

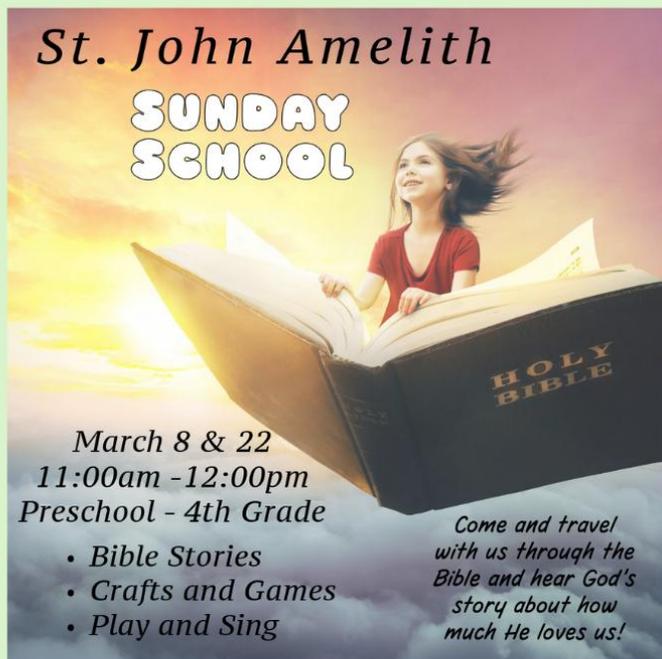
# ST. JOHN AMELITH CHURCH AND SCHOOL NEWSLETTER MARCH 2026

Church Important Dates - see calendar for details

- 3/3 - Council Meeting @6pm
- 3/5 & 6 - No School
- 3/8 - Daylight Savings Begins  
Sunday School @11am  
Pre-confirmation Class @11am
- 3/10 - P2 Conference @ VLHS for Pastor/Principal
- 3/17 - Elders Mtg @6pm  
LWML Mtg @6:30pm
- 3/20 - Spring begins
- 3/22 - LWML Prayer Pal Reveal Party @11am  
Sunday School @11am  
Youth Meeting @6pm
- 3/28 - Confirmation rehearsal/pictures @4pm
- 3/29 - Confirmation Day
- 3/30 - Board of Ed Meeting



**Saturday, April 4th**  
**10:00am**  
**Easter Egg Hunt**  
St. John Amelith Lutheran School  
1664 Amelith Rd  
Bay City, MI 48706  
Please Join Us!  
Ages : Toddler to 4th grade  
Please bring a friend and your own basket or container to collect your eggs. Rain or shine we will hunt for eggs so make sure to dress appropriately!



*St. John Amelith*  
**SUNDAY  
SCHOOL**  
March 8 & 22  
11:00am - 12:00pm  
Preschool - 4th Grade

- Bible Stories
- Crafts and Games
- Play and Sing

*Come and travel with us through the Bible and hear God's story about how much He loves us!*



**Lenten Season 2026**  
Ash Wednesday February 18, 2026  
Lenten Supper @ 5:00pm  
Divine Service @ 6:00pm

Mid-week Lent Events  
Wednesdays, February 25-March 25  
Lenten Supper @ 5:00pm  
Evening Prayer Service @ 6:00 pm  
Bible Study Following

Palm Sunday Divine Service March 29 @ 9:30am  
Confirmation Sunday

Maundy Thursday Service April 2 @ 6:00pm

Good Friday Tenebrae Service April 3 @ 7:00 pm

Easter Divine Service April 5 @ 9:30 am

Online giving through our Vanco app is available by scanning this QR code



## Pastor's Page

*And they said to one another, "Let us choose a leader and go back to Egypt." Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the people of Israel. Numbers 11:4-5*

