



# St. James News

Equipping and Empowering Families and Students through Christ

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CHURCH@STJAMESHL.ORG  
320-543-2766

Pastor – Reverend Mark Loder  
web site: [www.stjameshl.org](http://www.stjameshl.org) - [revloder@gmail.com](mailto:revloder@gmail.com)

[SCHOOL@STJAMESHL.ORG](mailto:SCHOOL@STJAMESHL.ORG)  
320-543-2630

Much has been written and discussed about Catechesis within the church. Within those discussions, much lamentation has been had over the struggle that can and has happened in getting Christians to understand and embrace the importance of developing their faith life. And, sadly, it has been uttered, that perhaps, the method of which we go about Catechesis is the cause, or at least a factor that leads to those once connected with the church despising the very source of the well-being of their souls. As a means for beginning an in-depth conversation, the following is presented as a starting point. These are the words of Martin Luther as a shorter preface to his Large Catechism. I encourage everyone to read his words and take heed of his strong encouragement and assertion of responsibility we have toward our spiritual well-being.

God's peace,

Pastor Loder

## Short Preface of Dr. Martin Luther

This sermon is designed and undertaken that it might be an instruction for children and the simple folk. Therefore in ancient times it was called in Greek *catechism* (i.e. instruction for children). It teaches what every Christian must know. So a person who does not know this catechism could not be counted as a Christian or be admitted to any Sacrament, just as a mechanic who does not understand the rules and customs of his trade is expelled and considered incapable. Therefore, we must have the young learn well and fluently the parts of the catechism or instruction for children, diligently exercise themselves in them, and keep them busy with these parts.

Therefore, it is the duty of every father of a family to question and examine his children and servants at least once a week and see what they know or are learning from the catechism. And if they do not know the catechism, he should keep them learning faithfully. For I well remember the time – indeed, even now it happens daily – that one finds rude, old persons who knew nothing and still know nothing about these things. Yet they go to Baptism and the Lord's Supper and use everything that belongs to Christians, even though people who come to the Lord's Supper ought to know more and have a fuller understanding of all Christian doctrine than children and new scholars. However, for the common people we are satisfied if they know the three "parts." These have

remained in Christendom from of old, though little of them has been taught and used correctly until both young and old (who are called Christians and wish to be so) are well trained in them and familiar with them. These parts are the following:

## FIRST

### THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF GOD.

1. You shall have no other gods.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain.
3. You shall sanctify the holy day.
4. You shall honor your father and mother <that it may be well with you and you may live long upon the earth>.
5. You shall not murder.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
9. You shalt not covet your neighbor's house.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his cattle, or anything that is his.

## SECOND

### THE CHIEF ARTICLES OF OUR FAITH.

1. I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.
2. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

3. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

### THIRD

#### THE PRAYER, OR “OUR FATHER,” WHICH CHRIST TAUGHT.

Our Father who art in heaven.

1. Hallowed be Thy name.
2. Thy kingdom come.
3. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
4. Give us this day our daily bread.
5. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.
6. And lead us not into temptation.
7. But deliver us from evil. [For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and ever.] Amen.

These are the most necessary parts of Christian teaching that one should first learn to repeat word for word. And our children should be used to reciting them daily when they rise in the morning, when they sit down to their meals, and when they go to bed at night. And until they repeat them, they should not be given food or drink. Likewise, every head of a household is bound to do the same with his household, man servants, and maid servants. He should not keep them in his house if they do not know these things or are unwilling to learn them. A person who is so rude and unruly as to be unwilling to learn these things is not to be tolerated. For in these three parts everything that we have in the Scriptures is included in short, plain, and simple terms. For the holy fathers or apostles (whoever first taught these things) have summarized the doctrine, life, wisdom, and art of Christians in this way. These parts speak, teach, and are focused on them.

Now, when these three parts are understood, a person must also know what to say about our Sacraments, which Christ Himself instituted: Baptism and the holy body and blood of Christ. They should know the texts that Matthew [28:19-20] and Mark [16:15-16] record at the close of their Gospels, when Christ said farewell to His disciples and sent them forth.

### BAPTISM

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. [Matthew 28:19]

Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. [Mark 16:16]

This is enough for a simple person to know from the Scriptures about Baptism. In like manner, in short, simple words, they should also know the text of St. Paul [1 Corinthians 11:23-26] about the other Sacrament.

### THE SACRAMENT

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also, He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

Then we would have all together five whole parts of Christian doctrine. These should be taught constantly and be required learning for children. You should hear them recited word for word. For you must not rely on the idea that the young people will learn and retain these things from the sermon alone. When these parts have been well learned, you may supplement and strengthen them by also setting before them some psalms or hymns, which have been composed on these parts of the catechism. Lead the young into the Scriptures this way, and make progress in them daily.

