



# Honing the Sword

A Family-Focused Approach  
to Pre-Confirmation Instruction

## Parent Handbook



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## Why Do It This Way?



Every year there are hundreds of young students confirmed across our national church body. However, the same statistical reports show only a handful remaining active in worship and other areas of Christian life. A look around our own sanctuaries shows our congregation is not immune to these statistical trends. For years, “confirmation class” has been intended to be a time of focused study. Pastors lectured; students passed the tests. Yet after the program was finished, the majority of them disappeared. **Might there be something in the Confirmation process that could be adjusted? Is there direction about Confirmation from God in his Word?**

To answer those questions, we have to start by carefully defining our terms. So, what is **Confirmation**? It’s a hard term to define because Confirmation isn’t found in Scripture. Confirmation is a church tradition, a rite or ceremony that has served many different purposes and had just as many definitions throughout the centuries, even just within the lifetime of an individual congregation. But this explanation from the Confirmation rite in our hymnal resources sums up well the function of Confirmation in our congregation: “The rite is used when children who have been instructed desire to confess their faith publicly and affirm that they are prepared to receive the Sacrament of the Altar.” (*Christian Worship: Agenda*)

Confirmation is an opportunity for young people in our congregation to publicly proclaim their faith in the one true God who created, redeemed, and sanctified them. It also serves as a traditional way to show they are ready to receive the Lord’s Supper. It is not the only way to do either of these, but that is the role Confirmation fills in our congregation and many others. But in order to make that public confession of faith, our young people need to be instructed.

That’s where our second key term comes in: **Catechesis**. Catechesis is simply another word for teaching or instruction. It’s related to the word “echo”, as we echo back the truths of Scripture that we learn. A “catechism” is the content of catechesis. But catechesis is more than just “confirmation class,” and it’s more than just memorizing Luther’s Small Catechism and reciting it back in an examination — though these can both be good and useful things.

**Catechesis is lifelong, from our baptism to our deathbed.** Catechesis is growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord (2 Peter 3:18) through his Word and sacraments. Catechesis is fulfilling our Savior's command to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Triune God and teaching them everything he has said (Matthew 28:18–20).

God has given this important work of catechesis to his whole Church on earth. To help carry it out, God has given us the gift of public ministers of the Gospel—pastors and other called workers—to lead and equip God's people. Equipped with the Gospel, believers do acts of service to build up God's people (Ephesians 4:11,12).

A special act of service God has given Christian parents is to raise their children in God's Word (Deuteronomy 6:6–9; Ephesians 6:4). The goal of this course is to help parents to do just that. **Honing the Sword, our youth pre-confirmation course, will be a program that brings parents and students closer to God and closer to each other.** To accomplish this, by God's grace, we will provide a Scriptural, practical, and flexible family spiritual growth program so that, having been guided by the church and led by their parents, the youth of our congregation will mature into faithful, active Christian young adults.



Also take the helmet of salvation and  
**the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.**

*Ephesians 6:17*

## What Will We Do?

### Monthly Family Forge (FF)

Once a month, parents and students will come together for a review of the previous content and to look ahead at upcoming lessons. This group time allows your family to get to know other families that are part of the catechesis program. Typically, Family Forge nights include:

- **Worship**

A brief devotional worship service, focusing on an aspect of God's Word we'll be studying that month.

- **For Students: Review and Application**

Students will review content and memory work from the previous weeks. During this time we'll especially focus on application of God's Word to our lives.

- **For Parents: Review and Preview**

Parents will also have the opportunity to engage in discussion about the previous weeks' lessons. We will then introduce the content for the coming weeks.

- **Meal**

We will close with some time for food and fellowship.

### Weekly Lessons

Each month the pastors will send out the set of weekly lessons for parents and students to go through. While each student works at their own pace, plan for approximately 60 to 90 minutes a week. Lesson work will be due by Sunday of each week and reviewed by Wednesday. The weekly lessons will typically include the following:

- **Studying the Catechism Lesson**

Work through the assigned unit from *Luther's Catechism*. There will be pages for reading each week; we will also provide a brief video from the pastors walking through the content and lesson helps for parents with additional discussion questions. Students will submit answers to the questions from the Catechism through a Google Classroom form.

Families have flexibility in how they approach the lessons, for example:

- Parents could read through the lesson with their student, discussing the Bible passages and answering the questions together. The lesson video could be viewed together or just by the parents to prepare for teaching the lesson. Parents can use the extra discussion question as they want.
- Students could work through the lesson on their own, using their catechism along with the pastor video. Parents can check their work and use the extra discussion questions as they have opportunity during the week.

