

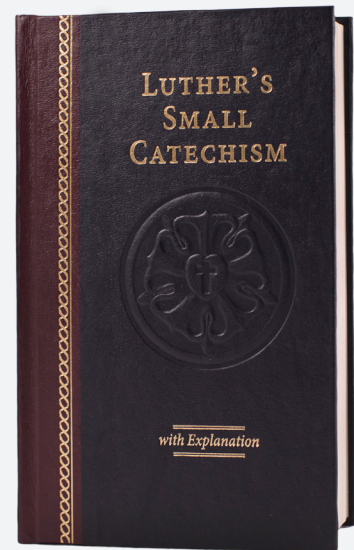
Devotional

READING PLAN

Use with Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation, 2017 Edition

Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation is an excellent resource for individual, household, and congregational devotions. The revised 2017 Explanation adds a variety of intentional aids to help you learn and confirm the timeless truths of God's Word for life.

Below is a list of the 38 different key elements of the Small Catechism and the aids in the 2017 Explanation that help with devotions. If you do five a week you should be able to read them all in two months. You can pick and choose the different features as you'd like, but below are some suggestions on how to use these devotional aids in a variety of ways. Many of the devotional plans require use of a Bible (we recommend and provide pages for The Lutheran Study Bible, or TLSB) as well as a Hymnal (Lutheran Service Book, or LSB).



Here are a variety of ways to customize this reading plan.

- **Basic devotion.** Read the Small Catechism reading for the day. Then consider the Reflection and how the Small Catechism reading applies to your daily life. In your prayers, include the prayer at the end of the section that's specifically written for that element of the Small Catechism.
- **Simple devotion with young children.** Read the Small Catechism reading for the day, then read the Central Thought and Bible narrative. Use this as an opportunity to talk about the narrative in the Bible together, then talk about ways to connect the reading and the Bible narrative to the Reflection. Then, in your family prayers, include the prayer at the end of the section that's specifically written for that element of the Small Catechism. In addition, if your children can read, consider also singing the hymn stanzas for the devotion together.
- **Devotion on your own or with slightly older children.** Consider reading the Small Catechism reading for the day, then read the Central Thought and Bible narrative. Use this as an opportunity to talk about the narrative in the Bible together, then talk about ways to connect the reading and the Bible narrative to the Reflection. In addition, read through the questions and answers in A Closer Reading together in order to better understand the words of the Small Catechism in greater detail, as well as what they mean for us. Finish by including the given prayer in your devotions, as well as singing the hymn stanzas together and/or reading the given Psalm.
- **Devotion on your own or with middle or high school youth.** Consider reading the Small Catechism reading for the day, then read the Central Thought and Bible narrative. Use this as an opportunity to talk about the narrative in the Bible together, then talk about ways to connect the reading and the Bible narrative to the Reflection. You can then read through the A Closer Reading section and/or the Connections and Applications questions together. In particular, the Connections and Applications section highlights critical issues and questions that are most likely relevant in the lives of youth and adults, and may serve as a great springboard for deeper discussion into God's Word. Finish by including the given prayer in your devotions, as well as singing the hymn stanzas together and/or reading the given Psalm.
- **Use the devotion in a more structured way either on your own or in a group.** Consider plugging the features of the Small Catechism and Explanation into a devotional setting from the LSB. The Order of Daily Prayers found on LSB pages 294-298 work well for this. Use the provided Psalm, Hymn stanza(s), Bible narrative reading, and Small Catechism reading for the day where appropriate. If you want to dig deeper into the Small Catechism add the questions and answers from A Closer Reading and/or Connections and Application.





- **READING #1:**
The First Commandment and its meaning, pg. 58–66
Central Thought: pg. 58
Luke 12:13–34 (TLSB pg. 1740)
Reflection Question: In what ways does God generously provide me with all that I need for my daily life and my eternal salvation?
Closer Reading: pg. 58–62
Connections and Applications: pg. 62–66
Close on page 66: Psalm 1, Hymn (LSB 581, stanzas 1–2), Prayer

- **READING #2:**
The Second Commandment and its meaning, pg. 67–73
Central Thought: pg. 67
Luke 1:39–56 pg. (TLSB pg.1706)
Reflection Question: How can I show that God is my Creator and Redeemer by the way I speak and in my daily conversations with others?
Closer Reading: pg. 67
Connections and Applications: pg. 71
Close on page 73: Psalm 135, Hymn (LSB 581, stanza 3), Prayer

- **READING #3:**
The Third Commandment and its meaning, pg. 74–80
Central Thought: pg. 74
Luke 10:38–42 (TLSB pg.1735)
Reflection Question: How does God's Word open our eyes to see all of His good works?
Closer Reading: pg. 74
Connections and Applications: pg. 77
Close on page 80: Psalm 119: 89–96, Hymn (LSB 581, stanza 4), Prayer