However, it is not enough for them to understand and recite these parts according to the words alone. The young people should also be made to attend the preaching, especially during the time that is devoted to the catechism. Then they may hear it explained and may learn to understand what every part contains, so that they can recite it the way they have heard it. Then, when asked, they may give a correct answer, so that preaching may not be useless and fruitless. For the reason we exercise such diligence in preaching the catechism often is so that it may be taught with the greatest simplicity. In this way it will enter the mind easily and be fixed in the memory.

# Our Church Records

## Church Attendance

Sunday, March 28	133 & 117
Maundy Thursday	110
Good Friday	43 & 74
Easter Vigil	34
Easter Sunday	165 & 160
Sunday, April 11	98 & 101
Sunday, April 18	99 & 89
Sunday, April 25	97 & 193

## Communion Attendance

Sunday, March 28	79
Maundy Thursday	95
Good Friday	38 & 61
Easter Vigil	34
Easter Sunday	128
Sunday, April 11	72
Sunday, April 25	94

## Funerals

**Carolyn Augusta Dangers** on April 17, 2021. She was called to her eternal rest April 11, 2021 at the age of 80 years and 29 days.

## Baptism

**Titus Allan Diers** infant son of Jeff & Leisha Diers on March 28, 2021. His sponsors are Dean & Michele Diers, Helen Lester and Ashley Roemer.

**Delia Grace Hassa** infant daughter of Justin & Christine Hassa on April 11, 2021 by Pastor Loder.

**William Eugene Hassa** infant son of Justin & Christine Hassa on April 11, 2021 by Pastor Loder.

## Marriage

**Tyler Miller and Kelli Lachermeier** on April 10, 2021 with Pastor Loder officiating.



LWML members and guests met in April for a delicious salad supper in the school fellowship hall entry. Tables were decorated for spring. President Lorie welcomed the group and led the ladies in prayer.

Pastor Loder presented the Quarterly Bible study, "Life is Like Swiss Cheese." We can concentrate on the cheese or focus on the holes; it is our choice. God encourages us to concentrate on the solid blessings in our daily life, finding contentment and giving thanks, always, for His gift of saving grace.

Program booklets for 2021 were available for members. A variety of fun activities are planned for the coming months. Many opportunities for group Bible study and fellowship are scheduled. Guests are always encouraged to join the group.

Dates for upcoming events include the National convention, June 24-27, to be held in Lexington, Kentucky, and the fall Crow River Conference Rally will be hosted by St. John's, Buffalo, on Saturday, October 9<sup>th</sup>. Other event reminders are printed in the program booklet.

Changes in serving at the receptions following funerals will be encouraged, as safety and health precautions are important. Suggested guidelines will be published for families and serving committees to observe.

"Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content."  
"Philippians 4:11"

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### † Bible Trivia †

See answers below

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1. Which book records Jesus' earliest known miracle?
2. What tax collector climbed a tree to see Jesus?
3. Which book contains the following prophecy: "...and a little child shall lead them."?
4. Which activity was Jesus justifying when he said "Which one of you shall have a donkey or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day."?
5. Of what did Jesus say, "Not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed like one of these."?

**Answers:** 1. John (chapter 2) 2. Zacchaeus (Luke 19:2-3) 3. Isaiah (Isaiah 11:6) 4. Healing (Luke 14:5) 5. Lilies (Matthew 6:29)



Lutheran Hour  
Ministries

*People of Christ With A Message of Hope*

## THE LUTHERAN HOUR

Hear The Lutheran Hour each Sunday at 12:30 PM on KDUZ-1260 Hutchinson or at 7:30 AM on KRWC-1360 Buffalo.

The Lutheran Hour may also be heard at 6:05 AM Sunday mornings on WCCO -830. The Lutheran Hour is our church's witness in the public marketplace. We can sponsor broadcasts on KDUZ in memory of loved ones or in honor of special occasions.

### May 2021

May 2

**"Laughed At"** Speaking out against the prevailing culture might prompt ridicule but it could also produce repentance. (Jonah 3)

May 9

**"Seriously?"** A preacher who gets upset when people take his message seriously--that's the story of Jonah. (Jonah 1-4)

May 16

**"Gain a Heart of Wisdom"** Fear, love, and trust in the Lord is the way to Wisdom in person, and we meet God's eternal wisdom in Jesus, the Messiah. (Psalm 90:12)

May 23

**"Wisdom Knows When"** Does someone need to hear words of rebuke-or redemption? A message about harsh words, gentle answers, and the wisdom of God. (Proverbs 15:1)

May 30

**"TBD"**

Proverbs

## Stewardship- An Article from LCMS

### The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

#### LCMS Stewardship Ministry

#### Newsletter Article – May 2021

St. Paul teaches us: "Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches" (Gal. 6:6). And again, he says: "Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:13–14). In other words, ministers of the Gospel are supported by the offerings of those who are served by them.

