



St. James News

CHRIST AT THE CENTER. TRUTH IN ALL THINGS

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From The Desk Of Pastor Mark Loder

September Spiritual Discipline: Reduce Media Consumption

Though the data can vary, it is estimated that the average American spends 7-8 hours a day consuming various forms of media. On average, then, the typical American spends more time-consuming media than sleeping, working, or spending time with others.

We are not smarter or better for it. Such significant time spent consuming media can do nothing but stupefy us. Neil Postman was onto this back in the 1980s already with his seminal work *Amusing Ourselves to Death*. I would highly encourage giving that book a read.

Media exists for the sole purpose of entertainment. The medium and the yearning for a profit makes it so. We can pretend that with such pervasive consumption, we are merely being well-informed and staying culturally relevant. If those lies were true, why would we want to be culturally relevant in such a world as this? For this is a world that cares not a lick for what the Holy Scriptures say. And if we are so well-informed, consider the last time you heard a genuine argument (in the classical sense) between two people who did not resort to personal attacks or mere slogans. Consciences are informed by many and various things that attack the purity of heart, mind, and soul, that disguise themselves (and certainly, often don't - they just simply let their evil hang out) as good for you. An awakening must occur within that recognizes that the most important thing for you to ingest is the truth that will set you free.

If we are going to discipline ourselves, train ourselves in the way of the Lord, we need to recognize the impediments that stand in our way of a right and proper hearing. And if there is a particular impediment that unnecessarily occupies the biggest chunk of time in our day and detracts from our ability to attentively listen to the Word, then it is incumbent on us to not

only be cognizant of what we are consuming but also to change our ways.

OUR SEPTEMBER SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE IS TO REDUCE MEDIA CONSUMPTION and to fill some of that time with meditation on the Lord's word.

We are going to do this in multiple steps. For the first week, keep track of how much time you spend using various forms of media. Keep a log of how long you spend on Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, reading the news, watching television, on your phone, etc. iPhone and Android users can simply check their screen time via the settings app. The use of a computer for work does not count towards this total unless you use work time to consume media.

During week 2, simply reduce consumption by 1-3%. So if media consumption is 8 hours per day, reduce the consumption by about 15 minutes. Turn it off. Unplug. It's a baby step.

During week 3, see if you can cut back another 1% and fill that time with prayer, the singing of a hymn, the reading of the Lord's Word, or the recitation of the catechism.

In week 4, cut back another 1% and fill that time with the same suggestions as found above.

If you were to follow a daily reading plan that took you through the whole Bible in a year, it would take you about 10-12 reading minutes per day. Wouldn't we be better for it? If we believe that Jesus alone holds the words of eternal life, then it is to our benefit to feed on the words of eternal life. Not only to feed on the words of life but to better feed on the words of life. A life that's a little freer of media consumption is a life in which the mind is better engaged. Far better to have our minds molded and shaped by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit than by Tucker Carlson or Don Lemon.

This month, we are going to slowly limit one of the biggest obstacles that get in the way of using the Word in our homes and inhibits our ability to listen to sermons. Let's do a mini cutback on technology and spend that time rejoicing in Christ crucified for us.

Our Church Records

Church Attendance

Sunday, July 5	155
Sunday, July 12	132
Sunday, July 19	124
Sunday, July 26	144
Sunday, August 2	170
Sunday, August 9	178
Sunday, August 16	172
Sunday, August 23	153

Communion Attendance

Sunday, July 5	99
Sunday, July 12	132
Sunday, July 19	124
Sunday, July 26	104
Sunday, August 2	111
Sunday, August 9	119
Sunday, August 16	121
Sunday, August 23	110

Funeral

Dean Cloose on July 24, 2026. He was called to his eternal rest on July 16, 2026, at the age of 91 years, 4 months, and 7 days.

Transfer Out

Michele Pettit to Trinity Lutheran Church, Clear Lake, MN.



Hear the Good News of the Gospel on the Lutheran hour each Sunday at 9:00 am on KDUZ 1260 AM Radio.

During the month of September, you will hear the following topics:

September 6, 2026

"Come and See"

The Book of Nature can open your mind to the possibility that God is real. The Book of Scripture, the Bible, goes further, like a friend who's been there.

