

# ALTO



## REFORMED CHURCH

### ARTICLES

#### Raising Kids in an Anti-Christian World

By Pastor Kevin Van Wyk

**Anti-Christian rhetoric is increasingly insulting and attacking believers.**

The Olympic opening ceremony was the latest attack with its repulsive amoral messaging... a threesome love-affair, rampant promotion of transgenderism, and the mocking of the Lord's Supper. (The argument that it was about Greek gods is lame; the message was clear.<sup>[1]</sup> The response of the Paris 2024 spokesperson was, at best, ignorant about Christianity and certainly not promoting tolerance.<sup>[2]</sup>)

Throughout our nation, students are being forced to submit to pronoun and bathroom policies<sup>[3]</sup>, teachers are being forced to remain silent with parents when their children struggle with their gender<sup>[4]</sup>, and school boards are stuck between receiving government funds and their constituents.<sup>[5]</sup>

Disney and other producers are doing their best to push liberal ideology and DEI in shows like "The Proud Family: Louder and Prouder", "Strange World", "Lightyear", "The Owl House", "My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic", "Chip and Potato", "Generation Drag", and "Steven Universe".<sup>[6]</sup> This list could go on and on.

Then we have the stories of parents having their child taken from them<sup>[7]</sup> or not being allowed to foster children,<sup>[8]</sup> because they refuse to help children “transition.”<sup>[9]</sup>

Muslim parents are having some success in pushing back against school districts’ gender ideology<sup>[10]</sup>, but the message is clear to Christians wanting to uphold biblical morality... “shut and get out of the way. Your beliefs are not welcome anymore.”

### **So, how do you raise kids in this world?**

It is tempting to talk about boycotting the Olympics, Peacock, the advertisers, Disney, and don’t forget Target, Budlight, Amazon, and ... here’s the really sad part: I just searched google for other companies where Christians have called for a boycott and Google’s top responses are all about divesting in companies that support Israel and boycotting Franklin Graham. Bizarre! Near the bottom of the page, they did point me to an excellent article from Ligonier<sup>[11]</sup> on the issue of boycotting. The bottom line is we are in the world, and you can’t boycott everybody. :-/

As well, to answer the above question, I’d love to have an in-depth look at and evaluation of school options, but that was not my intention for this article. Let me just say, we do need families to be a light as they go into public schools, we do need families to be a light as they go into private schools, and we do need families to be a light as they learn at home. I urge you to be supportive of every family as they navigate what is best.

**My concern now is simply to give you one simple strategy for helping your kids be a light in this world.**

Bless your kids!

No, I do not mean materially. The cool clothes, the latest phone, and the sweetest car will not get the results you want.

I implore you to pray a blessing over your kids!

"I'm not good at praying." "That would be awkward." "That's good for you, pastor, but that's not me."

Paul has already responded to our fears..."Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." (Philippians 4:6)

When Jesus left his disciples, he blessed them saying..."Peace be with you." (John 14:27; 20:19,21,26)

Paul included near the end of every letter a blessing on the believers. The most simplistic was, "Grace be with you." (Colossians 4:18).

**You can expand on these, but this is a priceless, easy way to start spiritually guarding and guiding your kids!**

**These simple blessings do several things...**

1. They assure your child that you care about them.
2. They empower your child to walk with peace and grace among wolves.
3. They call upon our mighty God to guard and guide your child.

Personally, I expand Aaron's blessing in Numbers 6:24-26...

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace." ... joy, rest... wisdom to know what is right and the courage to do what is right.

As you start simple, you will get more and more comfortable and confident in praying more specifically for your child's challenges. If they are out of the home, as we are now experiencing,

you can keep praying from a distance, but I'm thinking I need to restart this practice when I visit.

**This really is central to what your child needs every day as they head into the world.**

**PRAYER:** Make me a blessing to my children, that they will walk in your ways, having grace, peace and joy in their hearts. Stir me to pray boldly over them that they are assured of my love, empowered by your peace and grace, and guarded and guided by your Spirit. AMEN.

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<sup>[1]</sup> <https://www.today.com/news/paris-olympics/olympics-opening-ceremony-last-supper-controversy-rcna163929>

<sup>[2]</sup> [https://www.breitbart.com/europe/2024/07/28/paris-olympics-organizers-apologize-for-any-offense-taken-from-last-supper-parody/?mkt\\_tok=NDI3LUxFUS0wNjYAAAGUnNtruJs4WtPUjgkhZ4s9O4tOk6\\_ZXAj8V\\_IpAyAv\\_V\\_MjdjyTWg4\\_OuLx5LLRd7khFiw-Q6dTGz3EzblrNkslkHVhCKSKODWxJ9fVa\\_T](https://www.breitbart.com/europe/2024/07/28/paris-olympics-organizers-apologize-for-any-offense-taken-from-last-supper-parody/?mkt_tok=NDI3LUxFUS0wNjYAAAGUnNtruJs4WtPUjgkhZ4s9O4tOk6_ZXAj8V_IpAyAv_V_MjdjyTWg4_OuLx5LLRd7khFiw-Q6dTGz3EzblrNkslkHVhCKSKODWxJ9fVa_T)

