

News from our Missionaries

During the past few weeks, Pastor and the Elders have received thank you notes and updated information from the Missionaries we sponsor. We are sharing a couple of such communications in this edition of the Chronicler, and will do the rest in March.



At the zoo in Prague (no, the elephant is not real!)

We have been taking advantage of the winter weather by going ice skating and sledding—something we have not done since becoming missionaries due to Prague normally not getting very much snow. It felt like being in the Midwest again! Thank you so much for your prayers as we continue in the work that God has set before us, that the Gospel of Christ and Him crucified for the sins of the world may be proclaimed.

– Cody, Aurélie, Eva and Moriah

Dear Our Savior Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your continued interest in God's work in Eurasia. We hope and pray these updates encourage you as much as you are an encouragement to us.

God's Work in Eurasia

The Mock Family



(my Chinese name)

任頌美

Ren SongMei

Note of Interest:
Deaconess Sandra Rhein and Pastor attended Seminary together.



Dear Brothers + Sisters of Our Savior,
Epiphany greetings to you!
Thank you so much for your generous gift of \$4000. towards my mission work. Your support is both very beneficial and very encouraging.

I have added your church e-mail address to my newsletter recipient list, and have included the most recent one here.

Thank you again + God bless you.

Deaconess Sandra Rhein

I found this article timely and wanted to share it with all of you, especially at this time when we are having both Junior and Adult confirmation classes.
Pastor Manz

Editor's Note: This is a lightly edited reprint of an article that originally appeared in the April 1999 issue of The Lutheran Witness.

**Reprint: At Home with the Catechism
May 12, 2023**

Many Lutherans think of the Small Catechism as a teenage confirmation-class textbook. But it's not just for kids!

by Charles A. Gieschen

For many Lutherans, mention of Luther's Small Catechism recalls our youth and memorizing substantial portions of this small book for confirmation instruction. This catechism was used with the Bible as a textbook to teach us the basic truths of God's Word. It was this book that nurtured many of us in our understanding of sin, Law and Gospel, the Trinity, the person and work of Christ, the sacraments and many other teachings central to the life of a Christian. Often our "little book" shows these years of use (or abuse) with a broken binding, dog-eared pages, and plenty of pencil drawings in the margins!

While the study of the Small Catechism is not always the most pleasant experience of late childhood, we, as adults, can treasure that foundation built on God's Word. Sadly, this is where contact with the catechism often remains — in the distant and fading memories of our childhood. Our catechism is possibly boxed in some storage room at our parents' home or gathering dust on some bookshelf. Too many of us as adults continue to view the Small Catechism as a children's textbook. Now we are mature; we can use the Bible alone, or the Bible plus more sophisticated tools for spiritual growth — those study guides that come in large three-ring binders accompanied by a video!

Dr. Martin Luther, however, did not write the Small Catechism to be simply used by pastors as a textbook for children's instruction. He primarily intended it to be a family prayer book that is used frequently in the Christian home. One needs only read the headings of each of the six chief parts to see that Luther intended people to continue studying the catechism in the home: "As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household." How many parents have put the teaching of the catechism solely on the pastor in his brief weekly classes conducted for just one or two years of their child's life?

What kind of modeling would go on in our families if parents would keep their Small Catechism handy and review a portion of it as part of their daily family devotions? The 10 Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the sacraments and confession become much more the fabric of our being when presented, taught and prayed over the course of many years.

Let's call this "learning by heart" rather than "memorization," since faith involves much more than the mind. Luther stresses this personal nature of faith in the first-person pronouns of his explanations ("I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses).

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Occasionally, I have heard some children and parents say that they wished that we would study only the Bible instead of the catechism. Every pastor and parent should use the Bible as they teach. But we need also to remember that the catechism is built around central texts from the Bible, every word of the 10 Commandments and Lord's Prayer, every truth of the Creed, the institution and importance of both sacraments, and guidance on confession and forgiveness.