One of the goals of the program is for parents to have the opportunity to engage with the same Bible truths as their children, but there's more than one way to do this. You could sit down and work on the lesson together all in one setting, but you don't need to. Find what works for your family; the important thing is that God's Word remains weaved into our whole lives.

- **Practicing Memory Work**

Most lessons include memory work. More information on this is found in the next part.

- **Using the Connections Section**

Each catechism unit ends with a Connections section, which includes a longer Scripture reading, application questions or activities, a quote from Martin Luther or the Lutheran Confessions, and a hymn. Students and parents can work through these like the rest of the lesson, but they are also well-suited for devotional use. Considering using them not just with your student but with your whole family.

## **Memorization** *Learning by Heart*

Having the truth of God’s Word deep in our hearts and minds is a very valuable resource when the time comes to share our faith or when we face troubles and temptations. So, memory work will be a part of our catechesis as well. Students will memorize both Bible passages and the parts of the Catechism, generally one of each for every weekly lesson.

- **Bible Passages**

The set of Bible passages that students will memorize highlight key teachings of the Bible. Bible passage memory work will be repeated each year; after students have learned them in the first year, they will review them in their second year. While this reduces the amount of passages students learn by heart in this course, it should also help them to more deeply embed them in their memory. It also trains them to commit to memory any other passages they would like later in life.

- **Parts of the Catechism**

Luther’s Small Catechism contains helpful summaries of the basic teachings of the Bible. The parts of the Catechism for memory work will be divided between the two years of the course. A few parts are repeated in both years.

The full list of memory work for each year can be found in the Appendix.

## **Quizzes & Tests**

The online component of the weekly lessons allows the pastors to track week-by-week how students are grasping the lesson content. As another tool for accountability and reinforcing learning, the student review time at Family Forge will include short quizzes. After the final lesson each year, students will have a comprehensive review test, which they can complete totally open-book—Bibles, Catechisms, and notes. The goal of these is not to evaluate any individual’s faith, but to help students further embed the Bible truths they’ve learned in their hearts and minds.



## **Confirmation Examination**

A student is generally considered ready for confirmation after completing both years of the course. Prior to confirmation, time will be set aside for each student wishing to be confirmed to have an examination. More than simply a test reviewing content, the confirmation examination is a personal conversation between each student and the pastors. Students and pastors talk through the truths of Scripture the students have studied, and the students are given an opportunity to confess their faith and their desire to be confirmed.

## **Confirmation Rite**

The Rite of Confirmation takes place during a regular Sunday worship service, generally in the Easter season. Students have completed the course and examination are invited to make a public confession of their Christian faith as the congregation offers prayers that God would keep them strong in the faith they confess.

Confirmation may be the end of this particular course, but it is not the end of studying God's Word or growing closer to him. Confirmation is just one small part of a lifetime of growth in faith and godly living. May God keep us all connected to him by his Word through regular worship attendance and personal study, serving with acts of love, before, during, and after confirmation.



## Who Does What?

God's Word tells us to take the commandments of the Lord and impress them on our children. A love of Jesus Christ is truly a lifelong gift for your child, and you need only lead by example.

Our desire is to help you to be an example to your child by providing you with a curriculum that you can work through together. This will help your child confirm his or her faith and instill life-long spiritual habits.

### **Pastor Responsibility**

- **Communication with Parents and Students**
  - Respond to questions within 24 hours.
  - Calendar of assignments with Family Forge dates for the year.
  - Welcome email with new year orientation information.
- **Establishing Curriculum**
  - Bible-centered and parent-friendly.
  - Flexible for varying weekly schedules.
  - Available in print and digital formats.
- **Fostering Community**
  - Enlist families to start the confirmation process.
  - Equip parents to instruct their children in the way of the Lord.
  - Encourage parents and students to continue lifelong spiritual habits.
  - Work alongside parents to empower students to grow in the grace of knowledge of Jesus Christ.
  - Meet once a month for content review and introduction.

### **Parent Responsibility**

- **Model**
  - Bring your child up in the way of the Lord (Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Ephesians 6:4). You will set the tone for this program. Joy is contagious!
  - Pick times during the week when you can work with your child on new lessons, review past lessons, and practice memory work.
  - Make every effort to be available for all Family Forge nights.
  - Participate in worship services regularly.

- **Work Together**
  - Reading/listening through the lesson material.
  - Brainstorming appropriate answers for questions.
  - Allow discussion time to answer questions.
    - Share your testimony of faith when applicable—it is okay to be vulnerable and share times God led you through difficult circumstances or forgave sins in your past, for example.
    - Be honest when you don't know something and search for the answer together. Remember, it's also always okay to say, "I'm not sure; let's ask Pastor!"