And this is how the church lives even now. It is standard practice. But this deserves closer examination. For it instructs us not just *that* we are to give but also *what* we are to give. And it does so with four little words: "In the same way ..."

St. Paul is building his case for supporting the preachers of the Gospel with the sacrificial giving of individual members on the example of the Old Testament people who supported the Levites with their offerings and sacrifices. We're to support the Gospel ministry "in the same way." But how did the Old Testament people support the Levites?

Moses records this: "You shall tithe all the yield of your seed that comes from the field year by year. And before the Lord your God, in the place that he will choose, to make his name dwell there, you shall eat the tithe of your grain, of your wine, and of your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and flock, that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always" (Deut. 14:22–23). The Levites were supported by the tithe, 10 percent of all the yearly yield of that which was harvested.

Does that seem like a lot? Does it surprise you that St. Paul instructs us that we are to support the New Testament Gospel ministry "in the same way?" If it does, ask yourself: Is the church's job in the New Testament bigger or smaller than the Levites' job in the Old Testament? Back then, there was one Temple, and the ministry was almost exclusively located in one nation among the descendants of Abraham. In Matthew 28, Jesus calls us to teach and baptize all nations, and there are churches and ministries all around the world! How could we support

this new Gospel ministry with anything less than the Israelites supported the Old Testament ministry?

Of course, we are free to give more, for we have received more than those in the Old Testament. We have received the fullness of God's revelation, the fullness of His salvation, and the fulfillment of everything that God promised to do. For we have received Christ, God's own Son, in the flesh, who took upon himself our sins and in exchange gave us his righteousness. The Father claimed us as his own in Holy Baptism. He gathers us together in the place where his name dwells to feast on the first fruits of the resurrection, the risen and living body and blood of His Son – our Lord Jesus. He reminds us that we are His, that all things are ours because we belong to Him. He blesses us here in time with physical and spiritual gifts.

In the same way – and in response to His fatherly divine goodness and mercy – we gladly give to those who proclaim to us “the excellencies of him who called us out of darkness and into his marvelous light.” For once we were not a people, but now we are God's people; once we had not received mercy, but now we have indeed (1 Peter 2:9–10).



**May:** Jessica Maas (2), Patrick Workman (2), Peter Zander (2), Sara Niesen (3), Christopher Zander (3), Brooke Baumann (4), Hailey Baumann (4), Tim Boese (4), Amber Zander (4), Harold Balnchette Jr. (5), Brennan Monson (5), Averi Nowak (5), Evan Bobrowske (6), Ronald Reinmuth (6), Dennis Butterfass (7), Joyce Glessing (7), Robert Workman (7), Lilyann Blanchette (8), Jade Jones (8), Brody Niesen (8), Emerson Koosman (9), Jake Zander (9), Ben Bergquist (10), Lincoln Schlagel (10), Bethany Bureau (11), Zachary Koosman (12), Gerald Gruenhagen (13), Colleen Gutzke (13), Mackenzie Wiegand (13), Mason Wiegand (13), Mitchell Baumann (14), Shon Gabbert (14), Kathleen Uecker (14), Colton Burbank (15), Rodney Jones (15), Robin Painschab Jr. (15), Kayla Stueven (15), Wayne Wiegand (15), Sarah Halverson-Frich (17), Belinda Eklof (18), Noah Reich (18), Logan Frich (19), Garrett Hatcher (19), Della Hirsch (19), Flint Heller (20), Adam Stueven (20), Frances Luhaman

(21), Gabriel Monson (22), Jake Borg (23), Judith Rasmussen (23), Jacob Drusch (24), Michael Halverson (24), Lily Main (24), Shannon Wolff (24), Michelle Brady (25), Michael Goede (25), Stacey Sparkman (26), Tim Workman (26), Ashley Jones (27), Amy Schmieg (27), Maria Kilpela (28), Eric Borg (29), Jasmine Meservy (29), Beverly Hausladen (30), Mackenzie Yager (30), Grant Zimmerman (30), Michelle Peterson (31).