Luther wrote his catechism to be a servant that helps us understand the full text of the Bible, especially the clear and central message that Jesus Christ "has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent sufferings and death."

Here are some practical suggestions for family use of Luther's Small Catechism in the home:

First, in his preface, Luther encourages us to select one translation of the catechism and stick with it. Concordia Publishing House released a new edition of the catechism in 1991 and again in 2017. If you have young children now may be a good time to update the translation you will use in your home. Talk to your pastor about what translation will be used during the coming years in your congregation.

Second, study the basic texts first (i.e., the 10 Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer). With young children, these are learned effortlessly by using them frequently in your family's daily devotions.

Third, study Luther's brief explanations by including portions of them as part of your devotions. It is valuable to systematically go through the chief parts in order and, at the same time, be flexible in selecting a portion of the catechism that fits best with your devotion or the time of the church year. As your children get older, challenge their faithful learning (and competitive nature) to repeat these texts without reading them, encouraging their depth of understanding.

Fourth, adults can renew their understanding of the catechism by working with their children at home during the time of their formal confirmation instruction.

Fifth, learn the suggested prayers in the Small Catechism; they can help in developing daily practical Christian piety.

If individuals desire to become and remain Lutherans, it makes sense that they learn and faithfully continue in what Lutherans confess as the teaching of Scripture. In addition to the three ecumenical creeds, the one Lutheran confession that is specifically formulated for instruction in each church and home is Luther's Small Catechism. It is a brief prayerbook of truths central to our daily faith and life in Jesus Christ. Rather than being packed away after confirmation, The Small Catechism can regain a cherished position of frequent use alongside the Bible and hymnal in our homes.

After all, the foundational doctrine it contains is not just for kids!

Charles Gieschen is provost and professor of exegetical theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind.



Acolyte Schedule – September 2025 to August 2026

Beginning this year, each confirmand is expected to acolyte for an entire calendar month. Given there are 12 months, each student will serve two months total. Below is a tentative schedule for the year. Please let the Pastor know if any adjustments need to be made. If an acolyte is unable to serve on a given Sunday because of an emergency or unexpected situation, they are responsible for finding a replacement and communicating that to the Pastor. Thank you for your service in the church!

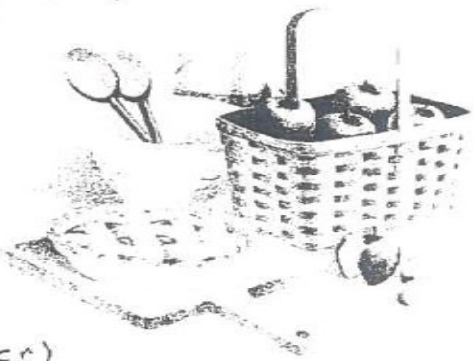
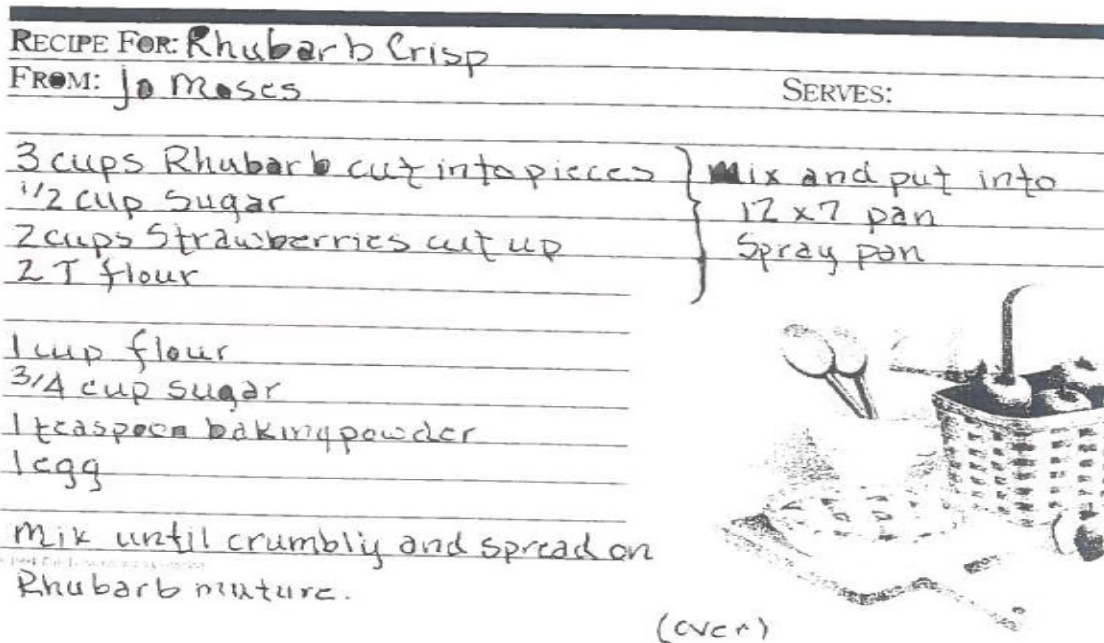
September: Sophia Manz	January: Blake Sorensen	May: Makenna Dunkerson
October: Alexis Sorensen	February: Sophia Manz	June: Rylee Harkin
November: Rylee Harkin	March: Open	July: Blake Sorensen
December: Makenna Dunkerson	April: Alexis Sorensen	August: Open