John 1:46

September 13, 2026

"Forgiveness Is a Non-Negotiable"

In God's family, forgiveness is non-negotiable. It's not up for debate because forgiveness is what makes us who we are. Matthew 6:12

September 20, 2026

"High Bar to Clay Jar"

In Jesus, we don't need to compare ourselves to anyone else. Instead, we are free to better appreciate them. Matthew 20:16

September 27, 2026

"Teachable"

To be a disciple is to be a learner. Jesus loves you enough to make you teachable. Matthew 21:31



August: Jane Diers (1), Edward Estrem (1), Micah Reich (3), John Horsch (4), Cassandra Butcher (6), Derek Nikko (6), Kamryn Stueven (6), Amanda Stoll (8), Christine Yukel (8), Gerald Burau (9), Jenna Davis (9), Robert Gruenhagen (9), Greta Van Meeteren (9), Jared Glessing (12), Bernice Pehl (12), Dale Engel (14), Paisley Painschab (14), Samantha Zillmer (14), Adam Birkholz (18), Thomas Young (18), Micah Loder (20), Dean Koosman (21), Everett Hennen (22), Bradly Koosman (22), Molly Loder (23), Lillian Baker (25), Mark Schmieg (25), Abigail Jones (26), Bonnie Engel (27), Drew Oestreich (28), Bruce Zander (29).

Happy Anniversary

9/1 Justyn & Jamie Love
 9/2 Dale & Julie Burau
 9/3 Marcus & Julie Linder
 9/7 John & Shari Zander
 9/8 Jesse & Angela Cardinal
 9/9 David & Kelly Gruenhagen
 9/11 Don & Stacey Smida
 9/13 Allan & Kathleen Uecker
 9/15 Mark & Barbara Schmieg
 9/18 Eric & Amanda Stoll
 9/19 Steve & Janice Comstock
 9/21 Edwin & Diane Borg



Our August meeting began with devotions by Bonnie, "Can You Hear Me Now?" We are urged to unplug from the world's noise and distractions and strive to Hear, Obey and Serve the Lord.

Bill Wickesberg was our great speaker and took us on an interesting and informative 3-week slide tour of his sights and adventures in Italy.

Marge opened the business meeting. Reports and thank you's were read. A motion was passed to pay half of the bill for 50 new padded chairs and racks. The Litchfield Zone LWML Fall Rally will be hosted by the St. James LWML on Saturday, October 17th, 9 AM. The guest speaker will be Jim Holmlund, Ex, Director of Love Inc Heartland, Howard Lake and Delano. Convention reports were given by our delegates Bonnie and Sonia. Birthdays were recognized followed by the LWML Hymn, Mite and table prayers, refreshments and fellowship.

Darlene Lind will be our guest speaker on Women's Health at our September 14th Meeting. Come Join Us!!

God is Still Writing Your Story- Stop Trying To Steal The Pen!!

LCMS Health Ministry

September is a month of transition for many people. School is back in session, the weather cools and schedules naturally change pace. Fall is also a great time to re-engage in physical activity and exercise - whether indoors or outdoors. It may seem unusual to hear the church talk about exercise, but LCMS Health Ministry exists to promote a Christ-centered approach to health. Yes, even physical health! The church cares about health — spiritual, mental, physical — because our Lord cares for us in every bodily need. We confess that God creates, redeems and sanctifies our whole person: body and soul, mind and spirit (Gal. 2:20). As such, we are given the task to steward our bodies as members of the larger body — Christ's church (1 Cor. 6:19–20; 1 Corinthians 12:12–27)! For more information on LCMS Health Ministry, visit lcms.org/health.

LCMS Family Ministry

“So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith” (Galatians 6:10).

God has given us communities in our own families, in our church family and in other places as well. This verse reminds us of what a great blessing our church family is. In our culture, we often have Sunday morning as the only time that we see our church family. Our time together on Sunday morning is good and important, but we can also have a relationship with those in our church family beyond that time. Find ways with your family to build connections with other members of the congregation. You can talk to someone that you do not know well and encourage your children to do the same, or even invite them over for a shared meal.

