

ISTANBUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Ap^ostle Paul wrote about 1950 years ago to the Christians in Ephesus: “Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In Him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in Him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit (Eph 2:19-22). This is what the Church is about and on this same foundation Istanbul Lutheran Church wants to stand today.

- Istanbul Lutheran Church confesses the Christian faith based on the Holy Bible, the witness of the Old and New Testaments to the Triune God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This faith is expressed in three ecumenical creeds and in the Lutheran Confessions.
- Istanbul Lutheran Church proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, the Lord of one, holy, universal and apostolic church, who invites people from all nations into His Church.
- Istanbul Lutheran Church responds to the mission the Lord has given it by celebrating church services, teaching and proclamation, and by individual counseling. It is the mission of the Church to proclaim its message and to operate publicly, carrying its responsibility in the society and praying for the wellbeing of this country.

He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

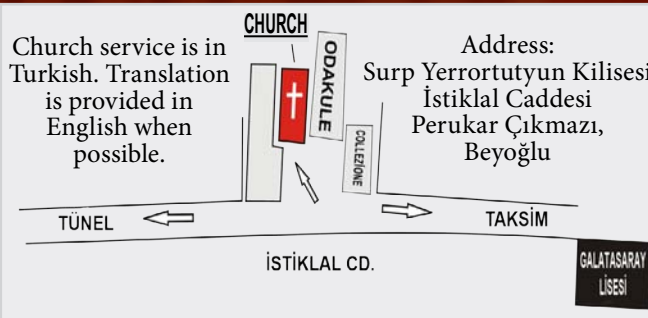
(Prophet İsaiah seven hundred years before Christ, Isaiah 53:3-5)

LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Catholic priest, Martin Luther, who lived in the 16th century, struggled hard to be good enough for God. When he recognized that even his best efforts weren’t enough to fulfill the demands of a holy God, he fell in despair. One day while reading the Bible his eyes were opened to a revolutionary truth; the Bible teaches that man is saved only through mercy and faith in the fulfilled work of Jesus Christ. The reformation and protestant movement started from this insight. According to Luther, the reformation of the Church has to be based on God’s word. Everyone should be able to hear and read the Bible in his own language.

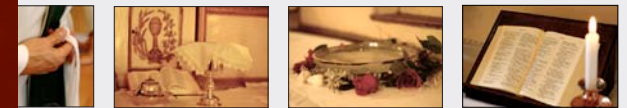
Martin Luther didn’t intend to found a new Church, but reform the Church from inside. However the political situation of 16th century Europe led to the establishment of the Lutheran Church. There are about 63 million Lutheran Christians in today’s world.

Church Service in Istanbul Every Sunday at 11 a.m.



Istanbul Lutheran Church
info@luteryenkilisesi.org
www.luteryenkilisesi.org

ISTANBUL LUTHERAN CHURCH



Church service every Sunday at 11 a.m.
in Surp Yerrortutyun Church, Beyoğlu

HISTORY OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN TURKEY

As early as 1709, Sweden sent the first Lutheran priest to Constantinople. In the same year Karl XII, the King of Sweden, was defeated by the Russians in the battle of Poltava and escaped to take refuge with the Ottomans.

In 1741, the Parliament of Sweden decided to collect money for the construction of a church in Istanbul. Funds for the plan were also raised in Germany and in Finland. The church was built in the garden of the Swedish Embassy in 1748. However, in 1818 it burned down and the current small Gothic wooden chapel was built as a replacement.

After 1884, the Swedish Government no longer covered the expenses of the chapel and the salary of a priest. From 1885 to 1960, the Greek Protestant community in Istanbul used the chapel for its church services. After the activities of the Greek Protestant Congregation came to an end, the chapel has been used by several Protestant congregations.

Lutheran church services were started in the empty chapel of the Swedish Consulate by Finns living in the city in 1999. After a Turkish speaking priest was found, the services were changed into Turkish.

In February 2005 the Istanbul Lutheran Church registered with the Turkish Government. In November 2006, in addition to the Istanbul Congregation the Turkish speaking Lutheran congregations in Peshtera, Bulgaria, and in Mannheim, Germany joined the Church.

Since July 2008, the Church services of the Istanbul Lutheran Congregation have been held in the more spacious vacant church building on Istiklal Street.



HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

Holy Trinity Church, Surp Yerrortutyun, located in the center of Istanbul on the busy Istiklal Street, was built originally by the Roman Catholic Church in 1699. The historical facts of this old building are somewhat scarce.

The building burned down in September 1762 and was rebuilt with the permission of Sultan Mustafa II. Since 1802 Holy Trinity served as the main Roman Catholic Church in Istanbul. In 1831 the church burned down again. At the same time the residence of the Archbishop, as well as the large library were destroyed, too. The church was rebuilt between 1832-1835. At this time the Archbishop's chair was also built in the front of the church and an organ was purchased.

For a while the building was used as a church of the Austrian Consulate. The initials of the Emperor Franz I and the balcony built in the front part of the church remind us of this period.

In 1856 the church came under possession of the Armenian Catholic Church. As the congregation decreased in numbers, the regular church services of this Armenian Catholic Congregation came to an end around the middle of 20th century. Without a regular church life and because of the lack of proper care, the condition of the building has badly deteriorated. In the course of many years, the church has been used by several Protestant and Orthodox congregations.

The Istanbul Lutheran Congregation has been meeting in this church since 2008. The Congregation is looking into possibilities to renovate the church to a more useful condition with the dignity it deserves.

(Historical facts taken from <http://www.bolsohays.com>, more information: L'Eglise Armenienne Catholique en Turquie by Hovannes Çolakyan)