

# KIDS IN THE DIVINE SERVICE



## What is a “catechism”?

A catechism (pronounced KAT-eh-kizm) is a book of instruction usually written in question and answer form. The word “catechism” comes from the Greek word *katekhein*, which means “to instruct.” A catechism teaches the basics of the Christian faith.

## Why do we need catechisms?

While visiting local churches, Martin Luther found many pastors and their church members were unaware of the true teachings of the Bible. Because of this, the people were living immoral lives. Martin Luther wrote the catechisms to instruct people in the basics of the Christian faith, that they might know Christ and His forgiveness and live accordingly. We still use Luther’s Large and Small Catechisms so that we never forget those things that are necessary for faith in Christ.



**Parents:** Consider these words from Luther: “I, too, am a theologian who has attained a fairly good practical knowledge and experience of Holy Scriptures through various dangers. But I do not so glory in this gift as not to join my children daily in prayerfully reciting the Catechism. ... For God gave the Word that we should impress it on ourselves. ... Without this practice our souls become rusty, as it were, and we lose ourselves” (Plass, Ewald M., *What Luther Says* vol. 1 [St. Louis: Concordia, 1986], 125–26).



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