

reformation  
**500**  
1517-2017 † Faith Not Fear.

# Rediscovering the Small Catechism *What does this mean today?*

*Engaging the Small Catechism worshipfully  
and devotionally, rediscovering its meaning  
for such a time as this.*

# Rediscovering the Small Catechism

## *What does this mean today?*

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# About

## Reformation 500:

October 31, 2017 will mark the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther posting the Ninety-Five Theses. This significant Reformation anniversary will make Martin Luther and the Lutheran tradition a topic of conversation throughout 2017. Lutheran churches throughout the world are already making plans to commemorate this special event.

In our own synod, we are preparing multiple events for people to connect with each other and resources for people to engage deeper in their Lutheran faith. While our Reformation 500 plans are within the Claimed Strategy of our strategic plan, it will reach into all of our strategy areas as we look to equip our leaders during this time and speak towards societal needs from a distinctively Lutheran voice.

Learn more about Reformation 500 at [mnys.org/500thanniversary/](http://mnys.org/500thanniversary/). There you can find a resource list from both MNYS and across our church, images for your use, and helps for getting started in planning your own event. You'll find links for sharing congregational and conference events with the entire synod as well as the latest details of upcoming synodical events with Reformation 500.

# Notes:



# **Worship:**

## **The Small Catechism on the Sacrament of Holy Baptism**

### **Introduction to the Retreat**

*From the Small Catechism on The Sacrament of Holy Baptism*

- Leader: What is baptism?
- Reader 1: Baptism is not simply plain water. Instead, it is water used according to God's command and connected with God's word.
- Leader: What then is this word of God?
- Reader 2: Where our Lord Jesus Christ says in Mathew 28, "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."
- Leader: What gifts and benefits does baptism grant?
- Reader 3: It brings about forgiveness of sins, redeems from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe it, as the words and promise of God declare.
- Leader: What are these words and promises of God?
- Reader 1: Where our Lord Christ says in Mark 16, "The one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned."
- Leader: How can water do such great things?
- Reader 2: Clearly the water does not do it, but the word of God, which is with and alongside the water, and faith, which trusts this word of God in the water. For without the word of God the water is plain water and not a baptism, but with the word of God it is a baptism, that is, a grace-filled water of life and a "bath of the new birth in the Holy Spirit," as St. Paul says to Titus in chapter 3, "through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. The saying is sure."
- Leader: What then is the significance of such a baptism with water?
- Reader 3: It signifies that the old person in us with all sins and evil desires is to be drowned and die through daily sorrow for sin and through repentance, and on the other hand that daily a new person is to come forth and rise up to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.
- Leader: Where is this written?
- Reader 1: St. Paul says in Romans 6, "We have been buried with Christ by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life."

### **Testimony or Conversation: What Baptism means to me**



## Thanksgiving for Baptism

In the name of the Father,  
and of the + Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,  
we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness.  
Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We give you thanks, O God,  
for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters  
and by your Word you created the world,  
calling forth life in which you took delight.  
Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family.  
Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom.  
At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit.  
By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons,  
making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.  
We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life,  
and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ.  
Shower us with your Spirit,  
and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.  
To you be given honor and praise  
through Jesus Christ our Lord  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## Affirmation by the Assembly

Dear friends, we give thanks for the gift of baptism as we come before God to make public affirmation of baptism into Christ.

Let us pray.

Merciful God, we thank you that you have made us your own by water and the Word in baptism. You have called us to yourself, enlightened us with the gifts of your Spirit, and nourished us in the community of faith. Uphold us and all your servants in the gifts and promises of baptism, and unite the hearts of all whom you have brought to new birth. We ask this in the name of Christ.

**Amen.**

## Profession of Faith

Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God,  
the powers of this world that rebel against God,  
and the ways of sin that draw you from God?

**I renounce them.**

Do you believe in God the Father?

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**



Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.**

You have made public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism:

to live among God's faithful people,  
to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,  
to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,  
to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,  
and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

**I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.**

Do you promise to support and pray for one another in your life in Christ?

**I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.**

Let us pray.

We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give us new birth, cleanse us from sin, and raise us to eternal life. Stir up in your people the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence both now and forever.

**Amen.**



## Luther's Catechism Hymn: When Jesus Went to Jordan's Stream

*While the hymn is sung, you are welcome to come forward to the bowl with water to remember and give thanks for baptism in ways that are meaningful to you.*



1 When Je - sus came to Jor - dan to be bap-tized by John,  
2 He came to share temp - ta - tion, our ut - most woe and loss,  
3 Come, Ho - ly Spir - it, aid us to keep the vows we make;



he did not come for par - don but as the Sin - less One.  
for us and our sal - va - tion to die up - on the cross.  
this ver - y day in - vade us, and ev - 'ry bond-age break.



He came to share re - pen - tance with all who mourn their sins,  
So when the dove de - scend - ed on him, the Son of Man,  
Come, give our lives di - rec - tion, the gift we cov - et most:



to speak the vi - tal sen - tence with which good news be - gins.  
the hid - den years had end - ed, the age of grace be - gan.  
to share the res - ur - rec - tion that leads to Pen - te - cost.

