



# ASCENSIONNEWS

May 2026

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## **Catechism Study: The Lord's Prayer** by Rev. Mark Bestul

As recorded in Luke 11, the disciples ask Jesus to teach them how to pray, and he does not respond with comments about posture or attitude or sentiment, but with specific words that serve as a foundation on which all Christian prayer is built. When Luther taught Master Peter the Barber to pray, his teaching can be summarized as beginning with the Lord's Prayer, meditating upon one petition of it, and allowing that petition to serve as the basis for any further exposition of prayer from the heart. As prayer is so central to daily life, this understanding of the Lord's Prayer as 'foundational' for prayer spills over to the Christian's entire life. Consider the layout of the Catechism: If the Ten Commandments teach the Law and the Creed teaches the Gospel, then the Lord's Prayer teaches daily Christian life in that Law and Gospel. So, let us follow Luther's lead and meditate upon the Lord's Prayer, as it is taught in the Catechism (both Large and Small):

### **The Introduction: "Our Father who art in heaven"**

- In his introductory comments in the Large Catechism, Luther says, "God does not consider prayer because of the person, but because of His Word and obedience to it" (para. 16). A few paragraphs later, he continues, "We should be more encouraged and moved to pray because God has also added a promise..." (19). How does this concept – that prayer is not based on our worth, but on God's; that "He is our true Father and that we are His true children" (Small Catechism, Introduction)—both humble the proud and bolster the doubting?

### **The First Petition: "Hallowed be Thy name."**

- "it may be... among us also" – This phrase (or similar ones) appears in Luther's explanation of each of the first three petitions. How does this remind us that being baptized into the Triune name does not mean Christians are 'masters of the things of God,' but are those who constantly need spiritual care and guidance in daily life?
- Luther says that the plainest way it can be said that God's name is kept holy among us is "When both our doctrine and life are godly and Christian" (Large Catechism, para. 39). How does this help us understand that "doctrine" is not merely found in books, but also 'lived' in daily living?

### **The Second Petition: "Thy kingdom come."**

- Do we tend to think that praying "Thy Kingdom Come" is primarily a "future tense" request for the Second Coming? How does Luther's explanation teach us to treasure the present-tense work of the Holy Spirit through the Word and Sacraments, so that we cherish His Word in our daily life and the Divine Service as the pinnacle of our week?

### **The Third Petition: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."**

- If the first petition is about doctrine, and the second is about the Means of Grace, the third petition is described by Luther as a prayer that God defend us from "everything that seeks to oppose and prevent the fulfillment of the first two petitions" (para. 61).

How does this understanding teach the Christian to understand that the baptismal life is not always going to be easy, but that “If we would be Christians, therefore, we must surely expect and count on having the devil with all his angels and the world as our enemies” (para. 65)?

**The Fourth Petition: “Give us this day our daily bread.”**

- “...but we pray in this petition that God would lead us to realize this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.” Do we “realize” that our daily bread comes from God? Consider passages such as Matthew 6:25-34 and James 1:17. And, even when we do begin to “realize” this, do we receive it with proper “thanksgiving”? Consider the crowds in John 6, who only followed Jesus because they “ate [their] fill of the loaves” (6:26). How does Jesus, in the next verse, instruct the crowds to receive daily bread with thanksgiving?

**The Fifth Petition: “And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.”**

- We can get confused by the second phrase of this petition, “as we forgive...”, and think that God’s forgiveness is in response to a good deed of forgiveness. Consider the parable of the unforgiving servant (Matthew 18). How does Luther show a right understanding of that when he concludes, “So we too will sincerely forgive and gladly do good to those who sin against us”?

**The Sixth Petition: “And lead us not into temptation.”**

- In this petition’s meaning, we read of that well-known trio of enemies, “the devil, the world, and our sinful nature.” In the Small Catechism, Luther admits that these should be an expected part of daily life: “Although we are attacked by these things...” and that our only source of certain strength in such daily trials is prayer and depending upon God’s Word. Read Ephesians 6:10-18, and consider Luther’s warning: “If you try to help yourself by your own thoughts and counsel, you will only make the matter worse and give the devil more space. For he has a serpent’s head. If it finds an opening into which it can slip, the whole body will follow” (LC, para. 111).