**Student  
Responsibility**

- **Follow your parent's spiritual instruction (Ephesians 6:1,2).**
- **Be a disciple/student of Jesus.**
  - Reading/listening through the lesson material.
  - Brainstorming appropriate answers for the questions.
  - Sharing testimony from your life experiences. It is okay to open up with your parent about anything. They love you and want what's best for you.
  - Be honest when you don't know something and search for it together. If you can't find an answer for a question, it's okay to say, "Let's ask Pastor!"
- **Practice learning God's Word by heart.** A few minutes each day doing memory work is easier and works better than trying to cram it all in at once!
- **Serve Others**
  - Be available for all Family Forge nights.
  - Get involved in our review and application discussions.
  - Participate in worship services regularly—help remind your parents to bring you, and themselves, to church!

## Course Materials

- **Bible**—Students are asked to bring their own Bible. If purchasing a new Bible, the following translations are recommended.
  - Evangelical Heritage Version (EHV)—This is the translation regularly used for the Scripture lessons in worship at St. Paul. Most memory work passages are taken from the EHV.
  - New International Version (NIV)—A widely used and readable translation, also used in worship at St. Paul. Some memory work passages are taken from the NIV.
  - Christian Standard Bible (CSB)—Another translation similar in style to the EHV and NIV. Used for the Scripture lessons in worship at some of our fellow WELS congregations in the area.
  - English Standard Version (ESV)—A modern translation that follows stylistically in the footsteps of the King James Version more than the others listed here.
- **Catechism**—Students will be provided with a copy of *Luther's Catechism: Anniversary Edition* (2017, Northwestern Publishing House). The copy students receive uses the EHV; NIV and ESV editions are also available. You may wish to have a copy for home and personal use, which can be purchased from NPH ([online.nph.net](http://online.nph.net)).
- **Catechism Connections (Optional)**—*Catechism Connections: Expressions of My Faith* (2017, Northwestern Publishing House) is a companion notebook to *Luther's Catechism*. It offers an easy way for students to keep notes from their weekly work and Family Forge discussions. Students may also keep notes in a regular notebook. Copies of *Catechism Connections* may be purchased from St. Paul at a discount from the NPH price.
- **Weekly Lesson Materials**—Parents and students will also be provided with the following materials to assist with weekly work and preparing for FF nights.
  - **Lesson Video**—A video for each lesson with a pastor walking through the key points of the lesson. Can be used by parents, students, or both together.
  - **Parent Helps**—Instructions for completing each weekly lesson, including answers to the questions in *Luther's Catechism* and optional questions and prompts for further discussion.
  - **Google Classroom Form**—Online form for students to submit their answers to the questions from their weekly catechism reading.
  - **Further Reading**—Optional resources for digging further into the lesson content if desired. These might be a section in the Book of Concord, an essay or article, or a whole book recommendation.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **I don't know enough about the Bible; how can I teach?**

You probably know more than you realize, and this program is meant to cover the basics of Christianity. If you feel nervous about knowing content, consider the class a good time to review truths that God wants you to know and share. Lesson content is guided material that helps to teach these Bible basics, and the pastors are only a call or email away to help with further clarification.

### **Isn't teaching Confirmation the pastor's job? Why are parents teaching?**

In keeping with Ephesians 4:11,12, the pastor's role is to equip God's people for ministry. Through this program, our pastors will equip parents for their important home ministry with their children.

### **What if I'm too busy?**

From the First Commandment we are reminded that it is God who created, redeemed, and preserves all people, and he rightly deserves first place in our lives. It is our cultural norm to be constantly running; however, this busy-ness is often unhealthy and unscriptural. We highly recommend looking through your schedule and highlighting the things that last the longest and are most valuable, remembering that God and his Word are what are most important for ourselves and our children.

### **What if I have custody of my child every other week?**

We can sit down with you and work out a plan so you can participate in the Confirmation program.

### **Do I have to be at Family Forge? What if I have other obligations?**

Family Forge is an essential part of the class and attendance is expected. We want to be appropriately flexible but ask that parents make an honest effort to attend. If something comes up, please let the pastors know so that we can find an alternate time to go over that month's material with you.

It may happen that students are involved in activities (e.g. sports teams, community groups) that fall on the same night as Family Forge. If this happens to you, please let the coach/director know ahead of time that you will be at a church event. It is a teachable moment to highlight for your family and others how valuable God is in your life. If coaches give you any grief, we're happy to write a letter excusing you.