<sup>[3]</sup> <https://www.dailysignal.com/2024/07/26/virginia-court-upholds-challenge-unconstitutional-school-pronoun-bathroom-policies/>

<sup>[4]</sup> <https://www.npr.org/2024/07/16/nx-s1-5041437/california-bans-school-rules-requiring-parents-notification-of-childs-pronoun-change>, <https://www.dailysignal.com/2024/07/15/exclusive-calif-district-helps-students-hide-gender-identity-parents/>

<sup>[5]</sup> <https://www.dailysignal.com/2024/07/17/minnesota-district-approves-infuriating-transgender-policy-allowing-boys-girls-spaces/>

<sup>[6]</sup> <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-11732617/How-Disney-indoctrinating-kids-woke-cartoons.html>, <https://www.heritage.org/progressivism/commentary/cartoons-are-the-lefts-new-weapon-target-your-kids>, <https://www.care.com/c/kids-shows-with-lgbtq-characters-and-storylines/>

<sup>[7]</sup> [https://catholicvote.org/military-family-sues-hospital-for-attempting-to-transition-autistic-son/?mkt\\_tok=NDI3LUxFUS0wNjYAAAGUogHBR4JiI0-a5FuCVFpvl-yA7oz\\_H1bn0zWEOQHkixrFX6tpqu2lo5USIQW1F8i3eMHyyuZm-EVRHj8sIF6UJquqHm3p6Clt-G7In9QR](https://catholicvote.org/military-family-sues-hospital-for-attempting-to-transition-autistic-son/?mkt_tok=NDI3LUxFUS0wNjYAAAGUogHBR4JiI0-a5FuCVFpvl-yA7oz_H1bn0zWEOQHkixrFX6tpqu2lo5USIQW1F8i3eMHyyuZm-EVRHj8sIF6UJquqHm3p6Clt-G7In9QR)

<sup>[8]</sup> <https://www.kptv.com/2023/04/04/oregon-woman-blocked-adopting-children-refusing-state-rules-gender-identity/>; <https://www.christianpost.com/news/families-sue-vermont-for-denying->

[foster-care-over-opposition-to-trans-ideology.html](https://www.foster-care-over-opposition-to-trans-ideology.html)

<sup>[9]</sup> [https://catholicvote.org/military-family-sues-hospital-for-attempting-to-transition-autistic-son/?mkt\\_tok=NDI3LUxwFUS0wNjYAAAGUogHBR4JjI0-a5FuCVFpvl-yA7oz\\_H1bn0zWEOQHkjrFX6tpgu2lo5USIQW1F8i3eMHyyuZm-EVRHj8sIF6UJquqHm3p6Clt-G7In9QR](https://catholicvote.org/military-family-sues-hospital-for-attempting-to-transition-autistic-son/?mkt_tok=NDI3LUxwFUS0wNjYAAAGUogHBR4JjI0-a5FuCVFpvl-yA7oz_H1bn0zWEOQHkjrFX6tpgu2lo5USIQW1F8i3eMHyyuZm-EVRHj8sIF6UJquqHm3p6Clt-G7In9QR)

<sup>[10]</sup> <https://www.dailysignal.com/2024/07/19/theyre-not-listening-100-muslim-parents-stand-gender-ideology-virginia-school-board-meeting/>

<sup>[11]</sup> <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/can-christians-do-business-world>

## Equipping Youth Update

By Randy McDaniel

*“Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward.<sup>4</sup> Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one’s youth.<sup>5</sup> Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.”* Psalm 127:3-5 (ESV)

Since I have been a part of the church at Alto, one thing I have noticed that impresses upon visitors and new attendee’s is the number of children our church has. Not only the amount, but the discipleship and involvement they have within our church. Our covenant children are not “seen but not heard”, they are seen, heard, and cherished.

Solomon, who no doubt fathered many children, speaks to the preciousness of children. They are a blessing. They are our pride. They are our reward. Not merely our birthed children, but the children of others within our congregation because we are all one family in the Holy Spirit made together in Christ Jesus by the grace of God the Father.

Just before these beloved verses in Psalm 127, Solomon speaks to the very important fact that if the LORD doesn’t build the house, any form of labor or attempt to build a house is in vain. How those who try to guard and keep watch over a house not built by the LORD is useless.

There are many within our church that see this. That seek the LORD in being vessels, instruments, workman to His building of His house. And that as the LORD builds, He blesses us with children. What a gift by His grace our children are, and a humbling privilege to be apart of their lives and raising up in Christ.

