



HOPEWELL NEWS GAZETTE

St. John Lutheran Church (Hopewell Township)

August
2026

Why is Pastor writing an article about what the Confirmation students' study?

After all, confirmation was a long time ago. You are done with Catechism! And it's for kids! Right? Or maybe your confirmation was a time of torture and boredom and something you would not like to revisit. If it was, I hope I wasn't the one teaching! It has never been my goal or job to make people hate, or suffer in church!

On the other hand, some of us, to be sure, really and truly memorized the Small Catechism in our confirmations and still remember. More of us only have vague recollections or memorized for the test because we had to and then forgot as soon as we walked away. And a good number of us here at St. John and Zion have come from other faith traditions that do not emphasize confirmation and knowing a Catechism as rigorously as Lutherans most usually do.

So why the article? Is the Catechism still important for us as we get older?

In the fall of 1528, Martin Luther and some other Reformation Leaders, most of whom were seminary academics, made a 'visitation' through the congregations of Saxony and Meissen to determine the state of the church. What was it really like "out there" in everyday congregations? After his 'visitation' tour, Luther wrote this, which can be found in the preface to the Small Catechism: "The deplorable, wretched deprivation that I recently encountered while I was a visitor has constrained and compelled me to prepare this catechism, or Christian instruction, in such a brief, plain and simple version. Dear God, what misery I beheld! The ordinary person, especially in the villages, knows *absolutely nothing* about the Christian faith, and unfortunately many pastors are completely unskilled and incompetent teachers. Yet, supposedly they all bear the name Christian, are baptized, and receive the holy sacrament, even though they do not know the Lord's Prayer, the Creed or the Ten Commandments!"

The Catechism was written for people of all ages (including the Pastors!) for instruction in and understanding of the faith.

Is the Catechism really all that important?

Another Luther quote from the preface: "Those who *do not want* to learn these things – who must be told how they deny Christ and are not Christians – should also not be admitted to the sacrament, should not be sponsors for children at baptism and should not exercise any aspect of Christian freedom".

And to those who thought that Christian freedom meant freedom from God and from Worship, Luther says, also in the preface to the Small Catechism: "You have to worry that whoever does not desire or receive the sacrament (in Worship)...despises the sacrament and is no Christian, just as anyone who does not listen to or believe the gospel is no Christian."

The Catechism is important. In it we find the Law that defines the boundaries of sin and drives to understand our need of a Savior. We also find Gospel, that speaks to us the word of peace with God through faith in Jesus Christ. Lastly, we find words of explanation as to *what it all means*.

I have been teaching Confirmation for nearly 30 years and the Catechism doesn't get boring. Every time we go through the Catechism, I learn something new or am reminded of something I have forgotten, or failed to do, or God's promise that I need to hear for faith. The Catechism is not one of those things one grows out of.

Consider grabbing a copy of the Small Catechism to read and think about an explanation a day, as part of your daily devotions. And look forward to regular newsletter articles on the Catechism!

Pastor Adam

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Acolyte for the Month



Acolyte Schedule for the month of August—

2nd	Caleb Poe
9th	Bailee Menchhofer
16th	Elias Poe
23rd	Aaron Sheets
30th	Isaac Menchhofer

August Readers

August 2nd
August 9th
August 16th
August 23rd
August 30th

Cindy Canary
Pat Siebert
Angel Forlow
Sherry Shaffer
Terry Carr



The next monthly meeting of the St. John Church Council will be held on Wednesday, August 12th, beginning at 7:00 p.m. All members of the church are always invited to attend the St. John Council meetings as guests.

Copies of the minutes of the Church Council meetings will be on the table in the back of the sanctuary (when available).



The Women of the Church will be meeting on Wednesday, August 5th at 1:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Pat Siebert will offer devotions and the Bible Study will be lead by Sherry Shaffer. The project of the month will benefit the C.A.L.L. Food Pantry. The Altar flowers for the month will be taken care of by Terry Carr. Please plan to join us!



Parkway Prayer Walk for 2026 will be held at the Parkway Local School ~ Rockford, on Saturday, August 15th at 8:30 a.m. Please come and join them in prayer for the school, students, and staff. This event is open to the community!



The Children's Moment on Sunday, August 16th will be the "Blessing of the Backpacks". Please have all school age children bring in their backpacks for a blessing on that Sunday.

Our benevolence contributions for the month of August will benefit the Kathleen Lutz Missionary Support.

"Walk Through the Bible" Event: Zion Lutheran Church ~ St. Mary's will be hosting the North West Ohio District "Walk Through the Bible" event, on Saturday, September 19th, at 10:00 a.m.; registration opens at 9:30 a.m. The North West Ohio District of the NALC will be covering the cost. This event is open to all ages and is aimed to help people overcome obstacles to knowing and living God's Word. Lunch will be included, a free will offering will be accepted.

August 2026 *CALENDAR* -- for St. John Lutheran Church (Hopewell Township)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 Worship w/Holy Communion 9:00 a.m.	3	4	5 Women of the Church Meeting 1:00 p.m.	6	7 NALC National Online Convocation	1 8
9 Worship 9:00 a.m.	10	11	12 Directory Photos 1:00 -5:50 p.m. Church Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.	13	14	15 Parkway Prayer Walk 8:30 a.m.
16 Worship w/Holy Communion & "Blessing of the Backpacks" 9:00 a.m.	17 	18	19	20	21	22
23 Worship 9:00 a.m.	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 Worship 9:00 a.m.	31					