February Volunteers

Ushers: Jary Boger & Noah Degen
 Greeters: Marilyn Jessen
 Fellowship: Marilyn Jessen
 Elder: Doug Woebeking
 Media: Deanna Ihde
 Altar Guild: Mary Ervin
 Acolyte: Sophia Manz
 Piano: Ophie Hart
 Organ: Joy McGinley

Important Dates Coming U

February 3 @ 6:00p – Men’s Group
 February 4 @ 1:00p - Bible Study (Weekly)
 February 4 @ 7:30p - Junior Confirmation (Weekly)
 February 5 @ 6:15 - 7:30p - Adult Confirmation (Weekly)
 February 10 & 12 @ 9:00a – Quilting
 February 10 @ 5:30p – Trustees Meeting
 February 16 @ 6:00p – Elder’s Meeting
 February 17 @ 5:30p – Council Meeting
 February 18 @ 7:00p – Ash Wednesday Service
 February 19 @ 10:15a - OSL West
 February 24 & 26 @ 9:00a - Quilting
 February 25 @ 7:00p - Lent Midweek Service
 @ 7:30p - 8:30p - Confirmation



Topping: Melt 1/3 cup of butter and drizzle over top of dish. Bake at 350, check at 35 minutes or until golden brown.

Jo brought this crisp to share with the quilters on Tuesday, January, 27 and it was delicious. Hope you will try this recipe and enjoy it as much as we did.

Snacks Needed

In the January Chronicler, you may remember reading about the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) groups that meet at Berg Middle School and Newton High School.

At Berg Middle School, students gather for FCA “Huddles” on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month. Their time together centers on Jesus through Scripture, short lessons, and—of course—snacks. OSL has been invited to support these dedicated young people by providing snacks for one or two upcoming Berg Huddles. We’ve also been given permission to include a flyer with our congregation’s name and worship times, extending a warm invitation to any student who may wish to join us for a service. This is a wonderful opportunity to encourage youth in their faith journey and strengthen our connection with the community.

Throughout February, members are asked to donate shelf-stable snacks. Suggested items include:

- granola or protein bars
- Hostess or Little Debbie snacks
- bulk boxes or bags of individually wrapped cookies
- fruit snacks
- snack crackers
- nuts
- chips



Let’s be honest—they’re kids, and snacks are life!

All donated items will be delivered to Berg for their March 2 Huddle. OSL members are also welcome to attend that gathering to help hand out snacks, observe the program, and introduce students to a few friendly faces from our church family.