**What if an assignment is missed or late, or we miss a Family Forge?**

A pastor will reach out each week if there is missing homework. If more than three assignments are missing or if there is more than one unexcused absence from Family Forge, the pastor will meet with your family to consider next steps.

**How will my child get to know his/her classmates and pastors?**

Family Forge nights and other youth events allow opportunity to get to know other students and the pastors. Regular weekend worship is also another opportunity to connect with people in the Confirmation program.

**My child doesn't want to do the assignments; what do I do?**

Consider some of the reasons he/she is not excited about the work. Is there something your child doesn't understand? Does your child recognize the benefits of knowing God's Word (peace, forgiveness, guidance, etc.)? Do you as a parent model excitement about it or is it a struggle for you?

Consider breaking the study up over the week or taking regular small breaks if doing the lesson all at once. Have a fun thing you do together to celebrate when a lesson is complete.

Reach out to a pastor to brainstorm more ideas or share other concerns.

**What happens if my child doesn't take this class?**

This program is aimed at children in the congregation in the 11-14 years old age range (roughly 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades) who desired to be confirmed. Older children may also participate, though they may prefer taking the adult pre-confirmation course instead. The program runs for two years, so it is recommended that children start at age 11 or 12. If you do not feel your child is ready to start this year, they can certainly join the class the next year.

Admission to the Lord's Supper is connected to Confirmation in our congregation's practice. Unconfirmed members, while still being baptized Christians, are not generally admitted to the Lord's Supper.

# Appendix

## Memory Work—Bible Passages

### **Psalm 32:1,2 (NIV)**

Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the one whose sin the LORD does not count against them and in whose spirit is no deceit.

### **Psalm 50:15**

Call on me in the day of distress. I will deliver you, and you will honor me.

### **Psalm 51:5**

Certainly, I was guilty when I was born. I was sinful when my mother conceived me.

### **Isaiah 53:6**

We all have gone astray like sheep. Each of us has turned to his own way, but the LORD has charged all our guilt to him.

### **Isaiah 55:11**

In the same way my word that goes out from my mouth will not return to me empty. Rather, it will accomplish whatever I please, and it will succeed in the purpose for which I sent it.

### **Matthew 28:18–20 (NIV)**

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

### **Luke 10:27**

He replied, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind; and love your neighbor as yourself.”

### **John 3:16**

For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

### **John 8:31**

[Jesus said,] “If you remain in my word, you are really my disciples.”

**John 14:6**

Jesus said to him, "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father, except through me."

**Romans 6:23**

For the wages of sin is death, but the undeserved gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Romans 10:17**

So then, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message comes through the word of Christ.

**1 Corinthians 6:19,20**

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought at a price. Therefore glorify God with your body.

**1 Corinthians 11:26**

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

**1 Corinthians 12:3**

Therefore I am informing you that no one speaking by God's Spirit says, "A curse be upon Jesus," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

**2 Corinthians 5:21**

God made him, who did not know sin, to become sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

**Ephesians 2:8,9**

Indeed, it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.

**1 Timothy 2:4**

[God our Savior] wants all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

**2 Timothy 3:16–17**

All Scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, and for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, well equipped for every good work.



**Titus 3:5**

He saved us—not by righteous works that we did ourselves, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and the renewal by the Holy Spirit.

**Hebrews 10:24,25**

Let us also consider carefully how to spur each other on to love and good works. Let us not neglect meeting together, as some have the habit of doing. Rather, let us encourage each other, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

**Hebrews 11:1**

Faith is being sure about what we hope for, being convinced about things we do not see.

**Hebrews 13:4**

Marriage is to be held in honor by all, and the marriage bed is to be kept undefiled, for God will judge sexually immoral people and adulterers.

**James 1:19**

Remember this, my dear brothers: Let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry.

**1 Peter 2:9**

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, the people who are God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

**1 Peter 4:10**

Serve one another, each according to the gift he has received, as good stewards of the many forms of God's grace.

**1 John 1:8,9 (NIV)**

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

**1 John 2:2**

He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the whole world.

