

# Church of Sweden moves to stop calling God 'Lord' or 'he'

The Church of Sweden has announced plans to move away from gendered terms to refer to God, saying it prefers the use of gender-neutral terms for its supreme deity.

The national Evangelical Lutheran church is in the process of updating its 31-year-old yearbook of the language for services, liturgy, hymns and more.

On Thursday night (local time) the church made the decision to remove the words "Lord" and "he" from the book and favour the more gender neutral term "God".

The choice was made at the end of an eight-day meeting of the church's 251-member decision making body.

The change will officially take place during the holiday of Pentecost, on May 20, 2018.

Formerly the official state church, the Church of Sweden is headquartered in Uppsala, 60km north of the capital and has 6.1 million baptised members in a country of 10 million.

Archbishop Antje Jackelén told Sweden's TT news agency the change was a long time coming, having been discussed in the 1986 conference.

"Theologically, for instance, we know that God is beyond our gender determinations – God is not human," she said.

Not everyone is on board with the change however. Christer Pahlmblad, an associate professor at Sweden's Lund University, accused the church of undermining the trinity.

"It really isn't smart if the Church of Sweden becomes known as a church that does not respect the common theology heritage," he told *Kristeligt Dagblad* newspaper in Denmark.

Newshub.

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