

Німецька Євангелічно-лютеранська церква України

Вих. №91 СЄ

Дата: 17.02.2023

Dear Rev. Jonathan E. Shaw
Dear Brother in Christ

Thank You very much for Your letter to us regarding the possibility of the fellowship of Your Synod with congregations in Ukraine.

According to the information we have, there is no ELCU or ELCU Church Center as a legal entity in Ukraine. The said ELCU, which according to Mr. Mashevsky consists of 5 of our congregations (4 of which have less than 10 people each) and 3 fictitious congregations that are registered by people from other congregations or non-Lutherans to increase the number of congregations in the eyes of partners.

The congregations of Kryvyi Rih and Odesa are congregations “on paper” and were created to “duplicate” our congregations that had already existed in that region. The newly founded congregation of Dnipro is a registered congregation of St. Catherine and is a duplicate. The congregation of St. Paul is a congregation of our Church, and the documents from the former head of the congregation that have been blocking the change of the head of the congregation through the court, do not express the actual will of the congregation. Perhaps other fictitious congregations were created that we do not know about, because similar attempts were made in the cities of Kharkiv, Kyiv and Poltava.

From the point of view of the Church order, if 5 of our congregations would like to enter the altar and pulpit fellowship, they must first officially come out of GELCU, confirm this decision at the general assembly of the congregations and send an official letter to the Synod of GELCU, and then create a new Church or Church Center.

We would also like to point out that Mr. Mashevsky seeks to be reinstated as a pastor of GELCU, which is also hard to understand considering his stated desire to create a new Church.

The essence of the conflict with Mr. Mashevsky is not of theological nature. The reason for it is primarily the abuse of his position and finances, which led to the loss of the Church's property cars and four real estate assets, including the house of prayer of the congregation in Zaporizhzhia and the purchase of a private apartment for Mr. Mashevsky and the re-registration of a company car for his wife. Not to mention serious ethical violations, such as alcohol abuse.

In addition, Mr. Mashevsky's practice of ordinating people without appropriate theological education for the pastor's and deacon's ministry (as well as creating and blessing another bishop) creates certain organizational and, perhaps, theological problems.

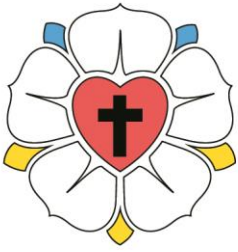
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Charges of liberality against GELCU are primarily a manipulation. The Church does not have any document or practice of blessing LGBT couples in marriage, which he publicly accused the Church of. At the moment GELCU has no practice of women's pastoral ordination, and all women that were blessed for deacon's ministry remained in the service with him. Prior to the conflict with Mr. Mashevski, GELCU had good long-lasting relations with other ministers from the Missouri Synod, for example, confirmation lessons for the acting bishop and the baptism of the president of the Synod were conducted by a pastor from the Missouri Synod.

Once again, we thank you for your inquiry and declare our readiness for meetings and dialogue.

With wishes of blessings,

Bishop Pavlo Shvarts

Rev. Alexander Gross