5/5 Danny & Jamie Remer  
5/7 Marlin & Shirley Diers  
5/8 David & Ruth Oestreich  
5/13 Mark & Lesley Stueven  
5/16 Clayton & Marjorie Helinske  
5/17 Pat & Barb Bickmann  
5/17 Tim & Bridey Boese  
5/18 Lyle & Karen Oestreich  
5/19 Richard & Connie Zander  
5/21 Derek & Holly Zillmer  
5/23 Ross & Elizabeth Anderson  
5/23 Brian & Rena Gruenhagen  
5/23 Gerald & Connie Gruenhagen  
5/25 Chris & Jody Menk

## Our Parish Nurse

### MAY GREETINGS,

The month of May brings many changes and chances of celebrations with family and friends. Since the threat of the virus seems to be somewhat lessened, I am hopeful we can gather together for some happy times. There will be confirmations, mother's day and Memorial Day. Also don't forget May Day, some still take May baskets to friends and family.

Last month I wrote about the loneliness that has occurred caused by the virus. A big part of the affects of the virus is called TOUCH STARVATION. The instinct to seek out human touch is more powerful than most of us realize. Touch starvation is supported by hardcore biology. It starts with hormones. Human touch, cuddling,



increased levels of oxytocin, the bonding hormone, and decreases levels of cortisol, the stress hormone, according to an immunologist, researcher and assistant professor at Sofia University in Bulgaria. These same hormones can affect your cardiovascular system, your sleep and also your mental health. Blood pressure is often linked to stress. Reducing stress may help lower your blood pressure.

Not everyone enjoys being touched, however, even a warm handshake has great value. Most people enjoy a gentle touch on the arm or shoulder. We are born as social people and as such we generally seek out communication with others. Ask for a hug if you are comfortable doing that. Physical touch is an essential part of how we communicate. Sensing someone's body language indicates their openness to human touch. Children are natural cuddlers. They can teach us something about human touch. Pets are great cuddlers, rewarding us with the "touch" we need for healthy living. (Excerpted from The Readers Digest).

Another book suggestion- GRACE ALONE, by Ruth E. Meyer. A novel published by CPH, tells the story of a single mom with a definite view of organized religion, and it's not good. It is a story about forgiveness, hope and Christian love. I enjoyed this book very much and will gladly lend it out for your reading pleasure.

Enjoy God's beautiful creation and the spring weather. Blessings and Prayers,

Your Parish Nurse,  
*Darlene*

## ***Vicar Dub's Corner***

Brothers and Sisters at St. James, the following is a blogpost from an LCMS pastor about why we preach and the responsibility of preacher and hearer during the sermon. I've had a couple of folks ask me about sermons and this seemed to be a timely article from Pastor Beane. Please read it and understand that as we gather for worship and as we are all hearers of the

Word, let us look forward to it reverently and treat it as the Holy Word of God that it is. You've heard Pastor Loder and I both talk about this, but it is always helpful to see that it is not just our thoughts. Yes, it is a long article. It is worth your time to read and digest.  
-Vicar Dub

"People don't have to be taught how to listen to the sermon. Preachers have to be taught how to preach sermons that people want to listen to. The onus is on the Shepherd, not the sheep."

In terms of the sermon, the author of the above quote places the "onus," that is, the burden, on the preacher of the Word, and on not the hearer.

He posits that the sermon should be one "that people want to listen to." He paints a picture of the hearer of the Word as a passive vessel waiting to be wowed. This assessment is a helpful and accurate snapshot of our culture, in which the consumer of entertainment waits for the performer to do or say something worth the listener's time and attention. And in our cultural milieu, the very worst thing a preacher can be is "boring."

Pastors must compete with 24-hour high-octane entertainment on demand, in which his hearers are accustomed to thumbing the remote and looking for better options if the current channel is not stimulating enough. Our culture is awash with special effects, naked girls, car crashes, rock music, and hi-def visual and audio. By contrast, preaching is a rather lackluster affair in the eyes of the world: just a guy talking.

This is why many pastors and congregations have gone to great lengths to make the sermon, and the entire service, something "that people want to listen to." They ditch the liturgy for drum kits and guitars. The sermon incorporates video clips of Hollywood movies, the pastor makes emotional faces and uses his voice for effect, with dynamic and dramatic gestures, perhaps ambulating around or speaking casually along the lines of a TED talk. Dancing girls and skits are also sometimes used to hold people's jaded attention.

Certainly, there is an onus on the preacher: not necessarily to preach sermons that "people want to listen to," but rather to faithfully preach the Word of God, in season and out of season, both Law and Gospel, delivering from the Good Shepherd that Word with which the sheep need to be fed, and to do so with fidelity to Biblical doctrine and the order of salvation. And yes, pastors are to be "able to teach." They are to know their theology. They are to be able to proclaim the Word of God with alacrity and

precision. They are to understand the texts upon which they preach. They are also to know their hearers, knowing what is going on in their lives as well as in the community and the culture at large.

