

GABRIEL'S GAZETTE

MARCH 2021



Christian Devotions in the Home

Lent is a good time to renew one's devotion to the Word of God and prayer. Daily reflections on God's Word and weekly attending the Divine Service should be priority number one all year, but life (read here: *Satan*) gets in the way. The devil loves to throw all kinds of obstacles at us: misplaced priorities, changes in schedule, stress at work, unruly children, fear, and embarrassment to keep us from God's Word. And he is very good at what he does. We don't even realize it's happening until we've been days or weeks without Holy Scripture. And without God's Word (which brings with it the Holy Spirit, forgiveness, life, and salvation), our guard is down for the devil's temptations. It should be your highest aim in life, above all the needs of this life, that you and your household reach heaven someday. What good is it if you have a successful career, happy retirement, happy and successful family, friends, reputation, and the like, but forfeit your eternal soul (Matthew 16:26)? Let us renew our effort to teach God's words diligently to our children, and talk of them when we sit in our house, and when we walk by the way, and when we lie down, and when we rise (Deuteronomy 6:7). Here are some tips to help you:

1. Keep it simple!

You do not need an elaborate plan. You don't need a PhD in theology. Just read a portion of Scripture and a part of the Small Catechism each day. Pray the Lord's Prayer and whatever other petitions you would like to add. You can add to that if you want, but start there. Devotional books like *Portals of Prayer* are good as long as you are reading more from the Scriptures themselves than from anything else. If you can't think of what to read each day, follow some of the suggestions from "The Congregation at Prayer" which is printed in every bulletin and can also be emailed to you in a mobile friendly format.

2. Get over your embarrassment

We (especially men) can be embarrassed leading prayer and devotions in the home. It can come from the guilt of one's ignorance of the Scriptures and insecurities about praying out loud. Or perhaps it is the guilt of having not fulfilled one's responsibilities in the home. Or maybe it is some weird feeling that it is too effeminate to talk about God and spirituality and prayer. Yet we have the command, "Fathers...bring your children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). We should not continue in shame any longer, but repent of our sins and receive the help of the Holy Spirit who forgives and enables us to fulfill our responsibilities. And the more practice you have at it, the more comfortable you will become.

3. Set a time and prioritize it

This can take many tries. Your chosen time might not work or schedules might change. Be willing to try various times to find the one that works best. Then stick to it and make it a routine which the household expects each day. And prioritize it before other things in your schedule, so that you don't allow various excuses to get in the way.

4. Attend the Divine Service weekly

How does this help one's devotion in the home? The preaching and teaching of the church will help you grow in your understanding of the Scriptures. You will also be

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*"Loving, Sharing, Serving
Jesus with you."*

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Christian Devotions in the Home

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a part of a community which believes the same things and can help one another in their faith. And through Absolution and the Sacrament of the Altar you will be forgiven for all your failed Christian devotion and daily living so that you do not lose hope or give up, but press on with joy, trusting not in your works, but in the cross of Jesus Christ.

May God bless you in your endeavor – and He surely will, for the Gospel “is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (Romans 1:16).

Pastor

fertilized and pruned for bearing good fruit by constantly hearing God’s Word preached and taught in sermon and Bible Class and in receiving the life-giving, faith-sustaining food of the Lord’s Supper. Remember your doctrine, hold on to the Lord’s teaching, and your thoughts will be taken captive to the obedience of Christ.

Bringing every thought captive to the obedience of Christ is recognizing that God does provide. The Lord’s Prayer teaches us to pray for daily bread. Praying this day in and day out reminds us that the Lord is the giver of our daily bread, and that we are to give thanks for His daily provision of it. God is rarely early and never late in His work, as Abraham learned on the mount of the Lord it will be provided. The Lord’s generosity forms our generosity in return.

Thus, we set aside for the work of God a generous, first-fruits, proportion of the daily bread that God has given to us. This act of trust in the Lord’s provision is the working out of our faith in Him. When budgetary discussions pop up our natural reaction is to point fingers. But remember your doctrine, and what your mother taught about pointing fingers. Our first natural reaction is not always right. In fact, when our thoughts are brought into captivity of Christ, our first reaction should be repentance. It should raise questions in our own lives. As good trees in Christ who are to bear good fruit, we should ask whether our thoughts have been taken captive by obedience to Christ. Have we given generously? Have we given our first-fruits? You know. And God knows. “For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him” (2 Chron 16:9).