**The Seventh Petition: “But deliver us from evil.”**

- “We pray in this petition, in summary, that our Father in heaven would rescue us from every evil of body and soul, possessions and reputation.” How do Luther’s words imply a “well-rounded” picture of things spiritual and things temporal, of “doctrine and life”? Additionally, how does the second half of the explanation teach us not to judge God’s love of us by how things are going now, but rather by what promises God has given and sealed for us in the death of Christ?

**The Conclusion: “[For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.] Amen.”**

- As godly as the doxological conclusion is, even more important is that little word, *Amen*. How does Luther’s commentary on this little word give you comfort that prayer is a most comforting tool for daily Christian life in Law and Gospel?

God grant you much joy in ever learning how to meditate upon and pray the divine words of the prayer by which our entire Christian life is daily guided!



### **Ascension Day of Prayer, Thursday, May 14, 2026**

We say the Lord's Prayer in every service. If you went through confirmation, you read the words in Luther's Small Catechism, breaking the prayer into parts with "what does this mean" explanations. The prayer is SO familiar, it's easy to mindlessly repeat the words without much thought, and that's something we want to guard against.

The act of prayer, the act of talking intimately with the creator of the universe is an amazing gift. Knowing that He hears us through His Son, Jesus Christ and because of Christ's death and resurrection, is humbling and awe-inspiring. On the day we mark the Lord's being lifted into heaven to sit at the Father's right hand, it's fitting that we take the words He taught us and approach God with boldness, joy, and reverence.

This year, to mark our **Ascension Day of Prayer on Thursday, May 14**, we're asking you to pray the Lord's Prayer throughout the day. STOP and really consider each petition as you pray. Pastor Dunn preached on this powerful prayer last summer and we'll follow the guidelines he provided in his sermon. You'll receive these guidelines at the May 10 worship service.

Practice now – pray the Lord's Prayer in the morning when you first wake up and pray it again before you close your eyes to sleep. Get very well acquainted with the words we've been given. May the Lord bless us as we pray.



**Upcoming Voters Meeting** May 17<sup>th</sup> following Worship Service. Reports of church activity plus annual elections for half of the elected boards. A potluck meal will follow the meeting.

**The Lutheran Urban Mission Agency Auxiliary** will meet on Wednesday, May 20 at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, 711 Benton Boulevard, Kansas City, MO. Registration begins at 9:00 a.m. with the opening devotion at 9:30 a.m. The program speaker will be Doris Cannon, Lead Victim Advocate for Jackson County, MO. The Mission of the Month collection is personal hygiene items, underwear (all sizes) and monetary donations. Lunch will be served. Please RSVP by May 17 to Pat Enomoto, 816-810-0647, [patenomoto@sbcglobal.net](mailto:patenomoto@sbcglobal.net). All ladies of the congregation are invited to attend and all donations for the Mission of the Month collection are appreciated. Thank you!



Sunday Worship Schedule:  
 Bible Study 8:15am,  
 Sunday School 8:30am  
 Worship Service 9:30am

Ascension Lutheran Church  
 4900 Blue Ridge Blvd.  
 KC MO 64133

816-358-1919  
 secretary@ascensionlckc.org  
**Walkers M-F, 7-10am**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					<b>1</b> No Bible Study	<b>2</b> Basketball 10am-12pm
<b>3</b> New Dimensions of Praise Fellowship Hall 10am Bd. of Elders meeting following worship	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> Bible Study 10am	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> Bible Study 10am	<b>9</b> Basketball 10am-12pm
<b>10</b> New Dimensions of Praise Fellowship Hall 10am	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> Church Council 6:30pm	<b>13</b> Bible Study 10am	<b>14</b> Ascension Day of Prayer	<b>15</b> Bible Study 10am Basketball 7-9pm	<b>16</b> No Basketball Craft Day 9am-6:30pm
<b>17</b> Voters Meeting & a potluck following worship New Dimensions of Praise 10am	<b>18</b> Dorcas Circle 6pm	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> LUMA Auxiliary 9am at Our Redeemer Bible Study 10am	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> Bible Study 10am	<b>23</b> Basketball 10am-12pm
<b>24</b> New Dimensions of Praise 10am Mite Box Sunday	<b>25</b> Memorial Day No Walkers Office Closed	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> Bible Study 10am	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> Basketball 10am-12pm
<b>31</b> New Dimensions of Praise 10am						

And he said to them, “When you pray, say: “Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread, our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.” Luke 11:2-4