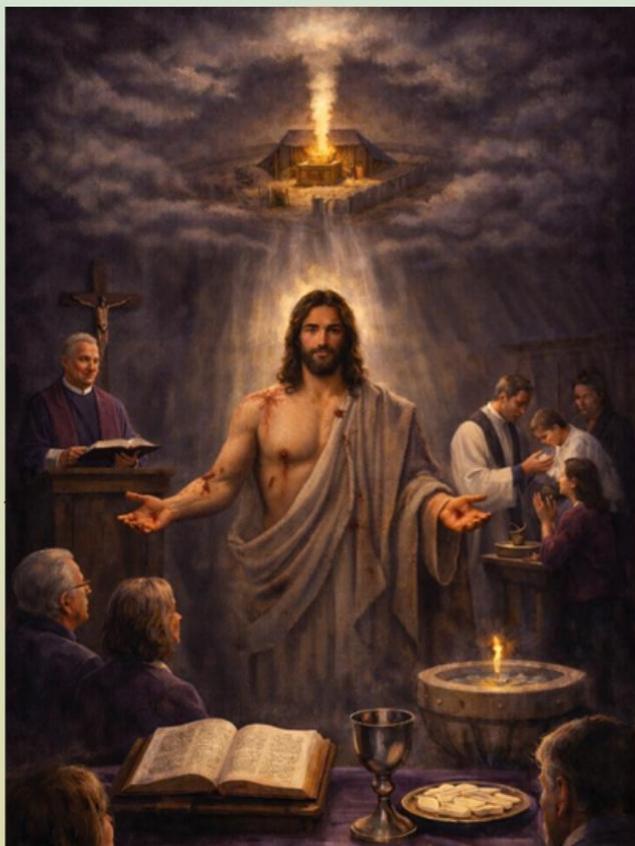
The season of Lent always takes on a strong wilderness theme. As Israel was delivered from Egypt, so the baptized have received deliverance by God's grace through Jesus Christ. St. Paul makes the boast, "So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God..." (Ephesians 2:19). What God formed of a community with Israel long ago has come to fullness in and through Jesus Christ. Joined to our deliverance won by the cross, Lent teaches and invites any back into our shared relationship to this household and church that is in the world, but not of the world. We are in the wilderness of sin, death, and Satan whether we like it or not!

Some label this time of Israel's history as "The Wilderness Wanderings" but it was not necessarily wandering. The Lord was with them in the tabernacle and His presence in the glory cloud. When He rested, they rested. When He moved, they moved. There was no pattern or prediction to God's Will. Jesus is with us by His Word and Sacraments, but Lent speaks a great witness to our life together. How did God put up with Israel? How does God put us with us? What looks like wandering turns out to be complaining, sinning, and despising the Lord.

In the Old Testament we see the glory and holiness of God untouched, but in the New Testament we see the Lord God is Jesus Christ in our flesh to be touched. He told His disciples, "Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves." (John 14:11). His miracles held similar care to the Lord God with Israel in the wilderness. Yet, the long-suffering place of God is what Jesus made visible for all to see.

When Israel wanted changes to leadership with God, His prophet, and to return to Egypt. It made Moses and Aaron fall down on their faces in repentance. Lent calls us to return from our wandering as king David sings, "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love" (Psalm 103). The suffering and death of Jesus is why God could mysteriously put up with Israel in the wilderness. This mystery is now known in the sacrificial love of Jesus before us in His service as the risen Lord over sin, death, and Satan. As God does save sinners by the Gospel, Jesus Christ forms His people to be a community, a new Israel, His very body.

The church is not a museum of former glory or simply a project of man, but where God is with us proving His long-suffering love. By Word and Sacraments Jesus Christ is present in glory hidden by His cross to forgive, restore, and reform us. When you are in the wilderness there is no place to settle down. St. John says, "And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever" (1 John 2:17). If there is wandering, it belongs to us since the Catechism teaches, "God is calling, gathering, enlightening, sanctifying, and keeping the whole Church on earth in Jesus Christ." Lent teaches us the only option is to be around the Lord. His cross is at the center even shaping our lives together.



Thousand, thousand, thanks shall be, Dearest Jesus unto you thee! Pastor

## Talking to Your Kids About Money...

February 20, 2026



I was playing with my boys when one of their toys broke. My oldest said, “That’s okay—

just order another one on Amazon,” and he handed me my phone! That’s when I realized I needed to explain things like needs versus wants, stewardship, and ... well, money in general.

### What the Bible Says About Money

Does God’s Word have anything to say about money? Actually, yes, quite a bit. And it’s more relevant today than ever. In a world where money is everywhere yet also invisible and intangible, how do we teach our kids about using money in a God-pleasing way?

Here are four helpful categories you can use to discuss what the Bible says about money: greed, gratitude, generosity, and discernment.