God will provide. He always has and He always will. He gives His meat in due season. He has not left you as orphans but has grafted you into His own family. You belong to Him. Remember this, letting this thought dwell in you richly. And you will then be rich toward others.

- LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter, March 2021

LENT JOIN US FOR
MIDWEEK WORSHIP SERVICES
DURING THE LENTEN SEASON.
WEDNESDAY EVENINGS 7:00 PM

FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE . . .



Hudson Taylor, a Nineteenth Century British missionary to China, is reported to have said, “God’s work, done in God’s way, will not lack God’s supply.” To know God’s way, we need to know His Holy Word. Or to

say it another way: you need to know your Bible.

St. Paul, before he spends two chapters on giving, wrote that every thought is to be taken captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor 10:5). Doctrine matters. And doctrine matters because the Scriptures matter. And the Scriptures matter because this is where we learn the teaching of Christ. Our thoughts must be brought into line with the teaching of Scripture so that our work is what God wants done and so that we do this work in His way.

A good tree bears good fruit. A bad tree bears bad fruit. We have been made good trees in holy baptism. We are



Quarterly Voters Meeting
Tuesday, March 9th
At 7:00 p.m.
All members of the congregation
are encouraged to attend.



Shepherds & Lambs The Sunday School Newsletter March 2021

The Lenten season is such a special time to share with your children. What is more important than to share God's love through Jesus Christ with our children? Guiding them to their Savior is the #1 opportunity we have as parents. This season especially, when opportunities come up, share your faith with your children. Ask them about what it means to them that Jesus loved them enough to die for them. Discuss how they might share their faith with others.



Our children will be receiving a Lenten booklet to help them study the different facets of our Christian faith. Each week has a different theme. Help your children work on these during the 6 weeks of Lent. Some of these

weeks have service projects that could be done as a family project. Guide them to come up with their own ideas for each week's themed activities. After working these 6 weeks, plan a special activity for Easter to celebrate!

The children buried the Alleluia Banner that we had displayed in the Gathering Place. The Alleluias are not said or sung during the Lenten season. We will bring it out again Easter morning when the Alleluia returns!



The children will sing on Palm Sunday, March 28, so mark the date on your calendar!!

Lynette Johnston-Martin
Superintendent

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2021 !!



Plans are underway to have an in-person VBS this summer! We're working out how to offer a rewarding and faith-building experience in a safe environment for the children of our congregation and community. Watch for updates as our plans develop and mark your calendars for **July 26-30** for:

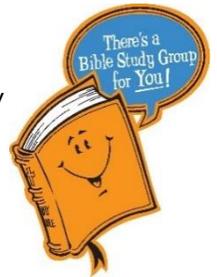
God's Wonder Lab: Jesus Does the Impossible.

BIBLE STUDY CLASSES . . .

Do you attend a weekly Bible study?

We offer many opportunities and a variety of topics—check out the ones below and watch for updates in the weekly bulletin.

All are invited to attend and are always welcome at any of these sessions.



SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDIES

On Sunday mornings these classes are offered at **8:45 AM:**

Pastor Solum leads a study of the book of *Judges*. This class meets in the Fellowship Hall.

A Women's Bible Class meeting in the Office Conference Room is studying CPH's *Bless These Lips*.

MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDIES

Tuesday, 6:00 PM – Pastor Solum leads a study on the book of *Daniel*. This class currently meets in Fellowship Hall.

MONTHLY BIBLE STUDIES

1st Saturday of each month, 8:00 AM – The Men's Network meets in the Fellowship Hall and is studying *We the People: Citizens of Two Kingdoms*.

1st & 3rd Saturdays of each month, 8:30 AM – Ladies Bible Study & Tea meets in Fellowship Hall and is studying material from the *LWML Lutheran Women's Quarterly*.





Daylight Savings Time begins Sunday, March 14. So, mark the date and remember to change your clocks on the right day. You won't want to miss out on a minute of the worship services, Sunday School, and Bible classes.



PLEASE NOTE: The deadline for submitting items for the April *Gazette* is **Monday, March 1.**

LENT
Pray + Fast + Give