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000  
Music: KING'S LYNN, English folk tune  
Text © 1980 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved.



# Holy Conversation: The Small Catechism on the Ten Commandments

## Introduction

*Breaking and Keeping the Commandments and the Garland of Four Twisted Strands*

## Luther's Catechism Hymn: These are the Holy Ten Commands

*This hymn is available from Concordia Publishing House.*

## Testimony or Conversation: What the Ten Commandments mean to me

### First Commandment:

You shall have no other gods.

What does this mean?

Luther's explanation: We are to fear, love, and trust God above all things.

In your own words, how would you restate this meaning for today?

Thanksgiving

I thank [you] God for having such unfathomable compassion toward me, for deigning to come in so fatherly a way to me, a lost person. [I thank you] for offering to be my God [even when] unasked, unsought, and undeserved. [I thank you] for giving me divine acceptance, and for wishing, in all my needs, to be my comfort, protection, help, and strength. **Amen.**

### Second Commandment:

You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God.

What does this mean?

Luther's Explanation: We are to fear and love God, so that we do not curse, swear, practice magic, lie, or deceive using God's name, but instead use that very name in every time of need to call on, pray to, praise, and give thanks to God.

In your own words, how would you restate this meaning for today?

Thanksgiving

I thank [you], God, for such glorious gifts, that [your] name has been revealed to me, that I myself can boast of [your] name, and that I am allowed to be called [your] servant and creature, that [your] name is my refuge, like a mighty fortress to which the righteous flee and find protection. **Amen.**

### Third Commandment:

Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy.

What does this mean?

Luther's explanation: We are to fear and love God, so that we do not despise preaching or God's word, but instead keep that word holy and gladly hear and learn it.

In your own words, how would you restate this meaning for today?

Thanksgiving

I thank [you] God... for [your] good deeds and grace, which are great and beautiful, giving us the preaching of the divine word and commanding us, especially upon the Sabbath day, to make use of it. [Your Word] is a treasure no human heart can ponder enough, because [your] word is the one single light in the darkness of this life: a word of life, a consolation, and complete blessedness. **Amen.**

### Fourth Commandment:

Honor your father and your mother.

What does this mean?

Luther's explanation: We are to fear and love God, so that we neither despise nor anger our parents and others in authority, but instead honor, serve, obey, love, and respect them.

In your own words, how would you restate this meaning for today?

Thanksgiving

I thank [you] rich and goodly Creator for myself and the whole world, that [you...] founded and sustained the reproduction and survival of the human species, that is, of households and states. **Amen.**

Thanksgivings adapted from Luther's *A Simple Way to Pray*.



### **Fifth Commandment:**

You shall not murder.

What does this mean?

Luther's explanation: We are to fear and love God, so that we neither endanger nor harm the lives of our neighbors, but instead help and support them in all of life's needs.

In your own words, how would you restate this meaning for today?

Thanksgiving

I thank [you] God for the inexpressible love, care, and faithfulness for me, that you have built up such a great and strong watchtower and wall around my body, that all people should be responsible not to harm me and to protect me. **Amen.**

### **Sixth Commandment:**

You shall not commit adultery.

What does this mean?

Luther's explanation: We are to fear and love God, so that we lead pure and decent lives in word and deed, and each of us loves and honors his or her spouse.

In your own words, how would you restate this meaning for today?

Thanksgiving

I thank [you] dear and faithful Father for such grace and blessed kindness that [you] shield and protect husbands, sons, servants, wives, daughters, and maids and so earnestly and sternly forbid anyone to bring them down in shameful scandal. **Amen.**

### **Seventh Commandment:**

You shall not steal.

What does this mean?

Luther's explanation: We are to fear and love God, so that we neither take our neighbors' money or property nor acquire them by using shoddy merchandise or crooked deals, but instead help them to improve and protect their property and income.

In your own words, how would you restate this meaning for today?

Thanksgiving

I thank [you God for your] faithfulness and goodness for giving me and the world such good teaching and the shield and protection derived from it, for where [you, O God] do not protect, not a nickel or a piece of bread would be able to remain in anybody's house. **Amen.**

### **Eighth Commandment:**

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

What does this mean?

Luther's explanation: We are to fear and love God, so that we do not tell lies about our neighbors, betray or slander them, or destroy their reputations. Instead we are to come to their defense, speak well of them, and interpret everything they do in the best possible light.

In your own words, how would you restate this meaning for today?

Thanksgiving

[I thank you, God,] both for this teaching and the protection [of our honor and good name], which are here given us so graciously by you. **Amen.**

### **Ninth Commandment:**

You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

What does this mean?

Luther's explanation: We are to fear and love God, so that we do not try to trick our neighbors out of their inheritance or property or try to get it for ourselves by claiming to have a legal right to it and the like, but instead be of help and service to them in keeping what is theirs.

In your own words, how would you restate this meaning for today?