LCMS Stewardship

Stewardship in the First Commandment

Originally published in September 2023

The greatest gift that Martin Luther gave to us was his Small Catechism. The word “enchiridion” is part of the original title of this work. This is the Greek word for “handbook.” The Small Catechism is a handbook of the Bible. All the basic knowledge that a Christian needs to understand the faith and live a godly life has been taken from the Bible and distilled into this beautiful little book of Christian piety.

Luther starts with the Ten Commandments.

The First Commandment:

You shall have no other gods.

What does this mean? We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things. (SC I)

We have a God above us. He is the Lord God and we are not. He is Almighty and in control. He is righteous and good. And therefore, we should fear Him.

This God is also our heavenly Father. He wants us to be saved. He does not want us to suffer His just wrath. He has provided salvation for us in His Son, Jesus Christ. And therefore, we should love Him.

Our heavenly Father will never leave us nor forsake us. He has promised as much — and the Bible shows us that He always keeps His promises. So, we should trust Him.

In the Large Catechism, Luther explains how money and possessions form one of the greatest temptations against the First Commandment:

This I must unfold somewhat more plainly, that it may be understood and perceived by ordinary examples of the contrary. Many a one thinks that he has God and everything in abundance when he has money and possessions; he trusts in them and boasts of them with such firmness and assurance as to care for no one. Lo, such a man also has a god, Mammon by name, i.e., money and possessions, on which he sets all his heart, and which is also the most common idol on earth. He who has money and possessions feels secure, and is joyful and undismayed as though he were sitting in the midst of Paradise. On the other hand, he who has none doubts and is despondent, as though he knew of no God. For very few are to be found who are of good cheer, and who neither mourn nor complain if they have not Mammon. This [care and desire for money] sticks and clings to our nature, even to the grave. (LC I 5–9)

These words of Dr. Luther should call us to repentance; sometimes, we live and act like we don't have a Father in heaven. We seek our comfort and peace outside of His gracious promises. But we do have a Father in heaven. He does love us. All His promises are true. And the Lord will surely provide. If that is our belief, then our outward lives will reflect this belief in our acts of generosity and mercy. We will see money and possessions not as gods but rather as tools for doing God's work.



and move in the new refrigerator. Thank you, Graham Moving, for being a blessing to our community.

We look forward to all that God has in store for us in the coming school year.

CHRIST AT THE CENTER TRUTH IN ALL THINGS

September brings the excitement of the start of a new school year. New textbooks have been delivered, the building has been cleaned and polished, new paint has been applied to some areas, and rooms have been set up to greet students for a new year of growing in God's Word and learning new skills and academics.

This year's theme is Rooted in Christ. "Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving." Colossians 2:6-7.

We are saying goodbye and God bless you, to two of our staff members. Heidi Olsen has taken a position as third grade teacher at Zion Lutheran in Mayer and Stacey Sparkman is stepping away from our staff for now. God continues to bless St. James with faithful workers and has provided Cheryl Jacobson to teach the first and second grades this year. Amanda Holz will be the preschool teacher for both 3- and 4-year-olds and will also be in charge of the childcare program. Pastor Brian Thorson will be teaching the fifth and sixth grade religion classes this year.

September also brings a change to the facilities manager post. We have ended our agreement with Right Way Cleaners and Jordan Holmquist has agreed to take over the cleaning and general upkeep of the school. He has already helped in many ways by being on the Board of Trustees and is ready to be here daily.

We thank the many volunteers who helped throughout the summer moving furniture in and out of classrooms so that they could be scrubbed and waxed. It helps so much to have folks willing to assist with those big tasks. Also thanks to Jack George and Jordan Holmquist for keeping the grass mowed and edges trimmed. Graham Moving provided the truck and manpower to remove the old refrigerator from the Fellowship Hall kitchen (which was in need of continuing repairs)



