



聖地雅歌台灣基督教會

Taiwanese Lutheran Church of San Diego

10075 Azuaga St., San Diego, CA 92129

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We would like to inform you that Pastor Shiau Ting Liu (Pastor Liu) has resigned from the Taiwanese Lutheran Church of San Diego effective December 8, 2024. We are thankful for the time he spent with us and pray for God's continuing guidance in his life and ministry.

Pastor Liu and any ministries affiliated with him, including but not limited to the Family First Network Association, the Chinese Service at University Lutheran Church, and The Donuts Association of Intercultural Communication in Taiwan, are no longer associated with the Taiwanese Lutheran Church of San Diego. Furthermore, the church has no involvement and disclaims all responsibilities for any financial matters or transactions related to Pastor Liu or his affiliated ministries. Unless authorized by the congregation or the Church Council of this church, any actions, statements, or representations made by Pastor Liu are not, and shall not be construed as, the official stance or position of the Taiwanese Lutheran Church of San Diego.

Regarding the Recent Election:

We would like to address concerns regarding the election of a deacon to the Church Council. It has come to our attention that there have been questions and confusion, and we wish to provide clarification in the spirit of transparency.

The Taiwanese Lutheran Church of San Diego conducts its elections in accordance with its constitution and bylaws. Our bylaws govern the election of deacons based on the Bible, referencing 1 Timothy 3:8-13, which outlines the qualifications necessary for those seeking to serve as deacons. These biblical qualifications and spiritual principles serve as the foundation of our deacon election process. The congregation votes according to these guidelines as they seek spiritual guidance from the Lord.

It has come to our attention that claims have been made that the election process may have violated the California Election Code. However, while our church is incorporated under California law, the California Election Code applies to public office elections and does not govern internal church elections. Our church election process does not violate any California law. In particular, the recent church election did not violate any California law.

After thoroughly reviewing the deacon's qualifications and election process, the Church Council and the Pacific Synod bishop both confirmed that the deacon's election was carried out in full compliance with the church constitution, bylaws, and California law.

Clarification on Financial Matters:

We also wish to address confusion regarding the compensation that Pastor Liu received from the church over the past decade. From 2015 to 2024, Taiwanese Lutheran Church of San Diego hired Pastor Liu under contract. The pastor's compensation included both salary and housing allowance. The majority of his salary and housing allowance came from the generous contributions of our congregation, and the remaining from individuals outside our congregation. We are grateful for the Lord's provisions throughout the years.

Timeline of Events:

10/27/2024 (Congregational Meeting)

At the congregational meeting, Deacon A, who served as a deacon before asked twice whether he could self-promote for the deacon election and Pastor Liu affirmed on the stage that he was eligible. Deacon A received enough votes to be a deacon. While still on the stage, Pastor Liu announced his resignation as Senior Pastor.

10/30/2024

During the Wednesday night church prayer meeting, Pastor Liu shared a message with the congregation publicly and later conveyed a similar message to select members of the Church Council. He stated that if Deacon A were allowed to assume the position, he would leave the church that very week and would not return. Pastor Liu also mentioned that he would publicly lead a group of followers away from the church, alleging that he believed the church

to be under the influence of the devil. Additionally, he expressed his intention to openly share his correspondence with Deacon A and the events that transpired, in order to safeguard the purity of the universal church. Pastor Liu emphasized that his stance was not personal but rooted in principle. He also made it clear that he would publicly disclose the names of the Church Council members, as he believed that they were the sons of darkness, for allowing a liar to hold the position of deacon.

11/24/2024

An informational meeting was held at the church, and the Church Council declared the election of Deacon A legal and legitimate. Deacon A was invited up to speak, and he thanked the Church Council for declaring the election legal and legitimate. Some of the congregation responded with applause, with one member responding, "Well said!" Pastor Liu also went up to speak after Deacon A. He accused Elder B of forwarding his messages dated 10/30 to others to defame him and he had already consulted a lawyer. Pastor Liu demanded Elder B to either apologize and resign as an elder, or leave the church. If Elder B did not oblige, Pastor Liu said that there would be legal ramifications for Elder B.

Despite Pastor Liu publicly resigning, he announced that he was still the Senior Pastor and President of the Church Council, as his resignation would not take effect until the end of 2024. As Senior Pastor, he called a Special congregational meeting to vote to dissolve the current Church Council and re-elect council members whom he deemed qualified. Pastor Liu also proposed terminating both the bookkeeper and the secretary of the church, who were the wives of Deacon A and Elder B, in order to protect them.

11/26/2024-11/27/2024

Pastor Liu instructed sending out disciplinary letters to the church member who said, "Well said" and to those who clapped on 11/24 in the name of the Church Council. The disciplinary letters told the recipients (10+ families) to show up and explain their actions to the Church Council on 12/8. The letter stated that if they did not show up, council church discipline would be enacted.

Around the same time, Pastor Liu also reconsidered his resignation and accepted the Church Council's request to stay as Senior Pastor. This announcement was made on the online church bulletin.

12/1/2024

Members of the congregation requested help from the bishop of the ELCA Pacifica Synod. He came on 12/1 to meet with the Church Council and to understand the situation. The bishop stated that the election of deacon A did not violate church's constitution, California election law did not apply to the church's internal elections (including the election of deacon A), the Church council cannot be dissolved as proposed by Pastor Liu, and so the Special Congregational Meeting should not be called. Pastor Liu walked out of the meeting immediately and announced to the church and publicly that he resigned again effective December 8, 2024.

Moving Forward:

These recent events were sudden and damaging to the church. We sincerely request Pastor Liu to stop criticizing the Taiwanese Lutheran Church of San Diego and its Council members, so we can heal, and continue gospel work for God's kingdom. We humbly ask for your continued prayers and support. May the Lord bless this church and use it for His glory. May the Lord also bless Pastor Liu and lead him along His path. We are thankful for God's unwavering guidance and His love, which sustain us in all things. May we continue to grow together in grace, unity, and the peace of Christ. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the church office at info@sdtlc.org.

With blessings and gratitude,

The Taiwanese Lutheran Church of San Diego - Church Council