- **READING #4:**
The Fourth Commandment and its meaning, pg. 81–84
Central Thought: pg. 81
John 19:25–27 (TLSB pg. 1822)
Reflection Question: How can I show that I honor and cherish my parents as gifts of God and as His representatives on earth?
Closer Reading: pg. 81
Connections and Applications: pg. 83
Close on page 84: Psalm 127, Hymn (LSB 581, stanza 5), Prayer

- **READING #5:**
The Fifth Commandment and its meaning, pg. 85–92
Central Thought: pg. 85
Luke 10:25–37 (TLSB pg.1735)
Reflection Question: What opportunities does God give me to help my neighbor?
Closer Reading: pg. 85
Connections and Applications: pg. 88
Close on page 92 : Psalm 10, Hymn (LSB 581, stanza 6), Prayer

- **READING #6:**
The Sixth Commandment and its meaning, pg. 93–104
Central Thought: pg. 93
Genesis 2:15–24 (TLSB pg. 16)
Reflection Question: How can I talk about marriage and sex in ways that reflect God's good purposes for it?
Closer Reading: pg. 93
Connections and Applications: pg. 98
Close on page 104: Psalm 119:9–16, Hymn (LSB 581, stanza 7), Prayer

- **READING #7:**
The Seventh Commandment and its meaning, pg. 105–109
Central Thought: pg. 105
Luke 19:1–10 (TLSB pg. 1755)
Reflection Question: What are some ways that I can help to protect and care for the earthly goods of my neighbor?
Closer Reading: pg. 105
Connections and Applications: pg. 107
Close on page 109: Psalm 112, Hymn (LSB 581, stanza 8), Prayer

- **READING #8:**
The Eighth Commandment and its meaning, pg. 110–114
Central Thought: pg. 110
Mark 14:3–9 (TLSB pg.)
Reflection Question: Who in my life or community needs me to speak well of them?
Closer Reading: pg. 110
Connections and Applications: pg. 112
Close on page 114: Psalm 35, Hymn (LSB 581, stanza 9), Prayer

- **READING #9:**
The Ninth and Tenth Commandment and their meaning, pg. 115–119
Central Thought: pg. 115
1 Kings 21:1–16 (TLSB pg.574)
Reflection: Name ten things for which you are grateful. Then offer a prayer of thanks to God.
Closer Reading: pg. 116
Connections and Applications: pg. 117
Close on page 119: Psalm 37, Hymn (LSB 581, stanza 10), Prayer

- **READING #10:**
The Close of the Commandments, pg. 120–127
Central Thought: pg. 120
Deuteronomy 30:1–10 (TLSB pg. 325)
Reflection Question: How do God's threats and promises shape the way I view Him and His actions?
Closer Reading: pg. 120
Connections and Applications: pg. 122
Close on page 127: Psalm 14, Hymn (LSB 581, stanzas 11–12), Prayer



- **READING #11:**
The First Article (Part 1), pg. 133–145
Central Thought: pg. 133
Genesis 2:7–25 (TLSB pg. 16)
Reflection Question: How does seeing myself as God's creature shape my relationship to Him and to His world?
Closer Reading: pg. 134
Connections and Applications: pg. 138
Close on page 145: Psalm 11, Hymn (LSB 811), Prayer

- **READING #12:**
The First Article (Part 2), pg. 146–155
Central Thought: pg. 146
Psalms 104:10–30 (TLSB pg.947)
Reflection Question: Who or what are the "hands, channels, and means" (LC I 26) through which God provides for my daily needs?
Closer Reading: pg. 147
Connections and Applications: pg. 150
Close on page 155: Psalm 104, Hymn (LSB 876), Prayer



- **READING #13:**
The First Article (Part 3), pg. 156–163
Central Thought: pg. 156
Matthew 14:13–21 (TLSB pg. 1612)
Reflection Question: What are some examples of God’s generosity in my life?
Closer Reading: pg. 157
Connections and Applications: pg. 160
Close on page 163: Psalm 107, Hymn (LSB 895), Prayer
- **READING #14:**
The Second Article (Part 1), pg. 164–175
Central Thought: pg. 164
John 20:24–29 (TLSB pg. 1825)
Reflection Question: How can I acknowledge in my words and actions that Jesus is my Lord?
Closer Reading: pg. 165
Connections and Applications: pg. 168
Close on page 175: Psalm 2, Hymn (LSB 954, stanza 2), Prayer
- **READING #15:**
The Second Article (Part 2), pg. 176–187
Central Thought: pg. 176
Luke 23:32–56 (TLSB pg. 1769)
Reflection Question: What does it say about Jesus that He willingly gave His life for me? What does it say about me?
Closer Reading: pg. 177
Connections and Applications: pg. 183
Close on page 187: Psalm 22, Hymn (LSB 556, stanzas 1–5), Prayer
- **READING #16:**
The Second Article (Part 3), pg. 188–194
Central Thought: pg. 188
Luke 24:36–53 (TLSB pg. 1772)
Reflection Question: How does confessing Jesus as my risen Lord give my life enduring direction and purpose?
Closer Reading: pg. 189
Connections and Applications: pg. 192
Close on page 194: Psalm 118, Hymn (LSB 556, stanzas 6–10), Prayer
- **READING #17:**
The Third Article (Part 1), pg. 195–204
Central Thought: pg. 195
Acts 9:1–22 (TLSB pg. 1851)
Reflection Question: Say a brief prayer of thanks to the Holy Spirit for the gift of faith.
Closer Reading: pg. 196
Connections and Applications: pg. 200
Close on page 204: Psalm 143, Hymn (LSB 497), Prayer