Thanksgiving

I thank you, God, for entrusting us with your many blessings, and for protecting what you have given us with the teaching of your commandment. **Amen.**

### **Tenth Commandment:**

You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

What does this mean?

Luther's explanation: We are to fear and love God, so that we do not entice, force, or steal away from our neighbors their spouses, household workers, or livestock, but instead urge them to stay and fulfill their responsibilities to our neighbors.

In your own words, how would you restate this meaning for today?

Thanksgiving

I thank you, God, for entrusting us with your many blessings, and for protecting what you have given us with the teaching of your commandment. **Amen.**



# Worship:

## The Small Catechism on Confession and Forgiveness

### Introduction

#### Luther's Catechism Hymn: Out of the Depths I Cry to You



1 Out of the depths I cry to you; O Lord God, hear me call - ing.  
2 All things you send are full of grace; you crown our lives with fa - vor.  
3 In you a - lone, O God, we hope, and not in our own mer - it.  
4 My soul is wait - ing for you, Lord, as one who longs for morn - ing;



In - cline your ear to my dis - tress in spite of my re - bel - ling.  
All our good works are done in vain with - out our Lord and Sav - ior.  
We rest our fears in your good Word and trust your Ho - ly Spir - it.  
no watch - er waits with great - er hope than I for your re - turn - ing.



Do not re - gard my sin - ful deeds. Send me the grace  
We praise you for the gift of faith; you save us from  
Your prom - ise keeps us strong and sure; we trust the cross,  
I hope as Is - rael in the Lord, who sends re - demp -



my spir - it needs; with - out it I am noth - ing.  
the grip of death; our lives are in your keep - ing.  
your sig - na - ture, in - scribed up - on our tem - ples.  
tion through the Word. Praise God for grace and mer - cy!

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. composite  
Music: AUS TIEFER NOT, atr. Martin Luther  
Text © 1978, 2006 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

### Testimony or Conversation: What Confession and Forgiveness mean to me

#### *From the Small Catechism on How People are taught to Confess*

Leader: What is confession?

Reader 1: Confession consists of two parts. One is that we confess our sins. The other is that we receive the absolution, that is, forgiveness, from the pastor as from God himself and by no means doubt but firmly believe that our sins are thereby forgiven before God in heaven.

Leader: Which sins is a person to confess?

Reader 2: Before God one is to acknowledge the guilt for all sins, even those of which we are not aware, as we



do in the Lord's Prayer. However, before the pastor we are to confess only those sins of which we have knowledge and which trouble us.

Leader: Which sins are these?

Reader 3: Here reflect on your place in life in light of the Ten Commandments: whether you are father, mother, son, daughter, master, mistress, servant; whether you have been disobedient, unfaithful, lazy, whether you have harmed anyone by word or deed; whether you have stolen, neglected, wasted, or injured anything.

*Time is kept for silent reflection.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

You have come to make confession before God. I invite you to confess before me, a pastor in the church of Christ, sins of which you are aware and which trouble you.

**Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone.**

We as a human family have honored false gods.

**Lord, have mercy on us, forgive us, and help us to fear, love, and trust you above all things.**

We have desecrated and dishonored your name, cursing, swearing, lying and deceiving in your name.

**Lord, have mercy on us, forgive us, and help us to call on, pray to, praise, and give thanks to you in every time of need.**

We have devalued worship, sometimes despising the preaching of God's word.

**Lord, have mercy on us, forgive us, and help us to keep your word holy and gladly hear and learn it.**

We have despised and angered our elders and others in authority.

**Lord, have mercy on us, forgive us, and help us to honor, serve, obey, love and respect our elders.**

We have harmed both neighbors and nature, endangering and harming life.

**Lord, have mercy on us, forgive us, and empower us to help and support our neighbors and all creatures in all of life's needs.**

We have misused sexuality and intimate relationships.

**Lord, have mercy on us, forgive us, and help us to lead pure and decent lives in word and deed, honoring those whom we love and to whom we are committed.**

We have cheated and stolen, using shoddy merchandise and crooked deals.

**Lord, have mercy on us, forgive us, and guide us to help our neighbors to improve and protect their property and income.**

We have lied about and slandered our neighbors, betraying them and destroying their reputations.

**Lord, have mercy on us, forgive us, and help us to come to our neighbors' defense, speak well of them, and interpret everything they do in the best possible light.**

We have coveted what you have given to others, trying to trick our neighbors out of what is theirs and claiming a right to it.

**Lord, have mercy on us, forgive us, and empower us to be of service to our neighbors in keeping what is theirs, and in helping them to fulfill their responsibilities.**

**We repent of all our sins, known and unknown.**

**We are truly sorry, and we pray for forgiveness.**

**We firmly intend to amend our lives, and to seek help in mending what is broken.**

**We ask for strength to turn from sin and to serve you in newness of life.**



Cling to this promise: the word of forgiveness I speak to you comes from God.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead to sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved.