This is indeed a great onus upon the pastor, which is why the Holy Spirit has called your pastor to serve you. The typical LCMS pastor has been rigorously trained and has been certified for service. And every man has his own strengths and weaknesses. One person's favorite preacher may not be someone else's cup of tea. Some people may have very short attention spans and/or know very little about the Scriptures. Such people might need more milk and catechesis. Others may wish the sermons were longer, more theological, and meatier, as such people are themselves apt theologians. The onus is on the preacher to navigate this diversity among his hearers and to find a way to preach to all - with the Spirit's guidance - in a way as to deliver the Word effectively. This is no mean task, and the pastor is himself a human being, subject to unseen stresses, illnesses, burdens, mental lapses, physical pain, etc., and so he may be better one Sunday than another.

But the commenter above was responding to a pastor who was himself responding to the specific question of how to be a better *hearer* of the Word, specifically, "What could the people in the pew, the hearers, do help the pastor in the pulpit and study get some traction on how to become a better preacher?" And in that sense, there is also an onus on the hearer, just as there is an onus on the preacher. And even as our table of duties does not place the onus entirely on one party or the other, but all people: parents and children, employers and employees, preachers and hearers, holders of each and every vocation, have their own corresponding onuses.

The pastor projects the Word using his own mind and voice, delivering the explication of the Word of God (the Word is itself supernatural and beyond his control). Once it leaves his mouth, he can no longer control it. The reception of the Word is indeed the onus not of the shepherd, but of the sheep. The hearer of the Word is to, well, *hear* the Word. It enters his ear and mind and penetrates to the heart and soul. It is up to the hearer to receive it, to welcome it, not to push it to the margins in favor of a daydream or something more interesting going on in the church or outside the window.

Indeed, we followers of Jesus are "disciples." It means that we are "students." And the vocation of student is difficult. I have been a teacher now for 17 years. I always tell my students that their job is harder than mine. I know, because I have been a student much longer than I have been a teacher. Being a student is not like being a vacuum

cleaner bag that passively waits to be filled by a mechanical suction action from the outside. Being a student is hard work: mentally and even physically. Learning is an *active* endeavor.

If you are a student, you have the onus to listen and learn from those who teach. It may involve taking notes. It may involve asking questions of the professor in the hallway or during office hours. It may involve going to the library or doing online research. It certainly means showing up at lectures and paying attention. And every prof is different. Some are funny and have a schtick. Some are dry and monotone. Some have speech impediments or accents. Some may have a tough time translating the ideas into layman's terms. But it is still the student's job, his *onus*, to figure out a way to learn the material. It is not his job to sit passively and wait to be spoon fed or entertained.

And it goes without saying that students, like teachers, have bad days and good days. They may be under stress, in pain, lacking sleep, tending to their children, or just not mentally there that day. They may have difficulty hearing or concentrating. That too is the onus of the person struggling to be a better hearer of the Word, just as the preachers deal with the real world invading the Holy Nave.

Finally, though there is an onus, an obligation, placed on both preachers and hearers, maybe a better way to frame the situation is to speak of the privilege and the blessing that both have. Preachers have the greatest job in the world: to be Christ's instruments to deliver forgiveness, life, and salvation to people who need Good News. We get to lead worship and deliver the Gospel to people as part of our day-to-day work. We get to study the Scriptures and pray as part of our vocation. There is nothing that could be a greater joy - though indeed, the work has its unpleasant and even brutal aspects to it as well. But let us focus on the joy of the calling we have been given.

And the same goes for hearers of the Word as well. What a privilege and a blessing to gather around altar, font, and pulpit, where the Lord comes to you supernaturally, out of love, to deliver to you forgiveness, life, and salvation. What a joy to sit and hear the Word of God proclaimed from the pulpit and taught in the classroom. And what a blessing it is that the Holy Spirit sent you a preacher and a teacher! No, he is not perfect. He may have mannerisms that you don't like. Maybe his voice is raspy or could be louder. But what a privilege that the Lord has sent him to your parish to deliver eternal life to you!

Perhaps this is one meaning of what our Lord said: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden (onus) is light."

At any rate, that is a better frame of mind to hear God's Word than crossing one's arms, sitting passively, and hearing - instead of the Word of God - rather the voice of Kurt Cobain singing, "Here we are now. Entertain us."