- **READING #18:**
The Third Article (Part 2), pg. 205–221
Central Thought: pg. 205
Acts 2:42–47 (TLSB pg. 1836)
Reflection: I should seek out those who also confess Jesus as Lord and Savior, for they are truly my brothers and sisters in Christ.
Closer Reading: pg. 206
Connections and Applications: pg. 214
Close on page 221: Psalm 27, Hymn (LSB 655), Prayer

- **READING #19:**
The Third Article (Part 3), pg. 222–230
Central Thought: pg. 222
Acts 24:14–21 (TLSB pg. 1888)
Reflection Question: How might our hope of the resurrection affect the way we view suffering within this world?
Closer Reading: pg. 223
Connections and Applications: pg. 224
Close on page 230: Psalm 42, Hymn (LSB 548), Prayer



- **READING #20:**
The Introduction—Our Father who art in heaven. Pg. 237–241
Central Thought: pg. 237
Luke 15:11–32 (TLSB pg. 1747)
Reflection: Say a prayer in which you thank God for the invitation and encouragement to pray.
Closer Reading: pg. 237
Connections and Applications: pg. 239
Close on page 241: Psalm 16, Hymn (LSB 766, stanza 1), Prayer
- **READING #21:**
The First Petition—Hallowed be Thy name. pg. 242–242
Central Thought: pg. 242
Luke 11:9–13 (TLSB pg. 1736)
Reflection Question: In what ways can I honor my Father’s name today?
Closer Reading: pg. 242
Connections and Applications: pg. 244
Close on page 245: Psalm 8, Hymn (LSB 766, stanza 2), Prayer

- **READING #22:**
The Second Petition—Thy kingdom come. Pg. 246–251
Central Thought: pg. 246
John 18:33–40 (TLSB pg. 1820)
Reflection Question: Since we know that Christ will return to bring an end to the devil’s present work of unbelief, sin, and death, how should we live today?
Closer Reading: pg. 247
Connections and Applications: pg. 250
Close on page 251: Psalm 110, Hymn (LSB 766, stanza 3), Prayer
- **READING #23:**
The Third Petition—Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. pg. 252–257
Central Thought: pg. 252
Matthew 26:36–56 (TLSB pg. 1642)
Reflection Question: What things in my life threaten to pull me away from the Word of God?
Closer Reading: pg. 253
Connections and Applications: pg. 256
Close on page 257: Psalm 19, Hymn (LSB 766, stanza 4), Prayer
- **READING #24:**
The Fourth Petition—Give us this day our daily bread. Pg. 258–263
Central Thought: pg. 258
Exodus 16:1–21 (TLSB pg. 122)
Reflection Question: What habits and practices can help me to better recognize how God sustains my life each day?
Closer Reading: pg. 259
Connections and Applications: pg. 261
Close on page 263: Psalm 103, Hymn (LSB 766, stanza 5), Prayer
- **READING #25:**
The Fifth Petition—And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Pg. 264–268
Central Thought: pg. 264
Matthew 18:21–35 (TLSB pg. 1622)
Reflection Question: Are there people in my life with whom I am not at peace because I have not forgiven them?
Closer Reading: pg. 264
Connections and Applications: pg. 268
Close on page 268: Psalm 32, Hymn (LSB 766, stanza 6), Prayer





- **READING #26:**
The Sixth Petition—And lead us not into temptation. Pg. 269–273
Central Thought: pg. 269
Mark 4:1–20 (TLSB pg. 1662)
Reflection Question: What people or things could lure you away from Jesus?
Closer Reading: pg. 269
Connections and Applications: pg. 272
Close on page 273: Psalm 91, Hymn (LSB 766, stanza 7), Prayer
 - **READING #27:**
The Seventh Petition—But deliver us from evil. Pg. 274–278
Central Thought: pg. 274
Genesis 3:1–19 (TLSB pg. 17)
Reflection Question: What evils do I see in the world for which I need to pray, “Lord, deliver us!”?
Closer Reading: pg. 274
Connections and Applications: pg. 276
Close on page 278: Psalm 90, Hymn (LSB 766, stanza 8), Prayer
 - **READING #28:**
The Conclusion—For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen. Pg. 279–280
Close on page 280: Psalm 99, Hymn (LSB 766, stanza 9), Prayer
- † *Note: Reading 28 does not include all the features of the other elements of the Explanation. On this day, consider simply reading through the questions and answers, and reflecting on the Psalm, Hymn, and Prayer.*