## Memory Work—Catechism

Series A	Series B
Ten Commandments (Without Explanations)	Ten Commandments (Without Explanations)
1 <sup>st</sup> Commandment	Apostles' Creed (Without Explanations)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Commandment	Lord's Prayer (Without Explanations)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Commandment	Address
4 <sup>th</sup> Commandment	1 <sup>st</sup> Petition
5 <sup>th</sup> Commandment	2 <sup>nd</sup> Petition
6 <sup>th</sup> Commandment	3 <sup>rd</sup> Petition
7 <sup>th</sup> Commandment	4 <sup>th</sup> Petition
8 <sup>th</sup> Commandment	5 <sup>th</sup> Petition
9 <sup>th</sup> Commandment	6 <sup>th</sup> Petition
10 <sup>th</sup> Commandment	7 <sup>th</sup> Petition
Conclusion to the Commandments	Doxology
Apostles' Creed (Without Explanations)	Baptism—Institution
1 <sup>st</sup> Article (up to "keep my body and life.")	Baptism—Blessings
1 <sup>st</sup> Article	Baptism—Power
2 <sup>nd</sup> Article (up to "is my Lord.")	Baptism—Meaning for Daily Life
2 <sup>nd</sup> Article	The Keys
3 <sup>rd</sup> Article (up to "kept me in the true faith.")	Public Use of the Keys
3 <sup>rd</sup> Article	Confession 1
Lord's Prayer (Without Explanations)	Confession 2
Lord's Supper—Institution	Confession 3
Lord's Supper—Blessings	Confession 4
Lord's Supper—Power	Lord's Supper—Institution
Lord's Supper—Reception	Lord's Supper—Blessings
	Lord's Supper—Power
	Lord's Supper—Reception

## Catechism Units

Outline of the Catechism units covered in the weekly lessons for both years of the program.

	<b>Series A</b>	<b>Series B</b>
	<b>Unit (Cat. Pg.)</b>	<b>Unit (Cat. Pg.)</b>
1	The Bible (p. 26)	The Bible (p. 26)
2	God's Law (pg. 33)	God's Law (pg. 33)
3	The Ten Commandments (pg. 40)	The Ten Commandments (pg. 40)
4	The First Commandment (pg. 46)	Difference Between Law & Gospel (p. 117)
5	The Second Commandment (p. 53)	The Apostles' Creed (p. 124)
6	The Third Commandment (p. 59)	New Self Against the Old Adam (p. 227)
7	The Fourth Commandment (p. 68)	Prayer (p. 236)
8	The Fifth Commandment (p. 75)	The Address (p. 243)
9	The Sixth Commandment (p. 81)	The First Petition (p. 248)
10	The Seventh Commandment (p. 91)	The Second Petition (p. 254)
11	The Eighth Commandment (p. 97)	The Third Petition (p. 260)
12	The Ninth and Tenth Comm. (p. 103)	The Fourth Petition (p. 267)
13	The Conclusion to the Comm. (p. 109)	The Fifth Petition (p. 273)
14	Difference Between Law & Gospel (p. 117)	The Sixth Petition (p. 279)
15	The Apostles' Creed (p. 124)	The Seventh Petition (p. 285)
16	Creation (p. 130)	The Doxology (p. 292)
17	God Preserves His Creation (p. 137)	The Means of Grace (p. 297)
18	The Ruin of God's Creation (p. 143)	The Institution of Baptism (p. 304)
19	Christ's Person (p. 148)	The Blessings of Baptism (p. 311)
20	Christ's Office (p. 155)	The Power of Baptism (p. 315)
21	Christ's Work (p. 163)	The Meaning of Baptism for Daily Life (p. 320)
22	Christ's Humiliation & Exaltation (p. 170)	The Keys (p. 328)

23	We Belong to Christ (p. 178)	The Public Use of the Keys (p. 333)
24	The Work of the Holy Spirit (p. 183)	Confession (p. 342)
25	Good Works & Gifts of the Holy Spirit (p. 195)	The Institution of the Lord's Supper (p. 350)
26	The Christian Church (p. 203)	The Blessings of the Lord's Supper (p. 356)
27	The Forgiveness of Sins (p. 213)	The Power of the Lord's Supper (p. 361)
28	The Resurrection (p. 220)	The Reception of the Lord's Supper (p. 365)

## A Simple Order for Home Devotion

In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### Morning Prayer

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have kept me this night from all harm and danger. Keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please you. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

### or Evening Prayer

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have graciously kept me this day. Forgive me all my sins, and graciously keep me this night. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

### Scripture Reading/Devotion

*Use a Bible reading plan, like the Daily Lectionary from the hymnal or an online resource, a reading from worship that week, a devotion book, or the Connections section from Luther's Catechism.*

### Prayer/Lord's Prayer

*Say a prayer in your own words or the prayer from a written devotion. Invite each member of the family to say something they'd like to pray for. You can also pray the Lord's Prayer in addition to or instead of another prayer.*

### Hymn

*Consider singing or reciting hymns at home. Hymns help us remember the truths of God's Word with poetry and music. If you don't have a hymnal, get one! Next to the Bible, a hymnal is one of the most useful books you can own for personal and family devotions.*

## Connections Hymn Numbers

The following table lists the hymnal numbers for the hymns included in each Connections section from *Luther's Catechism* for families who would like to look at the music or other verses of the hymns. Hymn numbers are given for both the current *Christian Worship: Hymnal* and for the 1993 *Christian Worship* and the 2008 *Christian Worship: Supplement*. A couple hymns used in the Connections sections were not included in the new *Christian Worship*; similar hymns are suggested. Some hymn texts, especially of translated hymns, may also differ between hymnals.