In the name of + Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

**Amen.**

*People may come forward for laying on of hands and individual absolution using these or similar words.*

In obedience to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your heart and your mind in Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

*As a sign of God's reconciling love, the assembly may share the Peace of Christ.*



# Holy Conversation:

## The Small Catechism on the Apostles' Creed

### Introduction

#### Luther's Catechism Hymn: We All Believe in One True God

1 We all be - lieve in one true God,  
 2 We all be - lieve in Je - sus Christ,  
 3 We all con - fess the Ho - ly Ghost

who cre - at - ed earth and heav - en, the Fa - ther,  
 his own Son, our Lord, pos - sess - ing an e - qual  
 who, in high - est heav - en dwell - ing with God the

who to us in love has the right of chil - dren giv - en.  
 God-head, throne, and might, source of ev - 'ry grace and bless - ing;  
 Fa - ther and the Son, com-forts us be - yond all tell - ing;

He in soul and bod - y feeds us; all we need his  
 born of Mar - y, vir - gin moth - er, by the pow - er  
 who the church, his own cre - a - tion, keeps in u - ni -

hand pro - vides us; through all snares and per - ils  
 of the Spir - it, Word made flesh, our el - der  
 ty of spir - it. Here for - give - ness and sal -

leads us, watch - ing that no harm be - tide us.  
 broth - er; that the lost might life in - her - it,  
 va - tion dai - ly come through Je - sus' mer - it.

He cares for us day and  
 was put to death on the  
 All flesh shall rise; we shall

night;  
 cross,  
 be all things are gov - erned by his might.  
 and raised by God vic - to - ri - ous.  
 in bliss with God e - ter - nal - ly.

A - men.



## First Article: Creation

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Luther's Explanation:

I believe that God has created me together with all that exists. God has given me and still preserves my body and soul: eyes, ears, and all limbs and senses; reason and all mental faculties. In addition, God daily and abundantly provides shoes and clothing, food and drink, house and farm, spouse and children, fields, livestock, and all property – along with all the necessities and nourishment for this body and life. God protects me against all danger and shields and preserves me from all evil. And all this is done out of pure, fatherly, and divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness of mine at all! For all of this I owe it to God to thank and praise, serve and obey him. This is most certainly true.

In what ways do you trust that God will provide all that you need?

In what ways do you fail to trust that God will provide?

## Testimony or Conversation: What Creation means to me

## Second Article: Redemption

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

Luther's Explanation:

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father in eternity, and also a true human being, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord. He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned human being. He has purchased and freed me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver but with his holy, precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death. He has done all this in order that I may belong to him, live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in eternal righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as he is risen from the dead and lives and rules eternally. This is most certainly true.

What does it mean today to say that Jesus is my Lord?

What does it mean to belong to Christ?

## Testimony or Conversation: What Redemption means to me

## Third Article: Being Made Holy

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

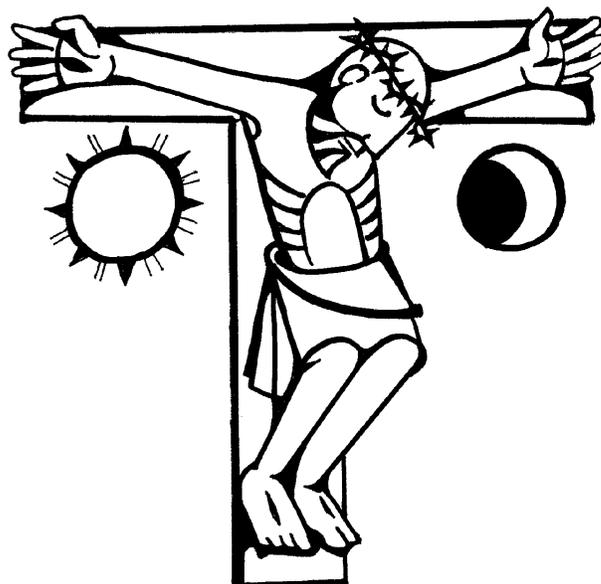
Luther's Explanation:

I believe that by my own understanding or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him, but instead the Holy Spirit has called me through the gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, made me holy and kept me in the true faith, just as he calls, gathers, enlightens, and makes holy the whole Christian church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one common, true faith. Daily in this Christian church the Holy Spirit abundantly forgives all sins – mine and those of all believers. On the last day the Holy Spirit will raise me and all the dead and will give to me and all believers in Christ eternal life. This is most certainly true.

In what ways does it ring true to you – or not – that “by my own understanding or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him”?

In what ways – or not – do you experience the Holy Spirit in the life of the church in being called, gathered, enlightened and made holy?

## Testimony or Conversation: What being made holy means to me



*from Luke 23:39-46*



# Worship:

## The Small Catechism on the Sacrament of the Altar

### Introduction

#### Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

#### Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Merciful God, we do not presume to come to your table trusting in our own righteousness, but in your abundant mercy. Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat and drink the body and blood of your dear Son, Jesus Christ, that we may live in him and he in us, now and forever. **Amen.**

#### Gospel: Matthew 26:26-30

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*From the Small Catechism on the Sacrament of the Altar*

Leader: What is the Sacrament of the Altar?

