

## Introducing “Congregation at Prayer”

For individuals and families, the study of the Bible is important for growth in the Christian faith. But it sometimes seems difficult for us to develop the discipline of daily study. Devotional guides like *Portals of Prayer* and resources like those provided by Higher Things can be of great benefit for getting us started. Luther’s Morning and Evening Prayers from the Small Catechism can bracket the day and provide a foundation for growth in our prayer life.

Yet it is also good to delve deeper in our personal Bible reading, to develop a discipline that can get us through the whole Bible in a year, and to build a foundation of prayer and catechism study along with it. The Parish Education Committee of the Kansas District provides a resource encouraging the discipline of daily Bible reading along with weekly catechism study and memorization, called *Congregation at Prayer*. The left-hand page provides a devotional framework for prayer, and the right-hand page gives prayers, a hymn, catechism readings, and daily Scripture readings geared for the church year and taken from the daily lectionary printed in *Lutheran Service Book*. This way the whole household has the opportunity to work together, and all members of the congregation have the opportunity to be literally on the same page while moving through the Bible during the church year.

We recognize that because of busy schedules, family obligations, and different stages of maturity (both physical and spiritual), that prayer life is not a “one size fits all” enterprise. Therefore, households most certainly can (and should) adapt the sheets to their needs. Some options to consider include the following:

- If the parts for memorization are too lengthy or difficult, feel free to shorten them or even to change them for your needs.
- For small children, it can be quite appropriate to use a short Bible reading followed by a children’s devotional from a book like *Little Visits with God* ([https://www.cph.org/c-3045-devotions?\\_id=1675449862831&cat=2854](https://www.cph.org/c-3045-devotions?_id=1675449862831&cat=2854)) or one of the devotional periodicals (<https://www.cph.org/c-3045-devotions>)
- Since the Bible readings rotate on a regular basis, using excerpts from year to year will get you through the entire narrative over time.
- If a particular hymn seems difficult, feel free to use one that seems more “sing-able” (though learning new hymns certainly fosters maturity). (See <https://www.cph.org/c-2768-hymnals> for possible hymn resources.)
- Devotional and prayer time should be a habit and discipline to cultivate, but it need not be a burden.

We pray that many of you will make use of this resource and will find it helpful in developing your own devotional life. Please contact your local Pastor for additional resources and/or inquiries.