



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on July 19, 2011

Bachmann's So-Called "Reverend Wright Moment"

GOP presidential contender Representative Michele Bachmann (left) has been called upon to explain her separation from Salem Lutheran Church in Stillwater, Minnesota, last month. Her decision to separate from the church came shortly before announcing her White House bid and has been the subject of some media curiosity.



The Bachmann family had been a member of the Salem Lutheran Church for more than 10 years, explains Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) director of communications Joel Hochmuth. He indicates, however, that they had not actually attended the congregation for at least two years.

Perhaps what makes the separation so significant is the controversial stance the WELS takes on the Catholic Church, which some contend is the reason for Bachmann's separation. *The Atlantic* explains:

WELS is the most conservative of the major Lutheran church organizations, known for its strict adherence to the writings of Martin Luther, the German theologian who broke with the Catholic Church and launched the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century. This includes endorsing Luther's statements about the papacy. From the WELS "[Doctrinal Statement on the Antichrist](#)":

Since Scripture teaches that the Antichrist would be revealed and gives the marks by which the Antichrist is to be recognized, and since this prophecy has been clearly fulfilled in the history and development of the Roman Papacy, it is Scripture which reveals that the Papacy is the Antichrist.

Bachmann has been called upon to answer for her Church's philosophy in the past, including during her run for Representative in 2006. She said at the time, "It's abhorrent, it's religious bigotry. I love Catholics. I'm a Christian, and my church does not believe that the pope is the antichrist, that's absolutely false."

Not surprisingly, *New York Magazine's* DailyIntel blog has [utilized](#) this opportunity to poke fun at the conservative contender. In a piece entitled, "Michele Bachmann's Reverend Wright Moment," the magazine indicates:

The actual reasoning behind the "antichrist" language is a somewhat complicated theological argument involving lots of historical detail about the Protestant Reformation. We'd summarize it, but we're waiting for the Michele Bachmann version, which will hopefully involve Martin Luther's move to Iowa and his bravery fighting demons in the battle of Concord, New Hampshire.

While it's possible that Bachmann did indeed leave her church because of the controversial philosophies of the WELS, which she may not have become aware of until 2006, one has to call into question the Left's claims that this is Bachmann's "Reverend Wright moment."



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After all, that same Left did not seem too put off by the actual Reverend Wright moment that took place during Obama's presidential campaign, nor by Obama's affiliations with a church and pastor that preaches bigoted, anti-American hatred.

In fact, when then-Senator Obama "repudiated" — if one could call it that — Wright during a press conference in 2008, the *New York Times* seemed sympathetic toward Obama's situation, [saying](#) this:

It is an injustice, a legacy of the racist threads of this nation's history, but prominent African-Americans are regularly called upon to explain or repudiate what other black Americans have to say, while white public figures are rarely, if ever, handed that burden.

It seemed in 2008 that a Reverend Wright moment was not such a bad thing, at least to those on the Left. But three years later, a Reverend Wright moment is suddenly not only something to be feared, but something with which GOP contender Bachmann is forced to address.

The *New York Times* may have had it right — there certainly does seem to be a double standard. But not between prominent black Americans and well-known white Americans. Between conservatives and liberals. If a liberal belongs to a church that passionately preaches hatred, the liberal is embracing their spirituality. If a conservative belongs to a church that privately condones a philosophy of intolerance towards another Christian church, that conservative is a member of the kooky religious right.

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