

The Bible – The Bible is the recorded history of God’s interaction with humankind. It tells us where we came from (Genesis 1-9), why we are here(1 John 4:16), and what happens when we die (John 11:25). It begins with the story of creation, and concludes by painting pictures of the end of time. In the midst of all of this, is the story of sin and redemption –the story of how God has rescued you from sin – Jesus!

The Bible was originally written in Hebrew (Old Testament) and in Greek (New Testament) and has been passed down word for word throughout the generations. It is the inspired Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17), meaning God has worked through sinful people to accurately tell us of salvation(2 Peter 1:21). Every word of the Bible is about Jesus.

The Bible tells us two things – Law and Gospel. Law simply shows us our sin, how we are guilty and cannot save ourselves. Gospel, on the other hand, shows our savior, Jesus who was promised in the Old Testament, and then suffered and died on a cross for our sins as recorded in the New Testament. These two things seem to be opposed to each other, but they actually work in harmony to create and sustain faith, so

that we may always see Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. (Hebrews 12:2)

Through the Word of God in the Bible, the Holy Spirit constantly points us to Jesus. For in Jesus we know we have salvation, the forgiveness of our sins (Luke 1:77)

God – This world is not just some fluke of science, and neither are you. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1) out of nothing. Nothing that exists can exist apart from God.

God is Trinitarian (Matthew 28:19). That means He is three persons in one God and one God in three persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Son became a flesh and blood human being to save us from sin. (John 1:14)

Original Sin – We are born in a broken relationship with our God because of sin. Sin affects every single person, from the smallest person to the elderly. (Romans 3:23) The consequence of this sin is death. (Romans 6:23) Because we are dead in sin, we cannot save ourselves, just as a dead person cannot bring themselves back to life.



There is so much more to learn about the faith. As Martin Luther wrote in the introduction to the Large Catechism, “Can we finish learning in one hour what God Himself cannot finish teaching?” For this reason, it is a good practice to attend Bible Study, to spend time in scripture, and to regularly attend the Divine Services at your local congregation. Your local Pastor would be more than happy to help answer any questions you may have about faith, Jesus and Lutheranism. They are a great resource.

For help finding a church near you, visit www.lcms.org and click “Find a...” in the top right corner.

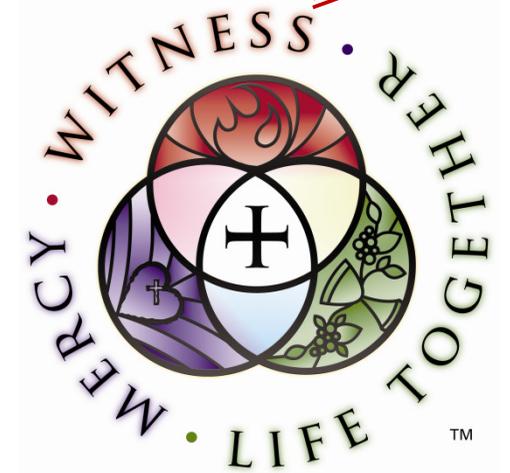
Being a Lutheran is living in the shadow of the Cross of Jesus. **GOD’S BLESSINGS!**



North Dakota LCMS – Bold Witness

Being Lutheran – “It’s all about Jesus”

Really!!



The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod is a denomination that believes and confesses that all of Scripture is true and inspired by God. Every page of scripture tells us about Jesus. He is the reason we exist, and He is the reason we have hope and promise.

All that we believe and teach centers around Jesus – His person, His work, and most importantly His gifts. Open up to find out what Jesus does for you.

Scripture tells us about Jesus in all of these ways:

Jesus – Jesus is the second person of the Trinity, the Son of God the Father. He has always existed, even from before creation. He was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered and died on the cross, was crucified, died and buried in a tomb. On the third day He rose again so that all your sin might be forgiven. In Him you have life and salvation. And now Jesus sits at God's right hand interceding for you, and pouring out his gifts upon you for your benefit! One day He will return again.



Baptism – Baptism is one of the ways that the forgiveness Jesus earned by His death and resurrection comes to us in this day. In Baptism, plain water is combined with God's Word to bring the forgiveness of Jesus to sinful people like you. (Mark 16:16 and Titus 3:5-8) In Baptism, the blood of Jesus for forgiveness covers all our sin. (Revelation 7:14) And in baptism, you die with Jesus on the cross, and are raised with him into eternal life (Romans 6:1-11). Baptism is a gift that brings Jesus to sinners like you without your help!



The Lord's Supper – The Lord's Supper is another way that Jesus comes to us. In the Lord's Supper we get the very body and blood of our Lord Jesus in with and under bread and wine for forgiveness. (Matthew 27:26-29, Luke 22:17-20, Mark 14:22-25, and 1 Corinthians 10-11) That means as we come to the altar, we receive the body that hung on the cross and the blood that poured from his side. In eating these things, we get forgiveness of sins, life and salvation as Jesus promised on the night He was betrayed.

As we come and receive these gifts from God, we also confess our unity in doctrine and practice (what we believe and do) as the body of Christ. For this reason we practice *closed* communion, asking that only those who do agree with us in faith and have publically declared so join us for the Lord's Supper. This

does not mean we believe non-Lutherans are going to hell. We wish that all could join us in receiving God's gifts following instruction in the faith.

God's Word – Behind both of these is the very Word of God – which created and sustains us day to day. It speaks forgiveness to us in preaching and the liturgy, and we study it on our own. It is God's true word.

Baptism, the Lord's Supper and the Word are the *means of grace*, or the way Jesus' forgiveness gets to us.

The Creeds – The Creeds are used to teach the basics of the faith. They were written in the early days of the church to define what the Bible teaches about God and Jesus. There are three creeds, the Apostle's, the Nicene, and the Athanasian. The Creeds are the basic defense of the faith that looks to Jesus as savior. It confesses all the things contained in this brochure.

The Liturgy – The Liturgy is the order of service we follow in weekly Church Services. It is a collection of passages from scripture set to music. Our worship is set by the liturgy, as we speak back to God what he tells us in the Bible.



Large and Small Catechisms – These were written by Martin Luther to help explain the faith clearly and simply. We believe in these books, along with the Book of Concord because they correctly explain what scripture confesses about Jesus. We still use these works to help us to learn about Jesus as Scripture teaches about Him.

Jesus is the Center - and all these things we believe flow out from Him. We carefully stand by our faith, for if the smallest thing is changed, it changes who our Savior is. It is as if our doctrine were an intricate spider's web, if one strand were cut, the entire web would collapse. Thus we believe all scripture, and the Jesus it speaks of.