Unit	Hymn Title	CW 21	CW 93/S
The Bible	One Thing's Needful	645	290
God's Law	The Law of God Is Good and Wise	637	287
The Ten Commandments	Salvation Unto Us Has Come	558	390
The First Commandment	The Ten Commandments Are the Law	634	285
	I Am Trusting You, Lord Jesus	816	446
The Second Commandment	Oh, Bless the Lord, My Soul	623	238
The Third Commandment	Speak, O Savior, I Am Listening	631	283
The Fourth Commandment	For Christian Homes, O Lord, We Pray	—	500
	<i>Our Father, by Whose Name</i>	761	501
The Fifth Commandment	The Ten Commandments Are the Law	634	285
The Sixth Commandment	Oh, Blest the House, Whate'er Befall	760	506
The Seventh Commandment	Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us	767	486
The Eighth Commandment	Take My Life and Let It Be	695	469
The Ninth and Tenth Commandments	God's Own Child, I Gladly Say It	679	737
The Conclusion to the Commandments	Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice	557	377
Difference Between Law & Gospel	The Law Commands and Makes Us Know	—	286
	<i>The Gospel Shows the Father's Grace</i>	638	288

The Apostles' Creed	Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty	483	195
Creation	Praise to the Lord, the Almighty	624	234
God Preserves His Creation	Now Thank We All Our God	597	610
The Ruin of God's Creation	All Mankind Fell in Adam's Fall	556	378
Christ's Person	Savior of the Nations, Come	301	2
Christ's Office	Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted	430	127
Christ's Work	Jesus, Your Blood and Righteousness	573	376
Christ's Humiliation & Exaltation	He's Risen, He's Risen	445	143
We Belong to Christ	Take My Life and Let It Be	695	469
The Work of the Holy Spirit	Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord	585	176
Good Works & Gifts of the Holy Spirit	Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest	586	177
The Christian Church	Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word	862	203
The Forgiveness of Sins	Chief of Sinners Though I Be	578	385
The Resurrection	I Know That My Redeemer Lives	441	152
New Self Against the Old Adam	My Song Is Love Unknown	397	110
Prayer	What a Friend We Have in Jesus	721	411
The Address	Our Father, Who From Heaven Above	720	410
The First Petition	Not Unto Us	582	392
The Second Petition	Spread, Oh, Spread the Mighty Word	902	576
The Third Petition	Jesus, Lead Us On	842	422
The Fourth Petition	Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow	617	334
The Fifth Petition	I Am Trusting You, Lord Jesus	816	446
The Sixth Petition	God's Own Child, I Gladly Say It	679	737

The Seventh Petition	Our Father, Who From Heaven Above	720	410
The Doxology	Our Father, Who From Heaven Above	720	410
The Means of Grace	The Church's One Foundation	855	538
The Institution of Baptism	God's Own Child, I Gladly Say It	679	737
The Blessings of Baptism	God's Own Child, I Gladly Say It	679	737
The Power of Baptism	God's Own Child, I Gladly Say It	679	737
The Meaning of Baptism for Our Daily Life	All Christians Who Have Been Baptized	682	736
The Keys	Jesus Sinners Does Receive	654	304
The Public Use of the Keys	Jesus Sinners Does Receive	654	304
Confession	From Depths of Woe I Cry to You	650	305
The Institution of the Lord's Supper	What Is This Bread?	665	742
The Blessings of the Lord's Supper	What Is This Bread?	665	742
The Power of the Lord's Supper	Lord Jesus Christ, You Have Prepared	667	312
The Reception of the Lord's Supper	Soul, Adorn Yourself With Gladness	663	311



# **The Small Catechism**

## **I. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS**

### **The First Commandment**

You shall have no other gods.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.

### **The Second Commandment**

You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God that we do not use his name to curse, swear, lie, or deceive, or use witchcraft, but call upon God's name in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.

### **The Third Commandment**

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God that we do not despise preaching and his Word, but regard it as holy and gladly hear and learn it.

### **The Fourth Commandment**

Honor your father and mother, that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God that we do not dishonor or anger our parents and others in authority, but honor, serve, and obey them, and give them love and respect.