Reader 1: It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ himself for us Christians to eat and drink.

Leader: What is the benefit of such eating and drinking?

Reader 2: The words "given for you" and "shed for you for the forgiveness of sin" show us that forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation are given to us in the sacrament through these words, because where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.

Leader: How can bodily eating and drinking do such a great thing?

Reader 3: Eating and drinking certainly do not do it, but rather the words that are recorded: "given for you" and "shed for you for the forgiveness of sin." These words, when accompanied by the physical eating and drinking, are the essential thing in the sacrament, and whoever believes these very words has what they declare and state, namely, "forgiveness of sin."

Leader: Who, then, receives this sacrament worthily?

Reader 1: Fasting and bodily preparation are in fact a fine external discipline, but a person who has faith in these words, "given for you" and "shed for you for the forgiveness of sin," is really worthy and well prepared. However, a person who does not believe these words or doubts them is unworthy and unprepared, because the words "for you" require truly believing hearts.

### Testimony or Conversation: What Holy Communion means to me



## Luther's Catechism Hymn: O Lord, We Praise You



1 O Lord, we praise you, bless you, and a - dore you, in thanks -  
 2 Your ho - ly bod - y in - to death was giv - en, life to  
 3 Lord God, be - stow on us your grace and fa - vor, that we



giv - ing bow be - fore you. Here with your  
 win for us in heav - en. No great - er  
 fol - low Christ our Sav - ior and live to -



bod - y and your blood you nour - ish our weak souls that  
 love than this to you could bind us; may this feast of  
 geth - er here in love and u - nion, nor re - pent this



they may flour - ish. O Lord, have mer - cy!  
 that re - mind us! O Lord, have mer - cy!  
 blest com - mu - nion. O Lord, have mer - cy!



May your bod - y, Lord, born of Mar - y, that our  
 Lord, your kind - ness so much did move you that your  
 Let not your good Spir - it for - sake us; by this



sins and sor - rows did car - ry, and your blood for us plead  
 blood now moves us to love you. All our debt you have paid;  
 ho - ly ban - quet re - make us. Give your church, Lord, to see



in all tri - al, fear, and need: O Lord, have mer - cy!  
 peace with God once more is made. O Lord, have mer - cy!  
 days of peace and u - ni - ty. O Lord, have mer - cy!

Text: German hymn, 15th cent., st. 1; Martin Luther, 1483–1546, sts. 2–3; tr. composite  
 Music: GOTT SEI GELOBET UND GEBENEDEIET, J. Walter, *Geistliche Gesangbüchlein*, 1524

## Offering Prayer

Holy God, gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**



# Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

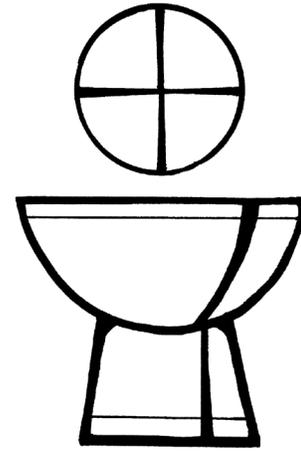
**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
that we should at all times and in all places  
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,  
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,  
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



*from Matthew 26:26-28*

I - sa-iah in a vi-sion did of old the Lord of hosts en-throned on  
high be-hold, whose splen-did train was wide out-spread un - til its stream-ing  
glo-ry did the tem-ple fill. A - bove God's throne the shin-ing ser - a-phim  
with six-fold wings did rev-'rence un - to him. With two each ser-aph hid his  
glo-rious face, and two a - bout his feet did in - ter-lace, and with the  
oth-er two he soared on high, and one un - to an-oth-er thus did cry:  
"Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly  
is the Lord of hosts! His glo - ry fill-eth all the earth!" The beams and lin-tels  
at their cry-ing shook, and all the house was filled with bil-owing smoke.

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. Martin H. Franzmann, 1907–1976  
Music: JESAJA, DEM PROPHETEN, Martin Luther  
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.



Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,  
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,  
who preached good news to the poor,  
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,  
we await his coming in glory.  
Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,  
and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,  
the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;  
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,  
be all honor and glory, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

## Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**Our Father in heaven,**  
    **hallowed be your name,**  
    **your kingdom come,**  
    **your will be done,**  
        **on earth as in heaven.**  
**Give us today our daily bread.**  
**Forgive us our sins**  
    **as we forgive those**  
        **who sin against us.**  
**Save us from the time of trial**  
    **and deliver us from evil.**  
**For the kingdom, the power,**  
    **and the glory are yours,**  
    **now and forever. Amen.**

## Invitation to Communion

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

## Communion

### Prayer after Communion

God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. So too, grace our luncheon table now with your presence, blessing what is set before us and keeping us mindful of those who hunger, that we may also feed them. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that in our serving, we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**



# Holy Conversation: Luther's Preface to the Small Catechism of 1529 and the Catechism's Relevance Today

## Introduction

### Testimony or Conversation: What the Small Catechism means to me

#### Questions and matters for reflection and conversation:

What are Luther's main points and concerns in his Preface to the Small Catechism?