If you’d like more information about this opportunity to serve, please contact Donita.



Thank you to Jo Moses for delivering these quilts to the staff at Lynnville-Sully schools prior to the Holiday break.



Recently Sue Fortune made a delivery to HHS of some quilts. What a wonderful gift and they were so appreciative. Thank you, Sue.

Remember When

This is a 2011 Chronieler article Patsy Waddell found regarding a gift to OSLC from Paul Oelke, who lives in Pella now and will be celebrating his 90th birthday. It's fun to connect the past with current events. Thanks, Patsy.

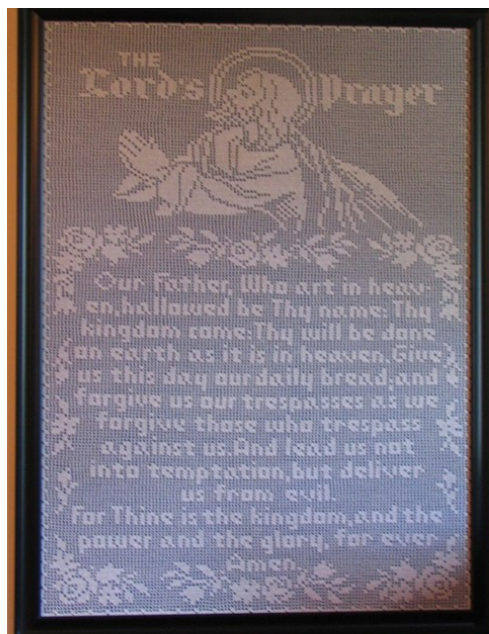
The Lord's Prayer in Crochet

This beautiful work of art was first displayed in its new mounting in April. It was hand-crocheted by Maude Versteegh. Her family and Doug Oelke's family have been friends for many years. This piece was one of two such pieces that Mrs. Versteegh gifted to Doug and his late wife, Lois, in the 1990's. Another like it was presented at the same time to the church at which Doug was then the Pastor.

As many of you know, Lois was active at Our Savior in many ways, including providing music for worship services and many mission-related activities. She began as a substitute organist and was a special and outgoing lady and was a strength and inspiration to many in our midst. During that time the Oelke's also often hosted in-home groups. Earlier this year Doug gifted this piece to Our Savior Lutheran Church in memory of Lois.

The Voting Assembly then assigned previously undesignated memorial funds to have the crocheted work framed for hanging. This required another artistry of sorts as the piece was carefully mounted and placed under glass. How fitting it was to see this rendering of the prayer our Lord gave to his disciples, and to us, hung in Luther Hall as Pastor completed a series of sermons on it. May this gift always serve as a reminder of the power of prayer in general and as inspiration to each of us to continue to call on Our Father through The Lord's Prayer.

Thank you for the gift, Doug!



Note: Special thanks go also to those of you that saw to it that the mounting was done, and to those who cleaned and painted in Luther Hall before the piece was hung.

**Doug attended here in the early 2000's. He is turning 90 years old on Feb. 7.
His family is requesting birthday cards be sent to him at
2602 Fifield Rd, Apt A320, Pella, IA 50219.**

Spreading Love and Kindness During February

It was brought to our attention that Discover Hope 517 here in Newton is in need of several items. A Thrivent Action Team Project has been applied for to help purchase items for them. They serve noon meals Mondays - Fridays to anyone in need so their supplies don't last long. At this time, they are particularly in need of jars of peanut butter (not huge ones), canned fruit, and hamburger. A list of regularly used items are:

butter	paper towels	copier paper
sugar	paper plates	dry erase markers
meat	paper bowls (all sizes)	sharpie markers
bottled water	napkins	high lighters
coffee	coffee cups w/lids	food gloves
coffee creamer (powder)	coffee stir sticks	39 gal. Trash bags
popcorn seeds/oil	toilet paper	13 gal. Trash bags
canned fruit/veg.	Kleenex	Dawn dish soap
frozen fruits/veg.	plastic forks	Lysol spray or wipes
cookies	Ziploc large freezer bags	air fresheners
non-perishable foods	plastic cups	Pinesol
salad dressings/mayo	to-go clam shell boxes	

During the month of February, let's spread a little love and friendship to help make the lives of people served by Discover Hope a little better. Please place the items in the boxes under the table in the Narthex. Thank you!

