerals: 28.732
 Groups in parishes, meeting regularly: 19.000

Buildings

Church buildings: 1.930
 Buildings for parish life: 287
 Kindergartens: 1.160
 Buildings for social work: 247
 Elderly homes: 179
 „Behindertenwerkstätten" (Work projects for disabled persons): 24



Source: Statistical data 2010

Church Leadership

Bishop

The bishop is elected by the synod for 12 years.

He or she represents the church in public and is the head of the council ("Landeskirchenrat")

The council

("Landeskirchenrat")

It meets monthly, appoints the pastors and decides about organisational matters.

The council consists of the bishop, the 6 regional bishops, and the heads of the departments in the church office in Munich.

The synod

The synod consists of 108 members. They are elected for 6 years by the members of all parish councils. The synod meets twice a year and discusses current issues of church and society – for example: Education in school, family, the care for old people. The synod decides about church laws and regulations and the church budget.

← elects →

Synod-committee

A synod-committee ("Landessynodalausschuss") meets monthly for the continuing work of the synod.

Church Budget 2012: 775 million Euro

Parish life in an average Bavarian congregation

Pastors, volunteers and church taxes

On average a Lutheran congregation has about 1700 members, one pastor, a part-time church-musician and part-time staff in the church office. About 80 persons attend the service on Sunday. The congregation is led by the church council (12 members, elected for 6 years) and the pastor.

The church council meets once a month. About 150 volunteers are organizing groups for children, young people, elderly, women. The pastor is responsible for the Sunday service, prepares the sermon and coordinates volunteer participation in the service. Confirmation class, counselling and visits of church members are part of his work as well as funerals, baptisms and weddings. The pastor teaches religion for 6 hours a week in public schools.

Church taxes fund the salary of the pastor, the employed staff and partly for the church buildings. The congregation raises the rest of the money through the offertory in the service and donations from its members.



As a church we contribute significantly to the culture of Bavaria. We teach „religion“ in public schools. We bring people together in worships, in lectures and academic discussions, in concerts and exhibitions.

As a church we feel the responsibility to bring our understanding of christian love and care for god's creation into the sphere of political discussion. Insofar our church proclaims the word of God in the realm of a democratic society.



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