#### Greed

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. (1 Timothy 6:10)

Greed, envy, and covetousness are mentioned often in the Scriptures. It’s important to note that it is the love of money, not money itself, that is the problem. Money has no inherent moral standing. We can use money to do great good, or we can use it to do great evil. So the Bible warns us against idolizing money and making it more important than God. Greed isn’t so much about how much money or how much stuff you have. It’s about your heart. It’s about what you trust most: God or money.

We can start talking about greed with our kids early on. Consider these conversation starters:

- “Do we need that item, or do we just want it? Can we wait until your birthday instead?”
- “Remember that we find our ultimate joy in Jesus, not in our stuff.”

- “Just because your friend has something doesn’t mean you need it too. We trust God to give us everything we need.”

#### Gratitude

Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for [God] has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” (Hebrews 13:5)

This is the heart of gratitude and something we can teach our kids early on. We have more than enough in Jesus, who died on the cross to give us forgiveness and eternal life. He provides for us, forgives us when we are greedy, and grows contentment in our heart.

We can teach our kids about godly gratitude by making thankfulness a part of our daily rhythm:

- Thank God before meals.
- Go around your home and list things you are thankful for.
- Say things like, “We thank God for Mommy’s and Daddy’s jobs that provide money for our family. We thank God for a reliable vehicle and a safe home. God gives us everything we need.”
- When your child gets a gift, write thank-you cards, and help them take care of the things they have as good stewards.

#### Generosity

God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Corinthians 9:7)

My boys love putting the offering in the plate on Sunday mornings. But I’ve realized that I need to explain what they are doing and why. Here are a few talking points you can use to talk about generosity:

- “Our offering pays for pastors to preach God’s Word to us. It pays for the church building, for Bibles, and for missionaries to tell other people about Jesus too!”
- “We’re putting these cans in the blessing box to help feed people who are hungry.”
- “God wants us to share our blessings with others. Let’s donate a few toys to other kids who might enjoy them.”

#### Discernment

Honor the LORD with your wealth. (Proverbs 3:9)

God's Word talks often about the value of hard work, honoring God with our possessions, and being good stewards of what we have. Discernment is about prayerfully deciding how we want our money to be used for our families and the church in the future. It's about making wise decisions with the things God has given to us.

Here are two ideas that you can adapt based on your kids' ages:

- Give your kids a budget to pay for a birthday present for their sibling. Help them discern what would be a good purchase.
- Start talking about saving their money. Discuss the categories of spend, save, and tithe when they get money for a birthday or allowance.

As we adults repent of our greed, grow in gratitude, learn to be generous, and discern how to be good stewards of God's gifts to us, we can teach our kids along the way. We can turn to God's Word as the source of wisdom for all parts of our lives, including for our money.

Scripture: ESV®.

*Emily Hatesohl is a wife, mom, coffee drinker, daily walk taker, Nebraska native, new Kansan, and avid board game player. She and her husband met as percussionists in the band at Concordia University, Nebraska. After college, Emily worked as a copyeditor at Concordia Publishing House and received a master's degree in English from the University of Missouri—St. Louis. Her job for the foreseeable future includes chasing her two young sons around and writing or editing if they happen to nap at the same time. Source: [blog.cph.org/serve/talking-to-your-kids-about-money-march-2026-everyday-faith-calendar](http://blog.cph.org/serve/talking-to-your-kids-about-money-march-2026-everyday-faith-calendar)*



# The Catechism in the Home

*Using Martin Luther's Small Catechism  
as a centerpiece of faith formation*

## WHAT LUTHER IMAGINED

As he was writing the Small Catechism Martin Luther did not imagine that, when people in the future considered this little book, they would think first and foremost of an old pastor teaching a bunch of fidgety teenagers in a classroom in a church basement. He envisioned instead that it would be used first and foremost in the home, with one generation passing along the treasure of the faith to another. We know this because he wrote before each part, “As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household.”

But in one sense, it doesn't matter what Luther imagined. It matters what you imagine. How do you view this little book of questions and answers about our Christian faith? Is it just a resource that every Lutheran has to master once during their life to prove their confession of faith true? Or can you envision it being the centerpiece of how you raise your children in the faith — how you nourish your family spiritually in your home day by day? Let me try to make that latter option much more likely than perhaps it seems right now.

## FULFILL YOUR CALLING AS A PARENT

Why should you use the catechism in your home? Well, first, you should use it because it helps you do what God gave you to do when He made you a parent. The Scriptures always speak of passing along the faith as an activity which centers in the life of the family. Deuteronomy 6:7 says, “You shall teach them [God's commands] diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.”