Youth Group attended Lifest this month which is the nations largest Christian concert. They enjoyed the time of fellowship with one another as we camped, played games, and had devotionals together. They worshipped God with all their hearts as they sang to Him during the concerts.

We also had a "Parent's Night Out" fundraiser for the fall and winter Silver Birch retreats which was very successful. Not merely in raising funds, which it was (thanks to all your generosity), but successful in seeing so many children playing and glorifying God through the enjoyment of each other and the life He has given them. To see those that helped enjoy the time with the children. To see the parents get a much-deserved night together to hopefully grow their love together more in Christ.

Additionally, we put on a diaper/cereal drive in which we collected over a hundred diapers, diaper wipes, and non-sugar cereals for the Waupun food pantry. The efforts of the teens to spread the word in attempt to provide for those in need is amazing.

So, this month I can honestly say I share Solomons heart. What a reward to see God continue growing and maturing these children in His love as they imitate their Father in Heaven. Alto Reformed Church, we can speak confidently to the world that God is doing great and mighty things, building His house, so that they may see and know the love of our Father in Christ Jesus.

## Library Update

By Deb Navis

We have some news to share from the ARC library. New 2024 books are now arriving on the library shelves! They are on the shelves just to the left of the entrance door to the library. Very easy to locate.

Some of the new fiction books are written by our favorite authors such as Lynn Austin, Wanda Brunstetter, Melody Carlson (a new favorite of mine), Colleen Coble, Denise Hunter, and Tracie Peterson. New authors to our library include Sarah Ladd, Hanna Linder, and Debbie Mayne. So please stop down to checkout the new 2024 books. And of course, our shelves are filled with many other fiction and non-fiction books, devotionals, young adult books, children's books, and DVD's - something available for all ages. And remember, a librarian is available on Sunday mornings to help with any questions.

# MESSAGES

Dear ARC, Thank you for sending me to camp! I am very grateful. It was an experience I will never forget, and I can't wait to go next year! Thank you!

Sincerely,

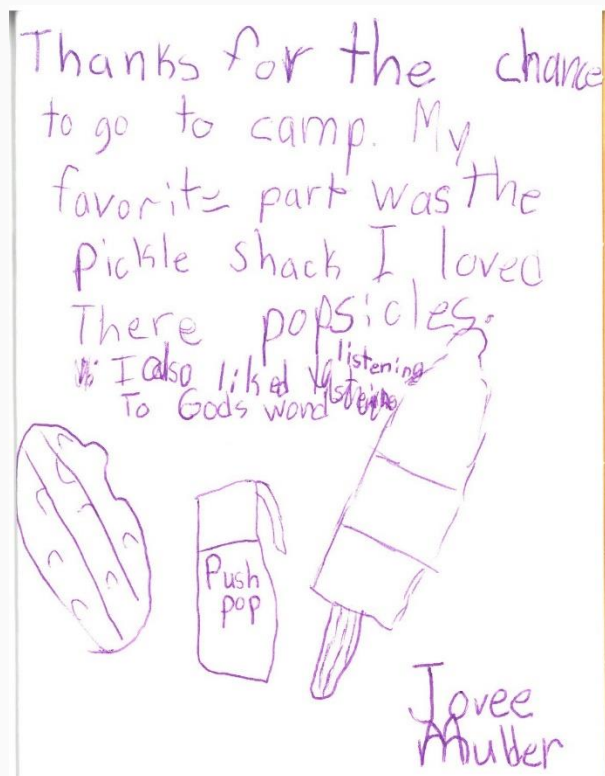
Jenna Bresser

Thank you for the prayers and cards for myself and for Brian. We are grateful.

-Faye Janey

Our heartfelt thanks goes out to all of you as you have cared for us during the passing of Audrey. Thank you for the flowers, cards, memorial gifts, food, the ladies that helped with the funeral lunch, and specifically to Pastor Kevin, Gloria, and Chad.

-Paul Elenius and family





## EVENTS

# August Events

August

7-8

Wednesday-Thursday

### Alto Fair

The office will be closed. We'll see you at the Alto Fair! There's still time to sign up to sit in our church booth. Signup at the Information Center.

August

11

Sunday, 10am

### Outdoor Worship & Church Picnic

Join us on the church hill for outdoor worship followed by the church picnic. Bring a lawn chair and a dish to pass.



## NEWS



**Baptisms**

7/14/24 - Wren Loomans, son of Colton & Courtney Loomans

**Change of Address**

Beverly Kowalski  
721 Mayfair St, Apt 1  
Waupun, WI 53963

Margaret Hoekstra  
Markesan Resident Home  
1130 N Margaret St, C102  
Markesan, WI 53946