### **The Fifth Commandment**

You shall not murder.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and befriend him in every bodily need.



### **The Sixth Commandment**

You shall not commit adultery.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God that we lead a pure and decent life in words and actions, and that husband and wife love and honor each other.

### **The Seventh Commandment**

You shall not steal.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God that we do not take our neighbor's money or property, or get it by dishonest dealing, but help him to improve and protect his property and means of income.

### **The Eighth Commandment**

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, or give him a bad name, but defend him, speak well of him, and take his words and actions in the kindest possible way.

### **The Ninth Commandment**

You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God that we do not scheme to get our neighbor's inheritance or house, or obtain it by a show of right, but do all we can to help him keep it.

### **The Tenth Commandment**

You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, workers, animals, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God that we do not force or entice away our neighbor's spouse, workers, or animals, but urge them to stay and do their duty.

## **The Conclusion**

*What does God say about all these commandments?*

He says, "I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments."

*What does this mean?*

God threatens to punish all who transgress these commandments. Therefore we should fear his anger and not disobey what he commands.

But he promises grace and every blessing to all who keep these commandments.

Therefore we should love and trust in him and gladly obey what he commands.

## **II. THE CREED**

### **The First Article (Creation)**

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

*What does this mean?*

I believe that God created me and all that exists, and that he gave me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my mind and all my abilities.

And I believe that God still preserves me by richly and daily providing clothing and shoes, food and drink, property and home, spouse and children, land, cattle, and all I own, and all I need to keep my body and life. God also preserves me by defending me against all danger, guarding and protecting me from all evil. All this God does only because he is my good and merciful Father in heaven, and not because I have earned or deserved it. For all this I ought to thank and praise, to serve and obey him.

This is most certainly true.

### **The Second Article (Redemption)**

I believe 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

*What does this mean?*

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord.

He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won 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.

All this he did that I should be his own, and live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as he has risen from death and lives and rules eternally.

This is most certainly true.

### **The Third Article (Sanctification)**

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.

*What does this mean?*

I believe that I cannot by my own thinking or choosing believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to him.

But the Holy Spirit has called me by the gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way he calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

In this Christian Church he daily and fully forgives all sins to me and all believers.

On the Last Day he will raise me and all the dead and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.

This is most certainly true.

## **III. THE LORD'S PRAYER**

### **The Address**

Our Father in heaven.

*What does this mean?*

With these words God tenderly invites us to believe that he is our true Father and that we are his true children, so that we may pray to him as boldly and confidently as dear children ask their dear father.

### **The First Petition**

Hallowed be your name.

*What does this mean?*

God's name is certainly holy by itself, but we pray in this petition that we too may keep it holy.

*How is God's name kept holy?*

God's name is kept holy when his Word is taught in its truth and purity and we as children of God lead holy lives according to it. Help us to do this, dear Father in heaven! But whoever teaches and lives contrary to God's Word dishonors God's name among us. Keep us from doing this, dear Father in heaven!

### **The Second Petition**

Your kingdom come.

*What does this mean?*

God's kingdom certainly comes by itself even without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may also come to us.

*How does God's kingdom come?*

God's kingdom comes when our heavenly Father gives his Holy Spirit, so that by his grace we believe his holy Word and lead a godly life now on earth and forever in heaven.

### **The Third Petition**

Your will be done on earth as in heaven.

*What does this mean?*

God's good and gracious will certainly is done without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may be done among us also.

*How is God's will done?*

God's will is done when he breaks and defeats every evil plan and purpose of the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh, which try to prevent us from keeping God's name holy and letting his kingdom come. And God's will is done when he strengthens and keeps us firm in his Word and in the faith as long as we live. This is his good and gracious will.

### **The Fourth Petition**

Give us today our daily bread.

*What does this mean?*

God surely gives daily bread without our asking, even to all the wicked, but we pray in this petition that he would lead us to realize this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

*What, then, is meant by daily bread?*

Daily bread includes everything that we need for our bodily welfare, such as food and drink, clothing and shoes, house and home, land and cattle, money and goods, a godly spouse, godly children, godly workers, godly and faithful leaders, good government, good weather, peace and order, health, a good name, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.

### **The Fifth Petition**

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

*What does this mean?*

We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look upon our sins or because of them deny our prayers; for we are worthy of none of the things for which we ask, neither have we deserved them, but we ask that he would give them all to us by grace; for we daily sin much and surely deserve nothing but punishment.

So we too will forgive from the heart and gladly do good to those who sin against us.

### **The Sixth Petition**

Lead us not into temptation.

