

ADVENT NEWS

ADVENT EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD



Pray the Catechism

August, 2019

Summer is quickly coming to a close and most of us are looking ahead to a Fall schedule filled with school, sports and weekly activities at church such as choir and catechism classes. Starting each Wednesday in September, we will begin having 7th-8th Confirmation Classes, Adult Form of Faith Classes, Adult Bible Class and Senior High Youth Group. Beginning at 7:00pm, we will gather in the Sanctuary to "Pray the Catechism" (also sing the Hymn of the Day and hear a short Homily), breaking up at 7:30pm until 8:30pm for our various classes. "Praying the Catechism" might sound a little strange to you, but for such it was designed. Most Lutherans think of the Catechism as something rote memorized or drummed into our heads by our parents, teachers and pastors. It is so much more! Enjoy the following article by Prof. John Pless and ponder the gifts we have been given. And as you are able, come join us on Wednesday nights!

Peace be with you,

Pr. Mackay

Among the many contributions of Martin Luther to the legacy of our church is the Small Catechism. Beginning in 1518, Luther frequently preached a sermon series on "the catechism," that is, the basic components of Christian doctrine (Apostles' Creed, Our Father, and the Ten Commandments) as they had been arranged and handed down from earlier generations of Christians. Eventually these catechetical sermons would become the basis for the Large Catechism and would be crystalized in the Small Catechism. Written in 1529, the Small Catechism would quickly become "the Layman's Bible," as the Formula of Concord would call it, because "it contains everything that Holy Scripture discusses at greater length and which a Christian must know for his salvation."

*The Small Catechism is the handbook for the Royal Priesthood of Believers. As such, the Small Catechism fulfills at least three functions for the Christian. **First, the Small Catechism is a "user's guide to the Bible."** In other words, the Small Catechism is that "pattern of sound words" that the Apostle Paul exhorts Timothy to follow in II Timothy 1:13. **The Small Catechism is not only a collection of essential doctrines, but the very pattern and shape of Christian doctrine.** The Ten Commandments come first as the Law shows us our sin. The Apostles' Creed follows the Ten Commandments as the Gospel follows the Law. The Creed confesses the one true God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Both the Father and His gifts in creation and the Spirit and His gifts that*

create and sustain faith are confessed in their relationship to the Son and His gift of redemption. The Our Father comes next—it is prayed in response to the Creed for it is the prayer of faith. The gifts confessed in the Second and Third Articles of the Creed are concretely given in Holy Baptism, Holy Absolution, and the Sacrament of the Altar. The daily prayers and table of duties form appendices to the six chief parts of Christian doctrine.

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Second, the Small Catechism is our prayer book. Not only does the Small Catechism teach us what Christian prayer is by unfolding for us the prayer which our Lord gave His disciples, the Small Catechism provides us with a structure for our prayers within the rhythm of the day (morning, evening, and at meals). Pastor Wilhelm Loehe has commented that of all the catechisms in Christendom, only the Small Catechism can be prayed. The Catechism has a liturgical function, as it gives doxological focus to Christian doctrine in prayer and praise. This is essentially what Martin Luther does in his “catechism hymn” (see hymns “Here Is the Tenfold Sure Command,” LW, 331; “We All Believe in One True God,” LW, 213; “Our Father, Who from Heaven Above,” LW, 431; “To Jordan Came the Christ, Our Lord,” LW, 233; “From Depths of Woe I Cry to You,” LW, 230; and “O Lord, We Praise You,” LW, 238).

Third, the Small Catechism is a handbook for the baptismal life. Writing in his treatise on The Freedom of a Christian, Luther notes that a Christian “lives not in himself but in Christ and in his neighbor . . . He lives in Christ through faith, in his neighbor through love. By faith, he is caught up beyond himself into God. By love he descends beneath himself into his neighbor” (American Edition of Luther’s Works[AE], 31:371). Just as the six chief parts of the Catechism draw us into Christ, so the Table of Duties draws us into the life of the neighbor in the concretion of the neighbor’s life in the congregation, government, family, and workplace. Living by faith in Christ, the Christian now gives himself in love to the neighbor according to his various callings in the world. “As (Christ) gives himself for us with his body and blood in order to redeem us from all misery, so we, too, are to give ourselves with might and main for our neighbor” (AE, 36:352).

Luther prepared his Catechism as an act of pastoral care for God’s people. The Saxon Visitation of 1528 revealed how deeply both the pastors and people were in need of catechesis. Luther alludes to these deplorable conditions in the Preface to the Small Catechism: “Good God, what wretchedness I beheld! The common people, especially those who live in the country, have no knowledge whatever of Christian teaching, and unfortunately many pastors are quite incompetent and unfitted for teaching. Although they are supposed to be Christian, are baptized, and receive the holy sacrament, they do not know the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed, or the Ten Commandments, they live as though they were pigs and irrational beasts, and now that the Gospel has been restored they have mastered the fine art of abusing liberty” (Book of Concord, Tappert, 338).