September

2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 7:00 Women's Bible Study	3	4	5
6 Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity 9:00 Divine Service 10:15 Bible Study 7:30 Trustees Meeting	7 LABOR DAY-Church office Closed	8 8:20 Opening Chapel	9 7:00 Women's Bible Study	10 9:00 Bible Study 5:30 Community Meal	11	12 7:30 Iron Sharpening Irons Breakfast 9:00 Elders Meeting
13 Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity 8:00 Divine Service 9:15 Bible Study/Catechesis/SS 10:30 Divine Service Rally Day Potluck	14 1:00 Naomi Guild 2:00 LWML 7:00 School Board	15 7:00 Leadership Council	16 8:20 Chapel 7:00 Women's Bible Study	17 9:00 Bible Study	18	19
20 Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity 8:00 Divine Service 9:15 Bible Study/Catechesis/SS 10:30 Divine Service	21	22	23 8:20 Chapel 7:00 Women's Bible Study	24 9:00 Bible Study	25	26
27 Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity 8:00 Divine Service 9:15 Bible Study/Catechesis/SS 10:30 Divine Service	28	28	29 8:20 Chapel 7:00 Women's Bible Study	30 9:00 Bible Study		

June 12, 2026

Dear Friends and Family,

I apologize as this update is long overdue.

In our last update I had made the difficult decision to remove myself from consideration of the call to my vicarage congregation. Several factors were making the vicarage a challenge, and after receiving counsel from the seminary, it was believed that this action was in the best interest of the congregation and our family. That was the beginning of February. The plan moving forward at that time was to finish out my vicarage at that congregation and then receive a call on April 29th. That is not how events ended up happening.

Very shortly after our last update, many of the influences and factors that had been causing the vicarage to be stressful and challenging for me came to a head. Due to reasons outside of my control, I was not allowed to complete the vicarage. As of March 1st I was relieved of all duties, and the vicarage was effectively ended. Thankfully we were allowed to stay at the parsonage through May so that Timothy was able to finish out his junior year at the high school.

I cannot even begin to express the sadness and helplessness that both Amanda and I felt in the immediate aftermath. After talking with the seminary, it was decided that due to the shortcomings and poor learning experience of the vicarage, it would be best for me to simply repeat the vicarage year entirely. Instead of graduating with my classmates and receiving a call at the end of April, I was assigned a new vicarage. So, beginning July 12th, we will spend the next year at Zion Lutheran Church in Imperial, Nebraska. This will be what is considered a "regular" vicarage. This means my supervisor is on-site and is the pastor of the congregation I am serving, as opposed to this past year where the congregation was vacant and the supervising pastor was retired and lived forty minutes away.

In the meantime for the next month we are hanging out at my (Lyle's) parents' in central Minnesota. This is the area where we lived before seminary, so in a way it still feels like home. We have been enjoying worshiping once again in our sending congregation for the time being. Grandmom and Grandad have been gracious hosts and enjoying the extra time with their grandchildren.

Timothy is gearing up for his senior year. Due to previous years with homeschooling, this is his first summer off in many years. This past week he has been watching the NBA finals with Grandmom and teaching her his joy for the sport. With Grandad, Timothy has been mowing the lawns at home and at church.

David, Daniel, and Eloise continue with consistency by doing a little bit of school work each day, along with all the normal summer activities: bubbles, sidewalk chalk, flying kites, reading books, and ice cream with Grandmom.

Philip, now nearly 15 months, is adding new words nearly every week, either verbally or through sign language. He is full of energy and spends a lot of time outside on the swing or going down the slide.

Even with the difficulties of the last several months, Amanda was able to finish a set of ordination vestments. Notice I said a set and not my set. After finishing, Amanda realized that she had over estimated material and had enough remaining for a second full set. So we decided to gift the completed set to a classmate and dear friend who is being ordained this June. Amanda has already begun work on the second set for my ordination next year.

Please keep our family in your prayers as we prepare for another move and vicarage. We have already received several positive indicators that this second vicarage will be a better experience. We will send an update with our Nebraska address once we arrive there at the end of July.

In the meantime our mailing address at my parents is:
4990 Yale Ave, New Germany, MN 55367

In Christ,

The Doster Family
Lyle, Amanda, Timothy, David, Daniel, Eloise, and Philip

Lyle Doster
Amanda

~~David~~
David
Timothy Doster

Eloise

Daniel C. Doster

Philip
(Philip)