Fathers in particular are told to raise up their children “in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (EPH. 6:4).

We see beautiful biblical examples of mothers doing this work as well (see 2 TIM. 1:5). Luther, in a series of sermons he wrote as a companion to the catechism, told parents to consider this the chief duty of their calling as parents. Not even feeding or educating their children was to take priority over it. If parents did not do this, he said, they should not consider themselves to be faithful Christians. In Luther's eyes, passing along the faith to the children entrusted to them by their Heavenly Father should be the prime concern of all Christian parents.

## KEEP IT SIMPLE, SAINT OF GOD

The catechism offers a simple way to teach the faith. There are many simple things you can do in the home that are spiritually beneficial, but out of all of them, using the catechism is perhaps the simplest of all. Using this little book need not require a large amount of preparation. Nor do you need any particular skill to teach it. It is, after all, just a little book of questions and answers.

Simply ask the question given and read together the answer with the one you wish to teach. Do it again. You are now teaching the faith. You are doing the very thing you were not sure you could accomplish. You are doing the thing perhaps no one ever modeled for you or taught you to do. The catechism instructs you how to teach even as you instruct those in your home.

Passing through the various parts of the catechism can also help give shape to a more robust devotional life in the home. The topics covered each day can lead to discussion and memorization of verses that establish these teachings, hymns

that sing of them and prayers that accompany them. Letting the catechism determine the topic for the day makes being regular at this work that much easier.

## PERFECT FOR ALL AGES AND ABILITIES

Consider that this little book is perfect for multigenerational settings like the home. There are portions so simple that even the youngest speakers and readers can master them. There are parts so deep that the most mature and experienced Christian will still be captivated by meditating upon them. There is a rhythm to it all that binds every one of every age and ability together.

## SHAPE HOW YOUR HOUSEHOLD VIEWS THE WORLD

This little book is not only a collection of individual teachings but a system of truths that shape the mind. As the catechism is learned piece by piece, it molds and solidifies how one views the world. Each question not only stands alone but rests upon the others to form a steady base from which godly discernment can occur. Topics not specifically covered in the questions and answers given can be pondered rightly by those who know well the framework of the catechism.

This is deeply needed by all of us who interact to various degrees with the unbelieving world. We are constantly asked, demanded even, to change our opinions on various issues. More than this, we are encouraged and sometimes manipulated into changing the very assumptions that undergird our whole way of thinking. The catechism teaches us the boundaries of truth so that we will not fall into error even accidentally.

## EVERYTHING NEEDFUL

The catechism is enough for salvation and life. Obviously, it is a quick summary of all that the Bible teaches and not a replacement for the Scriptures. It does not cover the breadth

and width and depth of all that is given in the Word of God. And yet, amazingly, given its brief nature, it does cover everything necessary for life and salvation.

It teaches right from wrong and righteousness from unrighteousness through the Commandments. Convicted of our sin, it shows us our saving God — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — who did everything necessary to rid us of our sin and who makes us holy in his Son. It teaches us what we truly need even as it teaches us to ask God for those things in prayer.

It teaches us about Holy Baptism, through which God connects us to Jesus' saving death and resurrection. It drives us to the forgiveness we receive in Holy Absolution. It beckons us to the altar to eat the Holy Supper, by which the true presence of Christ's body and blood gives and sustains in us eternal life.

There are even small sections that teach us how to live in our various callings in life, how to pray and how to examine ourselves to prepare for coming to Christ's altar. There is more to learn, to be sure, that the catechism does not broach, but nothing necessary for salvation and life in Christ is left out of this little book.

## IT POINTS TO JESUS

Lastly, imagine using the catechism in your home because it always points those who use it to Jesus. No matter where you find yourself reading and reciting from, the catechism leads you to the cross of Jesus to find your ultimate comfort and hope. And in your home, what else do you need?

## IMAGINATION INTO REALITY

Can you imagine it? Good. The next step is to bring that thought into reality. Open up the catechism. Grab a resource that helps you go through it in a regular way. Imagine it — and then do it.

*Article written by Pastor Philip Hoppe, pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church in Colby, Kansas.*

**Go to:** [bookofconcord.cph.org](http://bookofconcord.cph.org)

**The Book of Concord**  
*Available Online*

Explore the FREE Resource



Table Talk will meet again in April.

The sign-up sheet for the next book is in the Narthex. Please sign up by March 15 if you would like to purchase through the office.