Often overlooked in the Preface is Luther’s threefold outline for catechesis. Much to the chagrin of some contemporary educational theorists, Luther starts with the text. He makes three salient points: First, don’t be so quick to adapt new and improved translations. Luther writes: “In the first place, the preacher should take the utmost care to avoid changes or variations in the texts and wording of the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, the sacraments, etc. On the contrary, he should adopt one form, adhere to it, and use it repeatedly year after year. Young and inexperienced people must be instructed on the basis of a uniform, fixed text and form” (Tappert, 338). Second, after the text has been learned by heart, then the catechist can teach the catechumen its meaning. “In the second place, after the people have become familiar with the text, teach them what it means” (Tappert, 339). Third, after the people have mastered the rudiments of the Small Catechism, go into greater depth. “In the third place, after you have taught this brief catechism, take up a larger catechism so that the people may have a richer and fuller understanding” (Tappert, 340). With these principles in place, Luther intended that pastors would catechize their people so that the head of the household would be equipped to teach his family.

<http://www.ctsfw.net/media/pdfs/TheSmallCatechismPless.pdf>

Heritage Tour Golf Outing—September 15th, 2019

We have asked our emeritus pastor, pastor Fiene, to begin laying out the plans for our next Heritage Tour that will take place during the summer of 2021. Historically, we have always sought to absorb about one third of the cost incurred by the youth of our congregation for this trip. Our goal is to do the same for this upcoming trip. Toward this effort, there is always a certain amount of fund-raising involved, and we are making an effort to spread this out a little with a golf outing this year, and very hopefully next year.

Why Heritage Tours?

If you have been on one the answer might be obvious. These tours give our youth the chance to walk the same cities, see the churches, and worship in many places that Martin Luther and other Lutheran reformers and church fathers called home. The trips include not only visiting many Lutheran historical sights but also many other places. There are also times of fellowship, laughter, learning and worship.

While the format and itinerary will not be firmly set for many more months, history tells us it may possibly include other pastors and members of their youth groups; a seminary professor or two; sight-seeing; and it may have a conference/educational element. All of this is meant to add a level of experiential knowledge to our students' understanding of the Lutheran Reformation.



RIGHT NOW... please talk to your golfing buddies, neighbors, people at work, or your friends on the course and see if you can gather a foursome of players to join us on **September 15th at Brookshire Golf Club in Carmel**. They need not be Lutheran, but conversion might help their game!

Details and information has been distributed via email telling how to register online, or you can find a form in the narthex and other locations around the church with registration information.

September 15th — Brookshire Golf Club — Carmel
\$65 per person or \$250 for 2 adults and 2 children
Warm-up: 1 pm—Tee-time: 1:30 pm
Register by August 25th

Pastor Grady

From the Chairman

Hi everyone,

I have given some thought to how, as a congregation, we might prepare for a very bright future here at Advent.

God has certainly blessed us: Two talented and dedicated Pastors, a wonderful music staff, and a congregation with a nice mix of ages including so many enthusiastic children!

We also have a wonderful facility to worship God and hear the message of forgiveness. I expect this to lead to steady growth in the years ahead. In order to prepare for that, can each of our seasoned members please consider encouraging a younger member to volunteer with you in some capacity - to show them the ropes, so to speak? It could very well develop into a lasting friendship.

I will be meeting with the new Stewardship board to refresh our Talent survey form and encourage all of our members to fill it out so we can learn where everyone's talents and interests lie. As Advent's leadership considers future opportunities, having a talent pool to draw from will be very helpful.

So if you happen to be approached to help with the ongoing work of our Church, please give it prayerful consideration. I am confident God will provide you with the time needed and will bless you out of your willingness to serve!

Yours in Christ,
Chuck Long
Advent Chairman



Like Advent on Facebook

For those of you who are on Facebook, search for Advent Lutheran—Zionsville and “Like” or “Share” our page with others. Read periodic posts about services, events, and other news announcements of interest to our members.

Giving Statements

Watch your hymnal boxes for your six month giving statements. If you have any questions, please e-mail the office and your inquiry will be forwarded to Advent's Financial Secretary. Thank you!
E-mail: info@adventlutheran.org.

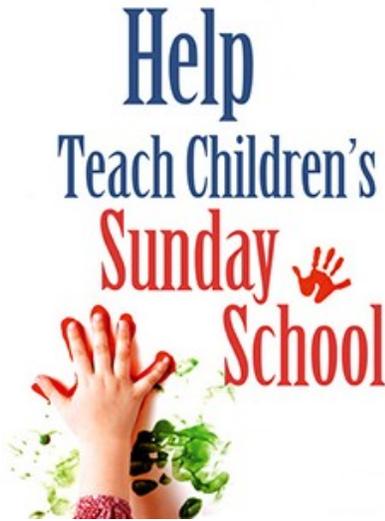
Annual Advent Picnic and Rally Day— September 8th!



Needed: Sunday School teachers!

Do you enjoy working with kids and helping them grow in their faith?

Advent is looking for volunteers to serve as Sunday School teachers for our youth!