In this Preface, Luther is characteristically provocative in his rhetorical style. To which statements are you most drawn and/or repulsed?

Of the main points and concerns we listed, what still rings true as concerns today?

How might God be calling us now to address these issues and concerns?



# Worship:

## The Small Catechism on the Lord's Prayer

### Introduction

### Responsive Prayer

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,  
have mercy on us.

### Testimony or Conversation: What the Lord's Prayer means to me

### Luther's Catechism Hymn: Our Father, God in Heaven

1 Our Fa - ther, God in heav'n a - bove, we pray, u - nit - ed  
 2 Give us to - day our dai - ly bread; let ev - 'ry - one be  
 3 In time of tri - al, res - cue us. Let your word give suc -  
 4 A - men. Yes, yes, it shall be so! Build up our faith and

in your love: Your name be hal - lowed. Help us, Lord,  
 clothed and fed. For - give our sins, as we for - give  
 cess to us when, on our left and on our right,  
 make it grow; be - set by doubt, help us be - lieve

in faith - ful - ness to keep your word. Your king - dom come; your  
 when oth - ers hurt us as we live. Help us to dwell in  
 temp - ta - tions chal - lenge us to fight. De - liv - er us from  
 what here we ask we shall re - ceive. So, by your prom - ise,

will be done on earth as there be - fore your throne.  
 har - mo - ny and serve each oth - er will - ing - ly.  
 e - vil's pow'r and com - fort us in life's last hour.  
 in your name, with loud A - men your Yes we claim!

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546, abridged; tr. hymnal version  
 Music: VATER UNSER, V. Schumann, Geistliche Lieder, 1539  
 Text © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.



*This prayer is first prayed silently, with meditation and reflection on Luther's explanation for each petition.*

### **Our Father in heaven**

What does this mean? With these words God wants to attract us, so that we come to believe he is truly our Father and we are truly his children, in order that we may ask him boldly and with complete confidence, just as loving children ask their loving father.

### **Hallowed by your name.**

What does this mean? It is true that God's name is holy in itself, but we ask in this prayer that it may also become holy in and among us. How does this come about? Whenever the word of God is taught clearly and purely and we, as God's children, also live holy lives according to it. To this end help us, dear Father in heaven! However, whoever teaches and lives otherwise than the word of God teaches, dishonors the name of God among us. Preserve us from this, heavenly Father!

### **Your kingdom come.**

What does this mean? In fact, God's kingdom comes on its own without our prayer, but we ask in this prayer that it may also come to us. How does this come about? Whenever our heavenly Father gives us his Holy Spirit, so that through the Holy Spirit's grace we believe God's holy word and live godly lives here in time and hereafter in eternity.

### **Your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

What does this mean? In fact, God's good and gracious will comes about without our prayer, but we ask in this prayer that it may also come about in and among us. How does this come about? Whenever God breaks and hinders every evil scheme and will – as are present in the will of the devil, the world, and our flesh – that would not allow us to hallow God's name and would prevent the coming of his kingdom, and instead whenever God strengthens us and keeps us steadfast in his word and in faith until the end of our lives. This is God's gracious and good will.

### **Give us today our daily bread.**

What does this mean? In fact, God gives daily bread without our prayer, even to all evil people, but we ask in this prayer that God cause us to recognize what our daily bread is and to receive it with thanksgiving. What then does "daily bread" mean? Everything included in the necessities and nourishment for our bodies, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, farm, fields, livestock, money, property, an upright spouse, upright children, upright members of the household, upright and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, decency, honor, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.

### **Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.**

What does this mean? We ask in this prayer that our heavenly Father would not regard our sins nor deny these petitions on their account, for we are worthy of nothing for which we ask, nor have we earned it. Instead we ask that God would give us all things by grace, for we sin daily and indeed deserve only punishment. So, on the other hand, we, too, truly want to forgive heartily and to do good gladly to those who sin against us.

### **Save us from the time of trial.**

What does this mean? It is true that God tempts no one, but we ask in this prayer that God would preserve and keep us, so that the devil, the world, and our flesh may not deceive us or mislead us into false belief, despair, and other great and shameful sins, and that, although we may be attacked by them, we may finally prevail and gain the victory.

### **And deliver us from evil.**

What does this mean? We ask in this prayer, as in a summary, that our Father in heaven may deliver us from all kinds of evil – affecting body or soul, property or reputation – and at last, when our final hour comes, may grant us a blessed end and take us by grace from this valley of tears to himself in heaven.

### **For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

What does this mean? That I should be certain that such petitions are acceptable to and heard by our Father in heaven, for God himself commanded us to pray like this and has promised to hear us. "Amen, amen" means "Yes, yes, it is going to come about just like this."