We have three different graduations coming up:

Preschool graduation- May 21

Kindergarten graduation- June 3

Eighth grade graduation- June 3

Track and Field day at Lutheran High School in Mayer will be held on Friday, May 7. Students have been practicing and soon will be all set for the events. Grades K-4 will hold their annual Field Day on Friday, May 28, on our school grounds.

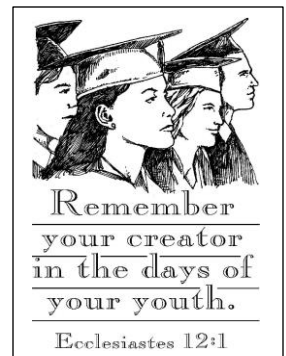
Congratulations to our Spelling Bee contestants for their hard work and for their accomplishments at the Spelling Bee. Riley Bickmann placed 7<sup>th</sup> in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade division. Scores of all the participants from each school are tallied to determine the total score of each school. Our school placed eleventh, missing the tenth place by just one word. Thanks to the boys and girls who represented up in this year's spelling bee!

Be sure to check out the video of the Spring Concert. A link to the video was sent out this past week. All the St. James school choirs, band and the Worship Choir prepared music in praise to our gracious God.

## High School Graduates

God's blessings to this year's graduating high school seniors. They will be recognized at the 10:30 AM service on Sunday, May 23. Congratulations to Bethany Burau, Casey Diers, Marit Gueningsman, Parker Helmbrecht, Gavin

Hooser, Matt Horsch, Alexa Lemke, Madison Marschel, Abby Niesen, Lucas Probst, Jessica Schmidt, Carson Woolhouse, and Jake Zander.



## Eighth Grade Graduates



God's blessings to our 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduating class of 2021: Mason Glessing, Lydia Graham, Agnesa Penkert, Isabella Wellnitz and Grant Zimmerman. Graduation will be held on Thursday, June 3 at 7:00 PM.

## Congratulations to our 2021 Confirmands



God's blessing to our 2021 Confirmands: Abbie Bobrowske, Olivia Cardinal, Caleb Diers, Mason Glessing, Annalie Kilpela, Aleah Lanars, Anika Monson, Vivian Nikko, Sophie Salmela, Alyssa Stoll, Carter Stueven, Zachary Thorson, Isabella Wellnitz, Megan Wiegand, and Grant Zimmerman.



## Stage 4 Cancer – Sorry State of Catechization in the Home

By T.R. Halverson

My aunt, Gladys, was a manager in the U. S. Geological Survey. As a federal government employee, she had excellent health care. The plan included frequent checkups and examinations. But it failed her. My Dad from North Dakota visited her and her husband, Bob, at their home in Maryland. He noticed it right away. Her complexion was not right. He asked, "Have you been diagnosed with something?" "No," she said. "Why?" "I think something is wrong with your liver," he said. She went for a special checkup. They diagnosed liver cancer. It was Stage 4 already. At that stage, the 5-year Relative Survival Rate is 7%. True to probabilities, in short time, she died.

My brother, David, had a similar story. For many years he was the Bills Clerk in the Montana House of Representatives until he was elected as the Representative from his district. He too had excellent health care. But it failed him.

During a midsession break, he returned to his home district. He presented to the emergency room with what sounded like flu-like symptoms. It took the lowly doctors of Podunk Sidney, Montana to catch what really was going on. They referred him to new doctors back in the capital. They diagnosed liver cancer. It was Stage 4 already. He finished the session, planted his last crop on his farm, and died before harvest.

Like my Dad who was no kind of medical professional, I am no kind of theological or ecclesiastic professional. Still, the color of our skin concerns me. Our flu-like symptoms worry me.

After Brothers of John the Steadfast published my article, [The No-Name Evangelistic Association, or How the Faith Came to My Grandchildren](#), I received a fair amount of feedback. There were some strong reactions to Luther's idea for the Small Catechism, which is that it should be taught in (A) a simple way (B) by the head of the house (C) in the home. What, I wondered, is the health of our homes?

So I have asked three questions in four Lutheran groups on Facebook:

1. The most unscientific survey ever. Shoot from the hip, your first wild guess: What percent of fathers or other heads of families in Lutheran congregations where you have attended use the Small Catechism with the children in the homes?
2. Another completely unscientific survey: What benefit do you think children can receive from

the head of the family teaching the Catechism in the home?

3. Complete this sentence. Among those fathers who do not teach the catechism in the home, their reasons are ...

The most encouraging answer to the first question was 50%. Only one person gave that estimate. The next most encouraging answers were "10-15," "8%," and "5-8%."