*What does this mean?*

God surely tempts no one to sin, but we pray in this petition that God would guard and keep us, so that the devil, the world, and our flesh may not deceive us or lead us into false belief, despair, and other great and shameful sins; and though we are tempted by them, we pray that we may overcome and win the victory.

### **The Seventh Petition**

But deliver us from evil.

*What does this mean?*

In conclusion, we pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would deliver us from every evil that threatens body and soul, property and reputation, and finally when our last hour comes, grant us a blessed end and graciously take us from this world of sorrow to himself in heaven.

### **The Doxology**

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

*What does this mean?*

We can be sure that these petitions are acceptable to our Father in heaven and are heard by him, for he himself has commanded us to pray in this way and has promised to hear us. Therefore we say, "Amen. Yes, it shall be so."

## **IV. THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM**

### **The Institution of Baptism**

*First: What is Baptism?*

Baptism is not just plain water, but it is water used by God's command and connected with God's Word.

*Which is that word of God?*

Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Matthew, "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

### **The Blessings of Baptism**

*Second: What does Baptism do for us?*

Baptism works forgiveness of sin, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare.

*What are these words and promises of God?*

Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Mark, "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."

## **The Power of Baptism**

*Third: How can water do such great things?*

It is certainly not the water that does such things, but God's Word which is in and with the water and faith which trusts this Word used with the water.

For without God's Word the water is just plain water and not Baptism. But with this Word it is Baptism, that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of rebirth by the Holy Spirit.

*Where is this written?*

St. Paul says in Titus, chapter 3, "[God] saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying."

## **The Meaning of Baptism for Our Daily Life**

*Fourth: What does baptizing with water mean?*

Baptism means that the old Adam in us should be drowned by daily contrition and repentance, and that all its evil deeds and desires be put to death. It also means that a new person should daily arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

*Where is this written?*

St. Paul says in Romans, chapter 6, "We were . . . buried with [Christ] through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."

## **V. THE USE OF THE KEYS AND CONFESSION**

### **The Keys**

*First: What is the use of the keys?*

The use of the keys is that special power and right which Christ gave to his Church on earth: to forgive the sins of penitent sinners but refuse forgiveness to the impenitent as long as they do not repent.

*Where is this written?*

The holy evangelist John writes in chapter 20, "[Jesus] breathed on [his disciples] and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.' "

## **The Public Use of the Keys**

*Second: How does a Christian congregation use the keys?*

A Christian congregation with its called servant of Christ uses the keys in accordance with Christ's command by forgiving those who repent of their sin and are willing to amend, and by excluding from the congregation those who are plainly impenitent that they may repent. I believe that when this is done, it is as valid and certain in heaven also, as if Christ, our dear Lord, dealt with us himself.

*Where is this written?*

Jesus says in Matthew, chapter 18, "Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

## **Confession**

*First: What is confession?*

Confession has two parts. The one is that we confess our sins; the other, that we receive absolution or forgiveness from the pastor as from God himself, not doubting but firmly believing that our sins are thus forgiven before God in heaven.

*Second: What sins should we confess?*

Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even those we are not aware of, as we do in the Lord's Prayer.

But before the pastor we should confess only those sins which we know and feel in our hearts.

*Third: How can we recognize these sins?*

Consider your place in life according to the Ten Commandments. Are you a father, mother, son, daughter, employer, or employee? Have you been disobedient, unfaithful, or lazy? Have you hurt anyone by word or deed? Have you been dishonest, careless, wasteful, or done other wrong?

*Fourth: How will the pastor assure a penitent sinner of forgiveness?*

He will say, "By the authority of Christ, I forgive you your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."



## VI. THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

### **The Institution of the Lord's Supper**

*First: What is the Sacrament of Holy Communion?*

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

*Where is this written?*

The holy evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and the apostle Paul tell us: 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 his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

### **The Blessings of the Lord's Supper**

*Second: What blessing do we receive through this eating and drinking?*

That is shown us by these words: "Given" and "poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins."

Through these words we receive forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation in this sacrament.

For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.

### **The Power of the Lord's Supper**

*Third: How can eating and drinking do such great things?*

It is certainly not the eating and drinking that does such things, but the words "Given" and "poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins."

These words are the main thing in this sacrament, along with the eating and drinking. And whoever believes these words has what they plainly say, the forgiveness of sins.

### **The Reception of the Lord's Supper**

*Fourth: Who, then, is properly prepared to receive this sacrament?*

Fasting and other outward preparations may serve a good purpose, but he is properly prepared who believes these words: "Given" and "poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins."

But whoever does not believe these words or doubts them is not prepared, because the words "for you" require nothing but hearts that believe.