- **READING #29:**
The Nature of Baptism, pg. 285–291
Central Thought: pg. 285
Matthew 3:13–17 (TLSB pg. 1582)
Reflection Question: How do people answer the question “Who am I?” How does Baptism help me answer that question?
Closer Reading: pg. 286
Connections and Applications: pg. 288
Close on page 291: Psalm 138, Hymn (LSB 590), Prayer
- **READING #30:**
The Blessings of Baptism, pg. 292–296
Central Thought: pg. 292
Acts 2:1–14, 29–41 (TLSB pg. 1832)
Reflection Question: What does the day of Pentecost, and Peter’s sermon in particular, tell us about Jesus and about the blessings of Baptism?
Closer Reading: pg. 292

Connections and Applications: pg. 294
Close on page 296: Psalm 41, Hymn (LSB 601), Prayer

- **READING #31:**
The Power of Baptism, pg. 297–301
Central Thought: pg. 297
John 3:1–15 (TLSB pg. 1782)
Reflection: I have so many faults and problems that I might lose hope. But “God does not lie” and “God’s Word cannot err” (LC IV 57). He has washed me clean. I can trust Him. He will help me in every trouble.
Closer Reading: pg. 298
Connections and Applications: pg. 299
Close on page 301: Psalm 43, Hymn (LSB 406), Prayer
- **READING #32:**
What Baptism Indicates, pg. 302–305
Central Thought: pg. 302
Romans 6:1–14 (TLSB pg. 1918)
Reflection Question: Baptism sets the rhythm for our daily lives as Christians. How do we drown our sins and evil desires? What kind of new person (“new man”) is God making out of me?
Closer Reading: pg. 302
Connections and Applications: pg. 304
Close on page 305: Psalm 18, Hymn (LSB 596), Prayer



- **READING #33:**
Confession, pg. 306–313
Central Thought: pg. 307
2 Samuel 11:1–12:15 (TLSB pg. 501)
Reflection Question: How does life change when I recognize that every day is a day for repentance? Closer Reading: pg. 307
Connections and Applications: pg. 309
Close on page 313: Psalm 51, Hymn (LSB 608), Prayer
- **READING #34:**
The Office of the Keys, pg. 314–321
Central Thought: pg. 314
John 20:19–23 (TLSB pg. 1825)
Reflection Question: What comfort does forgiveness through a pastor give me when I am tempted to doubt my identity as God’s child?
Closer Reading: pg. 315
Connections and Applications: pg. 317
Close on page 321: Psalm 40, Hymn (LSB 614), Prayer

- **READING #35:**
The Nature of the Sacrament of the Altar, pg. 322–330
Central Thought: pg. 323
Matthew 26:17–30 (TLSB pg. 1641)
Reflection: Jesus wants to be with me and within me (John 17:26). In the Sacrament of the Altar, He gives Himself to me and pledges never to leave me or forsake me.
Closer Reading: pg. 323
Connections and Applications: pg. 327
Close on page 330: Psalm 111, Hymn (LSB 617), Prayer
- **READING #36:**
The Benefit of the Sacrament of the Altar, pg. 331–334
Central Thought: pg. 331
Exodus 12:1–14 (TLSB pg. 113)
Reflection: This forgiveness sets me free from my sinful past, in which death and the tyranny of Satan were my only future. Christ’s body and blood give me a new life and a new future every day.
Closer Reading: pg. 331
Connections and Applications: pg. 333
Close on page 334: Psalm 50, Hymn (LSB 623), Prayer
- **READING #37:**
The Power of the Sacrament of the Altar, pg. 335–337
Central Thought: pg. 335
Mark 4:35–41 (TLSB pg. 1664)
Reflection: Because these words do what they say, there should be no doubt in my mind that the bread and wine are Jesus’ body and blood for my forgiveness.
Closer Reading: pg. 335
Connections and Applications: pg. 336
Close on page 337: Psalm 23, Hymn (LSB 395, stanza 3), Prayer
- **READING #38:**
How to Receive This Sacrament Worthily, pg. 338–345
Central Thought: pg. 338
Matthew 22:1–14 (TLSB pg. 1630)
Reflection Question: How can I prepare for the Lord’s Supper so that I receive it as a blessing?
Closer Reading: pg. 339
Connections and Applications: pg. 340
Close on page 345: Psalm 116, Hymn (LSB 618), Prayer

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