The rest of the answers are fairly represented by the following examples: Few; I would safely guess there weren't any fathers that did; 3%; 1.5%; Too small; Not enough; Less than 5% and that would include mothers; Statistically zero; 4%, maybe; Big fat 0; 0%; Statistically insignificant; Less than 1%; Maybe 5%; > 1; 1% – being generous; Fewer than 1%; Less than 1%; 20/1500; 1%; Undr 1%; 1% is optimistic; Based on my last three years of teaching confirmation (and not counting pastors kids) I would say anywhere between 0 and 9%; and less than 1/2%.

One respondent said,

*I personally think it is really low. While I love the theology and it is the reason I converted, most of the time it seems like Lutherans are the most spiritually lazy group of Christians (as a whole) I have ever seen. What reasons are fathers giving for not teaching the Catechism in the home? Here are some of the responses:*

- The kids are in bed by the time dad is home from work and he is off to work before they are ready in the morning.
- They would rather watch Sports Center.
- "I don't like reading." True story.
- Reading is hard. (I don't say that sarcastically)
- No one preached the Law to them that it is first their job.
- Their fathers didn't catechize them and they believe they "turned out okay."
- The wife ends up doing it so at least it gets done.
- I'm not qualified.
- I don't know how.
- They don't know that they are supposed to.
- They don't even know what the Catechism is.

- “What’s a cat-eeek-iss-umm?”
- Haven’t ever heard of it before yet alone teach it.
- No example of it in previous generations, nor any current role model.
- It’s not necessary to get to Heaven anyways.
- It doesn’t matter what you believe as long as you have Jesus in your heart.
- Uncertainty in how to approach the task? I mean, do you have to create a lesson plan, filled with interesting illustrations and entertaining transitions, or do you just read the passage and move on to the next evening activity (video games and texting or Bubble Guppies)?
- Left it up to the Mom.
- I don’t understand it well enough to teach it... that’s the pastor’s job... too busy...my wife is the Concordia graduate
- Don’t care
- Lack of confidence (feeling intimidated by the task), no time, think that Sunday is enough.
- They were never taught themselves. Not all pastors catechize using the SC. Some take shortcuts in Adult Instruction so the fathers have no clue.
- They can find time for others, but God sees their neglect toward their own flesh and blood children. Pitiful example indeed. Actions speak louder than words.
- They were not catechized themselves, having come to Lutheranism at a late age, and found it difficult to make catechism a part of family life “after the fact.”
- Because CPH charges \$14 for it, which is robbery, so we’re not giving them the satisfaction of knowing we bought one. And we’re not using those little cheapo paper ones, either.
- No time.
- That’s what we send them to church for!

- It’s the pastor’s job.
- I get him/her to church and Sunday school...isn’t that where it should be taught?
- It’s the pastor’s job! That’s what we pay him for!
- I’m not called to do that
- They are not Lutheran!
- They changed the words. How am I supposed to teach the 6th commandment?
- Laziness, belief that they cannot do it
- It’s hard enough getting them to do homework.
- Got to watch football on TV. Too tired after work. They definitely aren’t Lutheran. Got to see them guys at...wherever.
- They did not know how to!
- Daddy does not care what she learns. He was raised a staunch Baptist and will not lead his family in even devotions. Makes me sad. But I keep praying and keeping trying.
- Kids learn everything at school and church. That’s their job.
- Your favorite and mine ... That’s the way we’ve always done it.
- They learn it in school.
- Afraid to. Ignorant of it. It’s not enforced by the local school board.
- Too busy.
- Husband said “not qualified”. I know he felt inadequate and intimidated. Unfortunately, I was never satisfied with his efforts.
- They’re not Lutheran.
- Incompetent, too busy, too tired, too – not all that interested in doing what I “pay” the church to do.
- Don’t know it well enough themselves. Believe pastors are better for that.

- The mother is doing it, since she's already homeschooling the kids while he's at work. (Or at least that was the case for my parents.)
- Lack of confidence (feeling intimidated by the task), no time, think that Sunday is enough.
- Because CPH charges \$14 for it, which is robbery, so we're not giving them the satisfaction of knowing we bought one. And we're not using those little cheapo paper ones, either.
- Based off of my limited time in Lutheranism it seems that Pastors need to be teaching parents how to lead their children in the faith.
- It is not left to the pastors to baby sit our kids it is up to every father to do what is right
- Too busy.
- Don't know how too.
- They were never catechised themselves; catechesis was treated as something best left to the pastors.
- That's the pastor's job.
- I drop them off at Sunday School; what more do you expect?
- I'm not smart enough
- A secret hatred for their children, and a dark, pragmatic disbelief in their own heart.
- Hooked on sports more than faith
- They are going to let the kid choose for himself whether to go to church.
- No one knows anything anymore. We all just look it up on Google with our smartphones.
- It is not left to the pastors to baby sit our kids it is up to every father to do what is right
- Superfluous.
- Inconsequential.
- Vain.
- Meaningless.
- Rejected and condemned.