*After the time for silent prayer, meditation and reflection, the assembly prays the Lord's Prayer together.*



Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

**Our Father in heaven,**  
    **hallowed be your name,**  
    **your kingdom come,**  
    **your will be done,**  
        **on earth as in heaven.**  
**Give us today our daily bread.**  
**Forgive us our sins**  
    **as we forgive those**  
        **who sin against us.**  
**Save us from the time of trial**  
    **and deliver us from evil.**  
**For the kingdom, the power,**  
    **and the glory are yours,**  
    **now and forever. Amen.**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,**  
    **creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.**  
    **On the third day he rose again;**  
    **he ascended into heaven,**  
    **he is seated at the right hand of the Father,**  
    **and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,**  
    **the holy catholic church,**  
    **the communion of saints,**  
    **the forgiveness of sins,**  
    **the resurrection of the body,**  
    **and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Show us your mercy, O God,  
**and grant us your salvation.**

Give us the joy of your saving help again,  
**and sustain us with your bountiful Spirit.**

Give peace in all the world;  
**for only in you can we live in safety.**

Keep the nations under your care,  
**and guide us in the way of justice and truth.**

Let your way be known upon earth;  
**your saving health among all nations.**

Let not the needy be forgotten,  
**nor the hope of the poor be taken away.**

Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
**and sustain me with your Holy Spirit.**



Lord, hear my prayer,  
**and let my cry come before you.**

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**

God our creator, you have given us work to do and call us to use our talents for the good of all. Guide us as we work, and teach us to live in the Spirit who made us your sons and daughters, in the love that made us sisters and brothers, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

O God, our beginning and our end, you kept Abraham and Sarah in safety throughout the days of their pilgrimage, you led the children of Israel through the midst of the sea, and by a star you led the magi to the infant Jesus. Protect and guide us now as we set out to travel. Make our ways safe and our homecomings joyful, and bring us at last to our heavenly home, where you dwell in glory with our Lord Jesus Christ and the life-giving Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

Almighty God bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.  
**Amen.**

## Blessing at Meals from the Small Catechism

### Before the meal:

The eyes of all wait upon you, O Lord, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living creature.

Lord God, heavenly Father, bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bountiful goodness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### After the meal:

Give thanks to the Lord, for the Lord is good, for God's mercy endures forever. God provides food for the cattle and for the young ravens when they cry. God is not impressed by the might of a horse, and has no pleasure in the speed of a runner, but finds pleasure in those who fear the Lord, in those who await God's steadfast love.

We give thanks to you, Lord God our Father, through Jesus Christ our Lord for all your benefits, you who live and reign forever. **Amen.**



*from Psalm 65:9-13*



# Luther's Morning Blessing

## Introduction

*The Morning Blessing from the Small Catechism*

God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit watch over us. **Amen.**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

We give thanks to you, heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ your dear Son, that you have protected us through the night from all harm and danger. We ask that you would also protect us today from sin and all evil, so that our lives and actions may please you. Into your hands we commend ourselves: our bodies, our souls, and all that is ours. Let your holy angel be with us, so that the wicked foe may have no power over us. **Amen.**



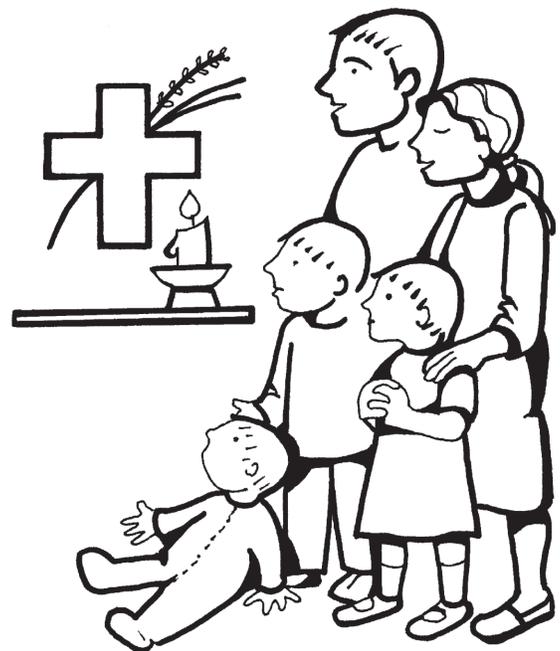
## A Morning Hymn: Lord God, We Praise You

1 Lord God, we praise you, now the night is o - ver, ac - tive and  
 2 Mon - arch of all things, fit us for your man - sions; ban - ish our  
 3 All - ho - ly Fa - ther, Son, and e - qual Spir - it, Trin - i - ty

watch - ful, stand - ing here be - fore you; sing - ing, we of - fer  
 weak - ness, health and whole - ness send - ing; bring us to heav - en,  
 bless - ed, send us your sal - va - tion; yours is the glo - ry,

prayer and med - i - ta - tion; thus we a - dore you.  
 where your saints u - nit - ed joy with - out end - ing.  
 gleam - ing and re - sound - ing through all cre - a - tion.