The st. John Amelith Lutheran Church and school Parent-Teacher League is conducting a bottle and can drive to help offset costs for the school. There are two barrels outside the school entrance to deposit cans. If you'd prefer to have someone pick them up from your home, please contact the school office.



**175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration** God has truly blessed this Congregation and it is time to celebrate 175 years of being *Rooted in God's word, Growing in Christ's love, Branching out to serve and bearing fruits of faith.* St. John Amelith was established in June of 1852. With no particular day being recorded; Sunday, June 27, 2027 will be our special day to celebrate.

Tom Rhode has asked Pastor Starke to write the congregation a hymn to commemorate the day and if it works out, his grandson to write the melody. Thank you, Tom! So, in order to write a hymn Pastor Starke needs a theme. On behalf of the congregation, I started looking and with Pastor Gauthier's guidance a theme/image has been chosen based on bible verse Hebrews 6:19-20.



*"We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." Hebrews 6:19-20*

We need volunteers to start planning this event and I am asking for your help. We have had some ideas like a cookbook, parade, and even a beard growing competition but we need a group to make it happen. Pete Hauffe and Ron Campbell have agreed to start writing letters and getting some official letters from head of states started and I will look into inviting district. All discussion and involvement is welcome! Once there is more interest on your part, we can set the first meeting and get planning. Thank you, Vinny Revord.

# MARCH

## School Important Dates

3/5 & 6 No School

3/8 - Daylight Savings Begins

3/10 - Bookmobile @10:30am

3/19 - United Financial School Visit @8am

3/29 - Students Sing @ church

Greetings!

As we continue through the season of Lent, we learn. We learn that God gave his only Son for us (John 3:16) and that we can endure **because** of Jesus. So as we endure the end of winter and embrace spring, it reminds us of God's promises. Promises that Spring will come, the ground will thaw, our kiddos will get muddy, the plants will grow and that God is so good!

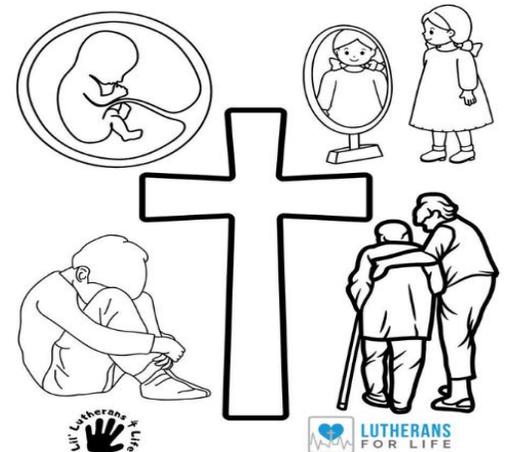
Sunday, March 29 we ask that all the children of Amelith come together for Palm Sunday to sing. You will find the details in a message in fastdirect. The children also walk into church with Pastor waving their palms. It is a tradition here at Amelith and such a sight to see!

Blessings from Mrs. Molly!

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" John 3:16

**OUR CHAPEL MISSION IS TO SUPPORT LUTHERAN FOR LIFE**

*"Fearfully and Wonderfully Made"*



# March Prayer Calendar

Every day, let us include the person/position/event mentioned in our prayers. You can pray for them, the job they do, those who receive or in whatever way you are led.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> March Altar Guild Servers	<b>2</b> March Anniversaries	<b>3</b> March Birthdays	<b>4</b> Teachers	<b>5</b> Students	<b>6</b> School	<b>7</b> SJA Members
<b>8</b> Pre-Confirmation Class	<b>9</b> Stewardship Committee	<b>10</b> Finance Team	<b>11</b> Bible Study	<b>12</b> Organists	<b>13</b> Church Staff	<b>14</b> Lawn Mowing
<b>15</b> Sunday School Teachers	<b>16</b> LWML	<b>17</b> Elders	<b>18</b> Lenten Servers	<b>19</b> Treasurer	<b>20</b> Cemetery	<b>21</b> Fund Development
<b>22</b> Youth Group	<b>23</b> Tech/IT Team	<b>24</b> Outreach Committee	<b>25</b> Pastor	<b>26</b> Church Mice Janitors	<b>27</b> Council	<b>28</b> Trustee Members
<b>29</b> Confirmands	<b>30</b> Board of Ed	<b>31</b> Endowment				