- Reasons of which to repent.
- Forgivable.
- The List could go on and on! It's all excuses.

What did respondents think are the benefits of the head of the family teaching the Catechism in the home? Many of the answers were good. They were so good, in fact, that it makes one wonder why it happens so seldom. Here are some of their responses:

- It indicates that Dad is concerned about the salvation of their souls. It reinforces the importance the parents place on their spiritual edification.
- To lay the foundation for strong faith. First teach them the what, then when they are ready for confirmation, teach them the why.
- What is important to parents (head of household) becomes important to children. You take your kids to soccer, dance, school – it becomes important to them. Teach the faith... well look at that.
- I like the lawnmower analogy. Why do toy stores stock toy lawn mowers? Because little kids like to imitate their parents. So it goes with religious practice. And of course hearing God's word is always cool.
- What's taught to the next generation will stick with the next generation(s). ([Ps. 78](#)) Grant this, Lord, unto us all.
- I grew up in an unchurched family, but during the years of my catechism classes, my LCMS uncle lived next door and I was there in his home several evenings each week reciting the Catechism with my cousin so that we were prepared for Saturday's class with our pastor. These evenings were significant in my life both then and now. He was my "other" father for the faith and it made me a better daughter to my own father and mother in the long run.
- Children will see that the person in charge of the family (usually the father but not always) believes that teaching the faith is important, that it applies personally to him. The children will learn to apply the Word of God to themselves. They learn that "this is for me."

- To teach the catechism would either mean that the head of the family knew it or was learning it as the family learns it – either way the whole family would be on the same page, so to speak. The children would benefit from having home instruction support church instruction about Jesus.
- The benefit of a solid foundation for their faith. Knowing why and what you actually believe can be the best defense against an evil world.
- Mom and Dad actually think this stuff is important enough for me to learn it.
- It implants the faith in the hearts and minds of the children.
- The children can experience a Christian education at home as a part of their daily life. In effect, they wouldn't think that their spirituality should be reserved for church.
- From an older child's perspective, teen? The pastor is supposed to think God is important. That's his job. Mom & Dad don't get paid to talk about God stuff. Maybe there's something to it after all. Totally separate thought, mom & dad have more hours in the week to dedicate than the pastor does, even if we just squeeze in a few minutes a day. That one-on-one time adds up and has a greater effect than an hour a week in confirmation class (9 months of the year for 2 years in our congregation).
- From the perspective of an adult convert (whose wife – and by extension stepson are disinterested or disagree), I can only think of the simplest and most effective benefit. That benefit is rooting in them in the notion of Christ at the center – in all places, times, and situations – not just on Sundays.
- I think if the head of the family is a man or the father and he teaches lovingly it can help the child to always think of God as a loving caring father. Also as the teacher teaches, he is learning as well.

As admitted in the questions posed on Facebook, these surveys are about as unscientific as can be. But let's not console ourselves that because the results are not

scientific, we can dismiss any concern that our families and churches have Stage 4 cancer.

Instead, our synods ought to get reliable and representative information to find out what has become of Luther's program for the home. Can we remain confessional while failing to practice a repeated feature of our confession. The Small Catechism is one of our confessions. It says repeatedly, "As the head of the family should teach in a simple way to his household?" Is that only a dead letter?

One dead letter of confession leads to another. When the direction to teach in the home is dead, then what is the health of the teaching itself? What becomes of the rest of our confession? Can the teaching itself be any more healthy than our practice of teaching it?

When we say, we never catechized our children in the home, and they turned out okay, what does that mean? Are we saying their faith and confession unto spiritual life is healthy, or only that they have turned out to be good kids, good neighbors, civically righteous, respectable and patriotic citizens? What kind of "okay" are we referring to? If we are referring to being spiritually okay, one must wonder, how do we think we know that, since we have had so few catechetical conversations with them?

The pastor is doing all he can, but he is in the trenches alone. He needs help from parents and synods. The synods need to make it a matter of agenda and priority to diagnose the family health of our congregations, to face facts, and to promote treatment of whatever disease is found.

## Vicar

Our application for a Vicar has been accepted. Vicar Zachary Klumpp from Fort Wayne Seminary has been assigned to our congregation for the next year or so. He is married with 4 children and should arrive here early summer. More information will be shared as we receive it.