Text: attr. Gregory I, 540–604; tr. composite  
 Music: CHRISTE SANCTORUM, Paris *Antiphoner*, 1681



# Luther's Evening Blessing

## Introduction

### Testimony or Conversation: What Prayer means to me

*The Evening Blessing from the Small Catechism*

God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit watch over us. **Amen.**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

We give thanks to you, heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ your dear Son, that you have graciously protected us today. We ask you to forgive us all our sins, where we have done wrong, and graciously to protect us tonight. Into your hands we commend ourselves: our bodies, our souls, and all that is ours. Let your holy angel be with us, so that the wicked foe may have no power over us. **Amen.**



# Big Look at the Small Catechism



*This is reprint of ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton's column from Living Lutheran in July 2014. Just as she did at the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, Eaton encourages people to "dust off" their Small Catechism and take another look at the basics of our faith as we near the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.*

Several years ago my husband's bishop tried initiating a diocese-wide call to the catechumenate to engage those preparing for confirmation in a period of study and formation. We call it confirmation class or catechism, something generations of Lutherans have gone through. But this was a new experience for the Episcopalians in his diocese. He set about developing a curriculum for prospective confirmands, only to encounter resistance. How do Lutherans get participation in multiyear catechetical instruction? I told him: "Five hundred years of hazing."

We do have a history of communicating the faith from generation to generation. Martin Luther wrote the Small Catechism after the Saxon Visitation of the late 1520s, which examined the religious practices in the parishes of that part of Central Europe. He discovered a stunning lack of understanding of the basics of the Christian faith among laypeople and pastors. So in the Small Catechism he gives a concise but rich explanation of the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, the commandments, baptism, communion, the Office of the Keys and confession.

The Small Catechism became an important part of faith formation in families. Millions of us throughout the centuries and world have studied and memorized it. Catechism has been a rite of passage in the Lutheran movement. It could be argued that no other experience is more universally Lutheran than studying this little book—not language, not hymnody, not cuisine, not worship style. "What does this mean?" and "This is most certainly true" are two of the most recognizable phrases in Lutheranism.

It's been said, "Youth is wasted on the young." I'm not suggesting that studying the catechism isn't beneficial to middle school students. But confining catechetical instruction to that age group and expecting fully formed disciples at the end of the process is probably a little unrealistic.

All of this has me wondering how we can bring our Lutheran traditions, unashamedly and gratefully, into our relationships with ecumenical and interreligious partners. The ELCA is fully committed to ecumenical and interreligious dialogue. We have six full communion

## LivingLutheran

partners: the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Reformed Church in America, the United Church of Christ, the Episcopal Church, the United Methodist Church and the Moravian Church. As the ELCA, we also claim the evangelical part of our name. Set free by the grace of God through the death and resurrection of Jesus and moved by the Spirit we want to tell everybody the good news.

Some argue that emphasizing our Lutheran identity is an impediment to dialogue and evangelism. I would argue that if we aren't clear about who we are and what we believe it's not possible to have deep and authentic encounters with others. It's hard to have meaningful give-and-take with mush.

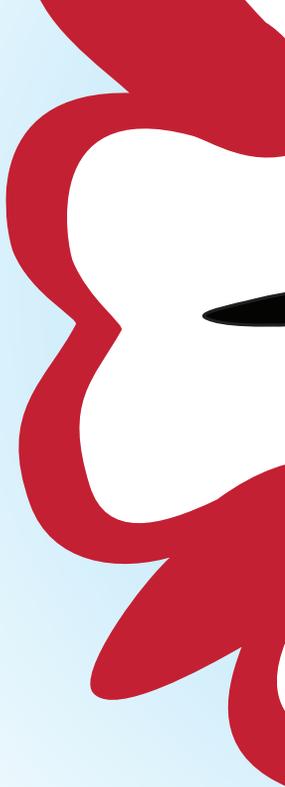
There was a time in the 1980s when church growth experts urged us to shed denominational identity in favor of more generic, and so appealing, names for congregations. St. Paul Lutheran Church became the Church at Pheasant Run. It's like selling our inheritance for a mess of marketing pottage. Of course we are baptized into the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church. Of course our identity is in Christ and not in a 16th-century Augustinian monk. But there is something distinctive about our Lutheran voice that needs to be heard in ecumenical and interreligious conversations and in the public square. If we aren't clear about this we run the risk of sliding into relativism.

It might be time for all of us to dust off our Small Catechisms (or find it in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, 1160) and take another look at the basics of the faith. Staff at the Lutheran Center in Chicago will be doing just that this fall. My guess is that places like Microsoft or McDonald's take great care in immersing their people into their corporate culture. We are Lutheran Christians. With great humility we can be unapologetic about being Lutheran. It would be wonderful if we as the ELCA prepared for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017 by studying the Small Catechism together. We have a common language with which to talk about faith, engage Scripture and make sense of our world. Catechism is not just for the young. This is most certainly true.

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# Notes:



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## Metropolitan New York Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



*Marked with the cross of Christ forever,  
we are claimed, gathered, and sent  
for the sake of the world.*