What Tim Walz has said about his faith

Walz has described himself as a 'Minnesota Lutheran'

Published: Aug 6, 2024, at 2:27 p.m.

VIEW 252 COMMENTS
SHARE

Michelle Budge, Deseret News / Source: Getty Images

By Kelsey Dallas
Kelsey is an assistant managing editor for the Deseret News. She covers religion, sports and the Supreme Court.

America, meet Minnesota Lutherans.

A member of this unofficial subset of Christians, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz was added to the Democratic presidential ticket on Tuesday by Vice President Kamala Harris.

Walz has referred to himself as a "Minnesota Lutheran" multiple times in recent years, such as when he spoke at a North America's Building Trade Unions event in April.

"Because we're good Minnesota Lutherans, we have a rule: If you do something good and talk about it, it no longer counts," he said, according to Religion News Service. "So what you have to do is to get someone else to talk about you."

The way Walz presents it, Minnesota Lutheran is both a religious identity and a cultural one. It's someone who will tell a self-deprecating story while sharing a jello mold with you at a potluck after church.

Tim Walz's religion

Beyond making jokes about Minnesota Lutherans, Walz doesn't say much about his faith during media appearances.

On social media, he's referenced attending Pilgrim Lutheran Church in St. Paul, but the references are few and far between.

Pilgrim Lutheran Church is part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, a mainline Protestant denomination that's theologically liberal compared to other Lutheran denominations active in the U.S., such as the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church.

The church's website highlights its effort to build an "inclusive Christian worshipping community," and lists "living sustainably" and "doing justice" among the congregation's core values.

RELATED

What would a Kamala Harris presidency mean for religious freedom?

What JD Vance has said about his faith

Walz's new running mate, Harris, also identifies as Christian, but her religious background is more eclectic than his.

As a child, she visited Hindu temples in addition to Christian churches, and, as an adult, she married a Jewish man, second gentleman Douglas Emhoff, as the Deseret News previously reported.

Tim Walz's political beliefs

Although Walz doesn't regularly talk about his faith, he does often promote his work on faith-related policies.

For example, he's been outspoken about his support for abortion rights.

"Minnesota was the first to establish an ironclad right to reproductive freedom after the Dobbs decision. Two years later, we continue to stand as a firewall against any and all attacks on reproductive freedom," he wrote on Instagram in June on the anniversary of the release of the Supreme Court ruling overturning Roe v. Wade.

He's also defended in vitro fertilization, or IVF, as some faith groups, as well as a few conservative lawmakers, have called for limitations on the procedure in recent months.

Walz has said that he and and his wife, Gwen, needed fertility treatments to have their two kids, per CNN.

"My oldest daughter's name is Hope. That's because my wife and I spent seven years trying to get pregnant, needed fertility treatments, things like IVF – things (some Republicans) would ban," Walz said last month.

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz speaks to the media, Nov. 9, 2022, in St. Paul, Minn. | Abbie Parr

Walz is also a vocal advocate of LGBTQ rights. In the 1990s, during his time as a high school teacher, he "sponsored Mankato West High School's first gay-straight alliance," according to The New York Times.

"When he won his House seat in 2006 in a conservative district, he ran on support for same-sex marriage," the article said.

He has recognized Pride Month during his time as governor of Minnesota.

"As states across the country move to attack the lives and liberties of our LGBTQ+ neighbors, my message is clear. Minnesota will continue to protect your rights — not take them away," he wrote on Instagram in June in the caption of a photo post showing his official proclamation on Pride Month.

Additionally, Walz has worked to protect access to certain gender-related health care procedures in Minnnesota, according to The Hill.

252
Comments

During his time as governor, Walz has signed a ban on conversion therapy and policies protecting members of the transgender community facing legal challenges in other states, the article said.

Report ad

One of the most notable faith-related policy debates that Walz has been involved in since become Minnesota's governor had to do with church closures during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to Religion News Service.

"Walz was one of many governors who imposed restrictions on worship in his state during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic. He was also one of many governors who faced pushback from religious communities, especially conservative ones," the article said.

Report ad

Most Popular

Kamala Harris — the 'sweariest' president?

Trump quietly prepares pitch to Latter-day Saint voters

Melania Trump gets candid about raid on Mar-a-Lago, assassination attempts on her husband

How BYU coach, administrator see revenue sharing changing college sports

Latter-day Saint leader sends BYU students a note about their treatment of Kansas State's football team

85 Israeli PM Netanyahu asserts Israel's right to defend itself at U.N. speech

76 As Romney leaves the Senate, he hopes to influence future family policy

Report ad