Let's celebrate February

The entire month of February is focused on raising awareness about cardiovascular health, especially for women, with key events like National Wear Red Day on Friday, February 6, 2026, encouraging participation in heart-healthy activities, CPR training, and supporting research through organizations like the American Heart Association (AHA). The theme often centers on community action and personal empowerment to fight heart disease, the leading killer in the U.S.

Key Dates & Events:

- February 1-28, 2026: American Heart Month.
- February 6, 2026: National Wear Red Day, when millions wear red to support women's heart health
- February 8-14, 2026: Heart Failure Awareness Week.



How to Participate:

- Go Red: Wear red on February 6th to raise awareness for women's heart health.
- Learn CPR: Take a course to learn Hands-Only CPR to be a lifesaver.
- Get Screened: Schedule regular heart check-ups to monitor blood pressure, cholesterol, and other risk factors.
- Live Healthy: Adopt heart-healthy habits like a balanced diet, regular exercise, stress management, and avoiding smoking.
- Support the AHA: Participate in the American Heart Association's Go Red for Women and American Heart Challenge to support research and education.

National Library Lovers' Month is celebrated every February to highlight the importance and value of libraries as community hubs, offering books, digital resources, educational programs, and safe spaces for learning and connection, encouraging everyone to visit, get a library card, check out materials, or participate in library events. It's a time to appreciate libraries for providing free access to information, fostering literacy,

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and offering diverse services beyond just books, like movies, classes, and community gatherings.

What it's about:

- **Celebrating Libraries:** A month-long event for book lovers (bibliophiles) and the wider community to show appreciation for their local libraries.
- **More Than Books:** Recognizing libraries as vital centers for technology access, skill-building, cultural activities, and community support.



How to Celebrate:

- **Visit:** Go to your local library, even if you have a card.
- **Get a Card:** Sign up for a library card or renew yours.
- **Borrow:** Check out books, e-books, movies, or music.
- **Attend:** Join story times, workshops, or community events.
- **Share:** Get a library sticker, share your love on social media, or participate in book-themed activities like "Mystery Date with a Book".

Why it matters:

- Libraries offer resources and expert help not always found online, acting as a bridge to information for everyone.
- They provide inclusive spaces for all ages to learn, read, and connect.

Great American Pies Month is celebrated annually in February. This month-long observance honors the long-standing tradition of pie-making in America, encompassing both sweet and savory varieties.

History and Origins

- **Established Date:** The month was officially designated as Great American Pies Month in 1990.
- **Corporate Roots:** It is believed to have been the brainchild of the Crisco brand to celebrate its role in family baking.
- **Presidents' Connection:** February was chosen partly due to the connection between George Washington and the legendary (though fictional) story of the cherry tree, making it a fitting time to celebrate cherry pie.

Key Dates in February

- **National Cherry Pie Day** is celebrated on February 20th. This is the primary specific pie holiday falling within Great American Pies Month.

How to Celebrate

- **Baking:** Experiment with new recipes, such as sourdough discard pie crusts or classic fruit fillings.
- **Hosting:** Organize "pie parties" or tasting events for friends and family.
- **Support Local:** Visit independent bakeries to try regional specialties.
- **Social Media:** Share photos of your creations using the hashtag #GreatAmericanPieMonth.

Popular American Pies

While apple pie is the most iconic, recent data shows pumpkin pie (24%) narrowly edges out apple pie (23%) as America's overall favorite. Other popular choices include:

- Pecan Pie
- Banana Cream Pie
- Cherry Pie
- Blueberry Pie