ALL MATERIALS ARE PROVIDED TO ASSIST TEACHERS WITH SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

Responsibilities include:

- Preparing weekly lessons centered on God's Word
- Instructing students on Sundays between the early and late services (9:30-10:30am)
- Promoting the spiritual growth and wellbeing of students by developing personal relationships and by Biblical instruction
- Regularly participating in workshops to increase Biblical knowledge, teaching skills and access to resources

Common Questions/Concerns:

What if I have limited or little teaching experience?

We still encourage you to volunteer! Prior to assigning you to your own class, we can arrange for you to observe a classroom or to serve as a teacher's aide. Additionally, volunteering for Summer Sunday School is a great way to get acquainted before making a one-year commitment.

What kind of time commitment can I expect?

On average, you can expect to spend **1-2 hours per week** planning lessons, and one hour of teaching on Sundays. There may also be occasional teacher workshops to attend throughout the year.

What kind of support is available for teachers?

Within your class, you will share responsibilities with a co-instructor. The Sunday School superintendents are also available to answer any questions or concerns and provide support to the teachers. **Advent will provide all of the learning materials and supplies your class needs.**

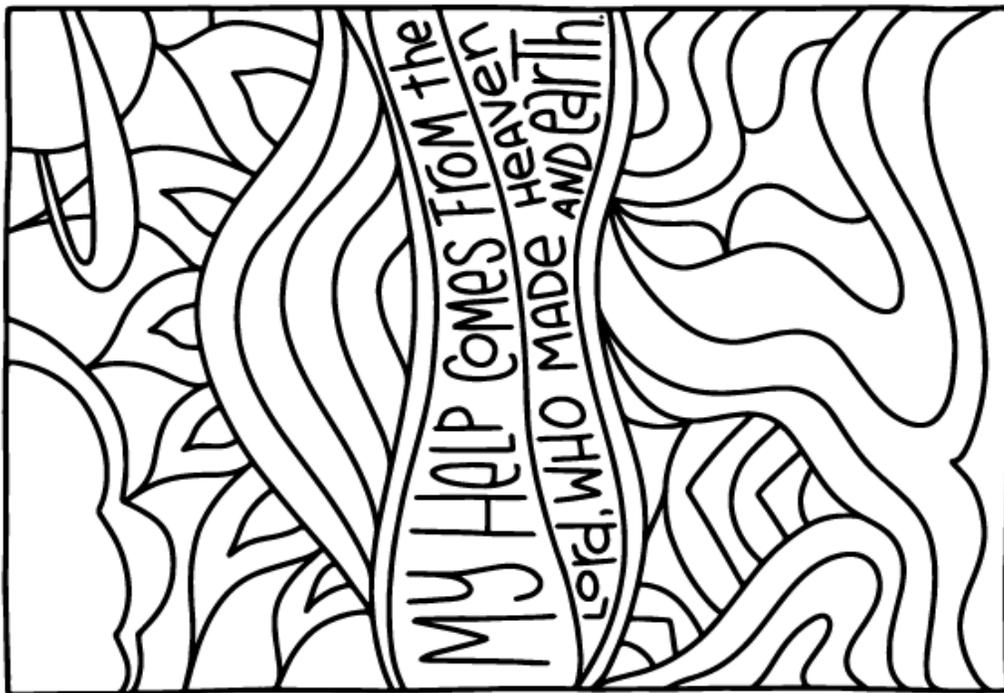
Questions?

Please contact Amanda Probst at adprobst@eagles.usi.edu

CHILDREN'S WORSHIP

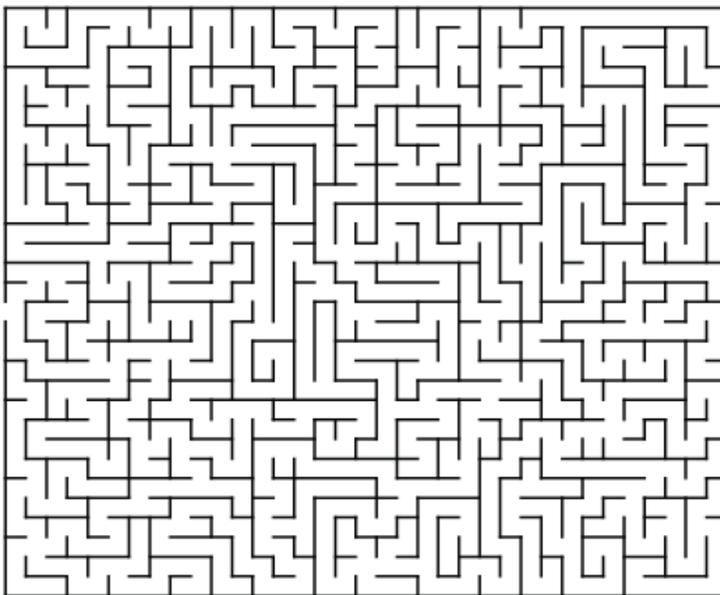


Activities based on Jeremiah 31:27-34, Psalm 121 and Luke 18: 1-8.



God makes a new promise with the people in the story from Jeremiah. It's been a long path to reach the new "covenant" or promise. Help God's people reach this place of fresh promise.

start



end

